



MiARA SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

MiARA June General Meeting A Huge Success

A successful General Meeting of the Michigan Alliance of Retired Americans was held in Madison Heights on June 13, 2012.

Charles Robinson, who works for State Senator Vincent Gregory, gave the audience a report on recent State Legislative Bills that concern ARA members. Charles' report centered on SB 1040, a Bill that changes much of the public worker's retirement system. He reminded listeners that it is imperative we turn out the vote in the primary and November elections.

Mike Stone, from UAW Region 1, spoke on the drive to collect signatures on petitions that will place the Protect our Jobs Amendment to the State Constitution on the November ballot. In addition, Mike spoke about the proposal to eliminate the Emergency Manager Law and the need to make sure that Michigan does not become a Right to Work (for less pay) State.

Highlighting the program was an informative talk from Mark Brewer, Chair of the Michigan Democratic Party. Mark discussed the ballot proposals, Health Care legislation, the Michigan Supreme Court Race, the State House election, Debbie Stabenow's reelection to the United States Senate and the need to reelect President Obama.

Other speakers included; Sam Burnette, from the National ARA, who emphasized the need for a united front to ward off the attacks on pensions, social security, and education; Eva Dominguey, also from the National ARA, who reported on the Patient and Affordable Care Act and the Ryan Budget Proposal; and Amy Chapman, from the SEIU, who asked for support collecting signatures on petitions to place the Citizens for Affordable Home Care on the November ballot. Amy said that, if passed, this proposal will benefit seniors by insuring safe home health care.

President Long adjourned the meeting with a reminder of the importance of the November election. He urged attendees to work hard and support candidates who fight for issues that benefit retirees.

Next General Meeting

September 12, 2012

11:00 A.M.

MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL BLDG.

**1216 Kendale Blvd. East Lansing
MI 48826**

Lunch Provided

MEET YOUR PRESIDENT

President Dick Long

Dick Long was elected President of the Michigan Chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans at the March 30, 2012, Convention.

President Long has been a political activist for most of his forty-seven years with the United Auto Workers Union.

Recently, Dick retired after forty-eight years of service with General Motors Corporation. While working at GM, he entered the Electrical Apprentices Program in 1967 and received his Journeyman's Card in 1971. He attended General Motors Institute to study Drafting and Design, and has an Associate's Degree in Applied Science from Oakland University. Between 1982

and 1985, he attended Oakland University's Ken Morris Labor Studies Program.

Richard has been married to Jackie Long for 47 years. They love to visit with their three children and six grandchildren. Long is an active golfer and likes to go hunting when he can find time. He is active in the Waterford community, volunteering to help local school basketball teams as timekeeper, referee and coach. Long has served on both the Oakland Community College Apprentice Advisory Committee and the Skills Trade Advisory Committee.



Politics have been a part of Dick's agenda for many years. From 2000 until his retirement in 2009, Dick was Director of the UAW National Community Action Program (CAP.) His responsibilities included oversight of national, state and local

political campaign fundraising and legislative strategy. Between 1998 and 2009, he was Administrative Assistant to UAW Presidents Steve Yokich and Ron Gettelfinger.

Richard's political involvement is not limited to his union. He has been a Precinct Delegate for 18 years. Also, he is on the Executive Board of the Michigan Democratic Party, the Board of the Oakland County Democratic Party, Vice-Chair of the Eleventh Congressional District Democratic Party, and a member of both the MDP Steering Committee and the MDP Board of Directors.

MiARA is fortunate to have Dick Long as president of our Michigan Chapter. He brings years of experience to the organization and his leadership will see to it that MiARA continues to grow.

Be Smart about ALEC

The Mission of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) “is to advance the Jeffersonian principles of free markets, limited government, federalism and individual liberty for Americans.” ALEC’s emphasis seems to be on limited government, except when government intervention can be used to promote corporate interests.

ALEC is not just another conservative advocacy outfit. According to Progress Michigan, an estimated ninety-eight percent of their funding comes from big corporations, not grass roots members. Corporate lobbyists write “Model Legislation” and then send these “Bills” to legislators in state capitals around the country. This includes some Republicans in Lansing, several of whom were found to be paying their ALEC dues with taxpayer funds.

Typical benefactors from ALEC include: ALTRIA/Philip Morris, who receives a tax break for “moist tobacco,” which allows flavored tobacco to attract young users; health insurance companies, such as Humana and United Healthcare, who benefit from Bills such as the Health Savings Account Bill that was passed

in Wisconsin; Corrections Corporation of America, who benefits from anti-immigration legislation introduced in Arizona; and large education corporations that benefit from ALEC’s interest in privatizing public schools.

Many conservative politicians find multiple ways to benefit from ALEC, which provides legislators and their families an all-expense paid vacation to attend its yearly convention. Business at the convention lasts about one day. The watchdog group, ALEC Exposed, reported that up to a quarter of a million dollars has been spent on childcare alone, so parents can enjoy their free time at these gatherings. At the end of these “vacations,” Congressional members receive “Bills” in a form ready to present to their state legislative bodies when they return home.

Some Republican politicians in Lansing, who receive support from ALEC, have shown more interest in protecting their corporate backers than they are in creating jobs or voting to bring about real reforms that will insure a bright economy for Michigan.

There are steps Progressives can take to counter ALEC’s influence. These include being on

the alert for ALEC's publications and articles, and watching for legislation that favors corporations. Let your representatives know that ALEC is not a friend. Write to the newspapers to let them know that you don't support ALEC's agenda.

**Remember: ALEC is not SMART
and ALEC is not your friend**

Edited By: Jack and Marylene Schneider