

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Council Members
National and International Union Presidents
Constituency Groups
Alliance for Retired Americans

FROM: Richard L. Trumka, President

DATE: June 26, 2015

RE: July 30th National Day of Action

On **Thursday, July 30**, America will celebrate Medicare's 50th birthday. How many more birthdays will Medicare have? If Paul Ryan, Mitch McConnell, and John Boehner have their way, not many.

Please join us to protect, improve and expand Medicare by endorsing the July 30th National Day of Action.

As you know, Medicare is the nation's largest and most successful health insurance program, providing quality healthcare and financial security to 50 million Americans in 2014. It is also the most financially efficient health care system in the United States with administrative costs averaging only 2 percent of program outlays.

Baby boomers depend on the continuation and improvement of Medicare and are overwhelmingly opposed to dismantling this program. However, that is exactly what Republicans in Congress want to do.

The House and Senate budget resolutions both propose beginning a privatization process. They would turn Medicare into a voucher program, raising costs for seniors and funneling billions of dollars into the coffers of insurance companies and hospital chains. Paul Ryan's proposal to raise the Medicare eligibility age to 67 is waiting in the wings. Raising the eligibility age would cost state and local governments billions of dollars and would bankrupt many Taft-Hartley healthcare trust funds.

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We need to stop them. We need to mount a vigorous defense of Medicare and ensure that President Obama will veto any privatization of Medicare. As the AFL-CIO statement on healthcare reform says, adopting "Improved Medicare for All" is the only solution to the increasing cost and access problems of our current healthcare system.

In Washington, D.C., the AFL-CIO is proud to join with National Nurses United in endorsing a rally at on **Thursday, July 30** at **Upper Senate Park**, starting at **9:30 am**. Although this event coincides with the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting, we will be asking our staff who are not already engaged at the Executive Council meeting to turn out. A flyer listing other actions that will take place around the country is attached.

I urge your union to do the following:

- Endorse the National Day of Action, including the Washington, D.C., rally.
- Mobilize your leaders, members and staff to participate in the D.C. rally and actions around the country.
- Sponsor buses for people to attend these events.
- Designate someone from your staff who will act as your liaison for these events.

I would appreciate it if you or your staff would contact Ken Zinn, Political Director of National Nurses United (kzinn@nationalnursesunited.org 240-235-2008), to indicate if your union's name can be added to the list of endorsers.

Thank you in advance for your support.

RLT/jhl