

Winter 2011



Eastern Mass OWL Newsletter

Massachusetts Social Security Coalition

OWL, Mass Senior Action, Mass Assoc. of Older American, and AARP called a meeting of advocates and interested elder organizations to discuss the proposed cuts to Social Security issued by President Obama's Commission on Deficit reduction. On December 7th, 14 different organizations met and agreed that we should work together to oppose cuts in benefits being proposed by the commission. Points made during the meeting included the need for grass-roots support with in Massachusetts, tying the recommendations to the impact on Massachusetts including loss of elder spending power, higher cost of living in Massachusetts, and the large number of state and local employees who do not pay into Social Security. The group will reconvene in January to discuss action steps. OWL members interested in being part of the group, please contact Ellen Bruce at ellen.bruce@umb.edu.



-Ellen Bruce

Update: 2011-2012 Paid Sick Days Legislation



The Mass Paid Sick Leave Coalition is gearing up for 187th Legislative session. A spirited Paid Sick Days strategy session was held on Dec.9th to both reach out to new potential partners and sponsoring organizations and to think

about the strategy of the campaign for the 2011-2012 Legislative session.

The momentum is building. On December 16th Ellen Wallace, a coordinator for the Coalition, announced that she will be taking a year leave of absence from Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) to work for United Auto Workers (UAW) and Elizabeth Toulan will taking over as Mass Paid Leave Coalition coordinator on behalf of GBLS. Ellen has done a terrific job as coordinator, happily she will continue to attend meetings from her position at UAW and we welcome Elizabeth. The immediate goal of the coalition is to recruit legislators, new and returning, to co-sponsor the bill. We lost 18 co-sponsors through attrition and the election. The final date for new bill submission is January 21st. A Paid Sick Days event

Calendar



Come learn about A Matter of Balance, Successful Eating for Older Adults, and the My Life, My Health programs, **January 11th, 2011, 9:30-10am - General Meeting and 10-11am - Presentation** at Samaritans Inc, 41 West St., 4th floor, Boston, MA 02111 (Walking distance of the Park St Station).

Please join us on **Thursday, January 13, 2011, at 11am** in State House room A-1 for our State House event "*Orange you glad you have paid sick days? Don't you wish everyone did?*" sponsored by the Mass Paid Leave Coalition and our national partner, MomsRising, State House room A-1 is just one flight up from the Bowdoin Street entrance to the State House. We'll be distributing oranges.

Next Chapter meeting: **Thursday, January 20, 2011, noon to 1pm** in room w-3-99 at UMass Boston Wheatley Building.

"Orange you glad you have Paid Sick Days. Don't you wish everyone did?" will be held at the State House on January 13th from 11am -2pm. People will be gathering at 11am in State House. Room A-1. Come join the rally, your support is important in signing up as many co-sponsors as possible.

Work/family balance continues to be such a vital issue for OWL to support.

-Joan Ditzion, OWL liaison to the Paid Sick Leave Coalition

Presentation: The Healthy Aging Promotion Program

The Boston Mental Health and Aging Coalition presents: "The Healthy Aging Promotion Programs"

Would your agency like to:

- Increase community recognition?
- Enhance fund-raising capabilities through proven outcomes?
- Increase client's confidence in managing their health?

If yes, then come learn about A Matter of Balance, Successful Eating for Older Adults, and the My Life, My Health programs.

When: January 11th, 2011, 9:30-10am - General Meeting & 10-11am - Presentation

Where: Samaritans Inc, 41 West St., 4th floor, Boston, MA 02111 (Walking distance of the Park St Station)

About Your Presenters:

Patricia O'Flynn is a Certified Wellness Coach, Personal Trainer
Susan Kale is the Aging and Mental Health Director at MAOA
Patricia and Susan are certified in several healthy aging programs

To RSVP for this Presentation please contact: Patricia O'Flynn
Boston Mental Health and Aging Coalition
Work: (617)536-2460 x5521
Cell: (508)472-7900
Email: poflynn@samaritanshope.org

Deficit Committee Proposal: Social Security Recommendations



Last year, President Obama appointed a bipartisan National Commission to propose recommendations which would improve the national fiscal situation. It is estimated that the U.S. government debt is 92.7 percent of gross domestic product. The Commission's report, found at http://www.fiscalcommission.gov/sites/fiscalcommission.gov/files/document/20100623_FiscalCommission_Report.pdf, relies primarily on cuts in benefits, programs, and services. In addition to the deficit, the Commission made a number of suggestions to change Social Security so it does not contribute to the national deficit.

Social Security proposed changes included raising the retirement age. The proposal calls for a gradual increase of the retirement age leading to 2075 to index retirement ages with life expectancy. Another problem is the actuarial living formula used which would reduce future benefits for both current retirees and future retirees. The Deficit Commission proposal, which OWL might support, but it is important to note the minimum benefit is for low-income/full-career workers-very young men who have taken time away from work for caregiving responsibilities.

-Lorilei Michaud Richardson & Ellen Bruce

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