

advocacy
education
outreach
mobilization



standing **STRONG**



“We’re Standing Strong to Strengthen Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid”

Over the past year, deficits are down, health care spending has slowed significantly, and Medicare now spends \$1,200 less for each beneficiary. More people are working, which is good news for Social Security. In spite of this progress, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid continue to be in the cross-hairs of a well-financed national campaign to cut benefits for the middle-class and poor under the guise of fiscal responsibility. The new GOP majority in Congress has provided the Wall Street-funded billion-dollar anti-“entitlement” lobby an historic opportunity to fulfill their mission of turning these social insurance programs into welfare and slashing benefits to the average citizen while protecting, and even expanding, tax cuts for millionaires.

The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare has long been **Standing Strong** against these attacks and this year was no exception. We sidelined repeated attempts at passing harmful proposals that would have cut benefits.

We successfully mobilized our members and supporters with massive petition drives, online activism and Congressional Town Hall meetings. We’ve won many battles but the war against America’s social insurance programs rages on.

Poll after poll shows Americans of all ages and political parties overwhelmingly oppose cutting Social Security and Medicare benefits. The vast majority wants Congress to focus on the real threats to our economy; wage inequality, unemployment, a growing retirement crisis and record low tax rates for the wealthy. That’s why we here at the National Committee vow to build on last year’s many successes and continue Standing Strong in defense of America’s most successful income and retirement security programs.

Max Richtman

President/CEO
The National Committee to Preserve
Social Security & Medicare



This popular NCPSSM graphic has been shared more than 500,000 times on social media sites.

advocacy

NCPSSM's Government Relations and Policy staff logged hundreds of hours on Capitol Hill briefing and lobbying Members of Congress and their staffs. We successfully leveraged our expertise and our national membership to ensure we remain "at the table" for ongoing policy discussions impacting a wide range of aging issues. These issues included benefit cuts which would target seniors, veterans and people with disabilities if the Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) formula was changed to the "Chained CPI," raising the retirement age, reauthorizing the Older Americans Act, means testing and cost shifting in Medicare, wage inequality, helping seniors prevent identity theft, and increased funding for Alzheimer's research.

*"In politics,
you're either at
the table or on
the menu"*

-- Anonymous

The National Committee successfully lobbied for no cuts to Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid benefits during the FY 2015 budget process, a \$199 million increase for Social Security's program integrity activities, and the removal of Social Security numbers from Medicare cards. We helped persuade the White House to support Social Security Disability reallocation and to continue to exclude the chained CPI proposal from the fiscal year 2016 budget.

Our organization endorsed many important pieces of legislation during the past year including: the "Caregiver Credit Act" which provides Social Security credits for caregivers who take time away from paid employment to care for loved ones, the "Social Security 2100 Act" which boosts Social Security benefits while extending the program's solvency, and the "Same Act" which ensures all married individuals, regardless of where they live, receive equal treatment under the Social Security program when they apply for spousal benefits. Conversely, we have voiced strong opposition when Congress is preparing to vote on a bill that would be detrimental to programs for older Americans; such as, the GOP budget's benefit cuts, Medicare vouchers and Medicaid block-granting provisions, efforts to cut pension benefits in multi-employer plans and proposals to increase means testing in Medicare.

The National Committee is consistently invited to provide advice, counsel and insight to the House and Senate Democratic Caucuses, the Democratic National Committee and other powerful organizations seeking to build coalitions with America's seniors. Our policy experts testified this year before the Senate Finance Committee, the Select Committee on Aging and the House Way and Means Social Security Subcommittee. NCPSSM is also often seen at the White House providing its expertise on protecting the rights of seniors.

shifting the debate

BOOST SOCIAL SECURITY NOW

For too long when Washington has talked about Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid it has been a one-sided discussion encumbered with proposals focused on benefit cuts instead of benefit adequacy.

In late 2014 that political tide shifted and the National Committee is proud to have taken a leading role in changing the conversation with our "Boost Social Security Now" campaign.



The “Boost” campaign has informed and mobilized our membership, grassroots networks and on-line communities to convince Congress that now is the time to boost benefits, not cut them. From city and county councils to state legislatures, political leaders from coast to coast have added their signatures to the National Committee’s Boost Proclamation urging Congress to support legislation increasing Social Security benefits.

Our National Committee members and supporters mobilized in a big way by providing 2 million signatures on letters and petitions to Congress, which we delivered to Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) in an event at the U.S. Capitol. Our Capitol Action team volunteers also presented each Senate office with signatures from their constituents providing first-hand evidence of the vast grassroots support to boost not cut Social Security.

