



**For Immediate Release**

**December 7, 2016**

**Contact:** David Blank – 202/637-5275 or [dblank@retiredamericans.org](mailto:dblank@retiredamericans.org)

## **Retirees Launch Campaign to Protect Medicare from Privatization**

**Washington, DC** – Alarmed by the House Congressional Leadership’s plans to dismantle Medicare, the Alliance for Retired Americans today kicked off a grass roots campaign to block any attempts to cut or convert guaranteed, earned health benefits into a voucher or privatized scheme. Speaker Paul Ryan and Rep. Tom Price, whom President-elect Trump will nominate to be Secretary of Health and Human Services, both said that they were moving to “reform” Medicare in the next Congress.

“Alliance members will use all the tools at our disposal to stop any plan to replace our guaranteed earned Medicare benefits with a system of ‘Coupon-care’ vouchers,” said Richard Fiesta, executive director of the Alliance.

Today the Alliance joined allies in delivering more than one million petitions against the Republican plan to cut and privatize Medicare to House Speaker Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

Before delivering the petitions, Fiesta spoke at a Capitol Hill news conference with Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Sen. Bernie Sanders and Representatives Jan Schakowsky and Ted Deutch. Representatives from several other advocacy groups also spoke against cuts to Medicare.

Alliance members will be directly lobbying members of Congress and Senators in Washington and in their home districts and stating their opposition to efforts to gut Medicare and Medicaid. More than 100 meetings have been planned so far, and the organization expects to reach 200 offices over the next few weeks.

The Alliance will also campaign online and feature dozens of personal stories about why Medicare’s guaranteed benefits are so important on its website, [www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org), and social media.

“Our members are irate. They paid into the Medicare system for decades, and heard President-elect Trump repeatedly promise to protect their earned health care benefits. We will fight tooth and nail to protect Medicare from all those who try to turn the earned benefits of Medicare into Coupon-care,” said Fiesta. “Medicare must be protected, preserved and expanded for future generations, not dismantled.”

###