NCPSSM was proud to join the sponsor of the “Social Security 2100 Act,” Representative John Larson (D-CT), at a Capitol Hill announcement event offering our endorsement of this important legislation which boosts benefits by about 2 percent, adopts the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E) and extends Social Security’s long-term solvency.

ELEANOR’S HOPE

Twenty-two million older women receive Social Security benefits; yet, the inequalities they face due to gender wage discrimination and longevity, among other factors, threaten their retirement security. In 2012 the average woman retiree received \$1,103 a month while a retired man received a \$1,414 monthly benefit. The National Committee believes women deserve an adequate retirement income. That’s why we launched a new initiative, “Eleanor’s Hope” — named in honor of first lady and activist Eleanor Roosevelt — to mobilize women of all ages to advocate for income equality, retirement security and health protection for women.

Some of the National Committee’s proposals for improving benefits include:

- ◆ Providing Social Security credits for caregivers
- ◆ Improving Social Security survivor benefits
- ◆ Equalizing Social Security’s rules for disabled widows
- ◆ Strengthening the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment
- ◆ Boosting the basic Social Security benefit of all current and future beneficiaries

Our “Eleanor’s Hope” initiative led to an invitation to testify before the Senate Finance Committee’s hearing, “Social Security: Is a Key Foundation of Economic Security Working for Women?” and has already generated thousands of actions including petitions and online engagement on the Eleanor’s Hope website, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

mobilization

The clear voice of our members and supporters is the National Committee’s most powerful asset. Their views — expressed through Capitol Hill events, petitions, email, phone calls, personal letters and our active social media communities — have long made a crucial difference in the outcome of legislation on Capitol Hill. Lawmakers know that National Committee members are a potent political force willing to invest their time, energy, and dedication to influence important legislative and political change in Washington.

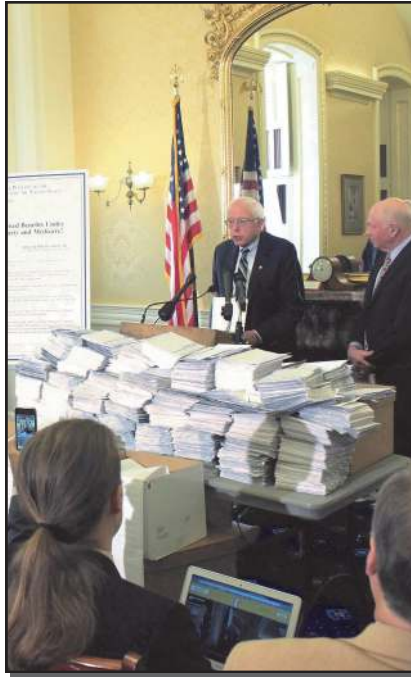
Energized NCPSSM volunteers in their bright yellow shirts are familiar sights at Washington events where the National Committee’s voice on Social Security and Medicare rings loud and strong.



In addition to delivering 2 million signatures opposing benefits cuts to Members of the Senate, our activists mobilized at events to lift the payroll tax, boost Social Security benefits and oppose cuts to people in the Social Security disability program. This year our Capitol Action Team doubled the number of actions taken in the DC area and we formed a rapid response team to call and email Congress when key votes are scheduled.

National Committee members and supporters placed thousands of calls to Congress last year, they signed millions of petitions and letters and our online community has sent hundreds of emails to Members of Congress. Our social media community on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and other sites continues to grow and now includes more than 150,000 Americans nationwide. They're an engaged and active force for change with more than a million interactions in the past year alone.

NCPSSM's social media strategy has earned Non-Profit.org's "Top Non-Profit" honors and E-Politics' "Top 10 Advocacy Post" for our widely-shared Facebook graphics.



Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) accepts delivery of two million NCPSSM petitions.

education & outreach

The NCPSSM Foundation's "Know Your Rights" educational initiative is the first of its kind in the nation and a model for a national campaign educating LGBT seniors about their potential eligibility for increased Social Security benefits following the Supreme Court's 2013 Windsor decision. California was a natural launching point for the initiative as the state receives more Social Security benefits than any other and also has the largest population of same-sex married couples. Our unique collaboration with the Social Security Administration and The California Wellness Foundation led to a state-wide effort including town halls in Oakland, San Jose, Sacramento, Santa Ana, Palm Springs and San Diego. Live-streamed events and webinars expanded our reach even beyond these town hall locations and our policy experts provided a briefing for the California State Assembly.

Over the past year, NCPSSM participated in town halls from coast to coast helping Members of Congress keep their constituents informed about Social Security and Medicare legislative efforts in Washington. Through our Political Action Committee, NCPSSM also supported incumbents and candidates who demonstrated a strong commitment to seniors' issues. National Committee endorsements played key roles in the elections of Hawaii Senator Brian Schatz and Illinois Rep. Cheri Bustos.



1+
Million
Online
Interactions



150,000
NCPSSM
Online
Community
Members



240%
Email List
Increase

NCPSSM MEDIA

Publicity Value

\$82.3 M

TOP OUTLETS

1. Huffington Post	\$9.5M
2. Reuters	\$3.6M
3. Forbes	\$2.8M
4. New York Times	\$2.1M
5. U.S. News & World Rept	\$2.0M

BROADCAST OUTLETS



Both high-profile races were closely fought with the candidates' plans for Social Security and Medicare as deciding factors for voters.

The National Committee also reached millions of Americans through the effective use of traditional and online media sources. From network newscasts and national dailies to talk radio, NCPSSM analysts provided a regular source of information and critical counter-point against the well-financed anti-Social Security and Medicare lobby's growing media influence. The *New York Times*, *National Journal*, *U.S. News & World Report*, the *Associated Press* and *Huffington Post* are just a few of the national media organizations which relied on NCPSSM analysis this year.

celebrating our successes

STOPPING THE "CHAINED CPI"

Thanks to organized opposition from National Committee members and Americans nationwide, plans to cut Social Security benefits by adopting a lower Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) formula have now been abandoned by President Obama. Defeat of the so-called "Chained CPI" is a perfect example of how citizen education, outreach and mobilization can be successfully deployed as we work toward strengthening, not cutting, the already modest benefits in Social Security and Medicare.

For anti-Social Security lobbyists and fiscal hawks, the "Chained CPI" has long been seen as a way to cut benefits under the guise of a "technical tweak." The Bowles-Simpson Commission endorsed the idea in 2010 and political momentum grew as many on Capitol Hill bought into the idea that the "Chained CPI" would be an easy way to save money without Americans realizing their benefits were being cut. President Obama even included the "Chained CPI" in his 2013 budget.



Tell Your Member of Congress **NOT** to support the Chained CPI.

Sign our Petition:
thertruthnow.org/Petition

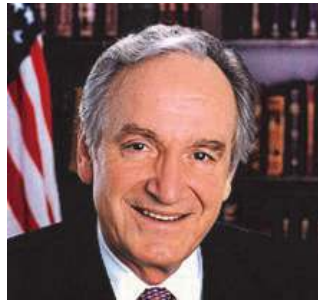
While many politicians believed the technical and obscure nature of a federal formula adjustment would diminish awareness of the benefit cut, what they didn't anticipate was the massive education and outreach campaign launched by the National Committee and our allies to expose the truth. Once seniors, the disabled, veterans and their families learned the "Chained CPI" was a back-door benefit cut, the National Committee generated thousands of emails and phone calls to Congress. We also organized protest rallies, petition drives and online actions. Finally, Washington relented. President Obama removed the "Chained CPI" from his budget and lawmakers now know the American people not only understand what this policy proposal means but have rejected it loudly and clearly.



"I believe the work of the National Committee is powerfully important in this fight and I'm pleased Eleanor's Hope will be out on the front line bringing attention to the issue of women's health and retirement security."

October 2014

**Senator Elizabeth Warren
(D-MA)**



"I deeply appreciate the support of the National Committee and commend them for their work to strengthen and expand Social Security."

February 2014
Senate Floor Statement

**Fmr. Senator Tom Harkin
(D-IA)**



"I am very proud to be an advocate for NCPSSM. We are able to get the truth to the people about what's going on in Washington."

NCPSSM Volunteer
since 2005

**Reverend Julius
Turnipseed, Memphis, TN**

looking ahead

With so much at stake and a stormy political climate, the National Committee is preparing for a period when senior safety net programs will be more vigorously challenged than ever before. It's a challenge we'll meet with new ideas and resources. In July 2015, we will assume the Chair of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO), a coalition of 72 of the nation's non-profit organizations serving older Americans, at the same time that our nation celebrates two historic anniversaries: Medicare turns 50, while Social Security marks 80 years of success. The White House Conference on Aging will also occur this year during NCPSSM's leadership of LCAO, providing our organization an important opportunity to help lead the national dialogue on America's retirement crisis and the state of our national aging policy.

While we've certainly had many successes to celebrate, we know that in politics you often have to fight a battle more than once to win it. We also know the future brings many opportunities for the National Committee and its members to continue **Standing Strong** in our fight to strengthen America's most successful income and retirement security programs — Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.



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The National Committee is proud of our more than thirty year history of successfully preserving and strengthening our nation's retirement and health security programs. We look forward to another year of Standing Strong with our millions of National Committee members and supporters nationwide.



10 G Street, N.E.
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 216-0420
(800) 966-1935
www.ncpssm.org