

# The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

The Monthly Publication of  
**PSARA EDUCATION FUND**  
"Uniting Generations for a Secure Future"

Vol XXXIV, No 6

June 2019

*"Climate change is real, the science is sound and the solutions are available. If I told Trump that Mueller thinks climate change is a hoax, we'd be well on our way."*

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC)

## Join Us for Our Summer Potluck and Membership Meeting! Thursday, June 20, at the Greenwood Senior Center.

State Representative and PSARA member Nicole Macri will be one of the featured speakers at our summer membership meeting. Nicole was elected in 2016 and represents the 43rd Legislative District. She will give us an end-of-session wrap-up on the results of the 2019 legislative session and her work on health care and housing. We will also be saying thank you for her work on the Long-Term Care Trust Act.

We also have two youth activists from the Sunrise Movement in Seattle. Sunrise is an activist effort by young people to stop climate change and create millions of good jobs in the process. They are working to build support for the Green New Deal. Sunrise started in 2017, and hit the national scene when activists sat in at Speaker Pelosi's office right after the 2018 elections. They are building an army of young people to make climate change an urgent priority across America. The Sunrise motto is "We are not looking to the right or left. We look forward. Together, we will change this country and this world, sure as the sun rises each morning."

The two young activists that will speak are Harry Katz and Victoria Hsieh. Victoria is a junior at Bellevue High School, an artist, and a fervent environmental and social activist. She has helped organize the recent climate strikes, coordinated sustainability summits, and designed workshops for other youth. She's one of the coordinators of Sunrise Movement Seattle.

Harry is a college student who is focusing on environmental studies. He is passionate about ending pollution,



Our 2018 summer membership meeting featured lots of lively discussion.

Join us for this year's event.

(Photo: Garet Munger)

poverty, and racism. He's also one of the coordinators of Sunrise Movement Seattle.

The event begins at 11:30 a.m. with a silent auction and raffle. The lucky winner of our raffle this year will receive a \$250 gift certificate to the Tides Inn in beautiful Port Townsend. Tickets are \$5 each. At noon we'll begin the potluck. Speakers will begin at about 12:45 p.m., with time for Q & A following the presentations.

Plan to attend and bring a main dish, salad, fruit, dessert, or soft drink to share at our always fabulous potluck lunch.

The event will be held at the Greenwood Senior Center, 525 North 85th Street, Seattle. Metro routes #45 and #355 stop in front of the Greenwood Senior Center. Route #5 stops at 85th and Greenwood, requiring a short walk to the center. Plan your trip with Metro's Trip Planner.

Plan to arrive starting at 11:30 a.m. to browse the silent auction offerings and to purchase your raffle tickets and socialize. The money raised will support PSARA's work.

**To RSVP email [organizer@psara.org](mailto:organizer@psara.org) or call 206-254-4910.**

## The Retiree ADVOCATE

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# PSARA On the Move

PSARA/PSARA Education Fund Presents  
*Making Retirement Security Real for All*

## *In Two Locations:*

Thursday, May 30  
7:00-9:00 p.m.

Third Place Commons  
Town Center at Lake Forest Park  
17171 Bothell Way NE, Lake Forest Park

Sunday, June 9

2:00 p.m.

Olympic Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
1033 N. Barr Rd  
Sequim/ Port Angeles

Sequim Indivisible is the local sponsor. Co-sponsors include the 24th Legislative District Democrats, Washington CAN, and the Clallam County Democrats.

The PSARA Education Fund and PSARA are committed to educating and organizing a grassroots base to expand Social Security and Medicare. The movement is growing. Progress is also being made in Congress supporting expansion of Social Security and Medicare. New legislation has been introduced that explicitly advances this goal with more co-sponsors than ever.

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## Fighting CMS Cuts to Medicare Reimbursements

*By Tim Wheeler*

**R**eps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Elise Stefanik (R-NY) have introduced HR-2552, a bill to reverse cuts of 60 percent in Medicare reimbursements for satellite clinics set up by rural hospitals across the nation.

Kilmer visited the Olympic Medical Center (OMC) in Port Angeles on May 11 to unveil the bill aimed at blocking the cuts imposed last November by the Centers For Medicare Services (CMS). More than 50 rural hospitals nationwide have been hit by the so-called "site neutrality" scheme that reduces Medicare reimbursements from \$118.35 to \$47.35 per patient visit at any clinic more than 200 feet from the parent hospital. OMC's Sequim clinic will lose \$3.4 million annually, an estimated \$47 million over the decade. The clinic served 80,000 patients here last year (including this writer for an excruciating tooth ache on a weekend).

Said Kilmer, "The (Trump) Administration has put forward a policy that will hurt access to care in rural areas and kill jobs. Hospitals should be encouraged to bring their services closer to the people they care for, not be penalized for it."

*Tim Wheeler is a PSARA member and a veteran journalist for People's World.*

# August 3, A Celebration of Social Security and Medicare

By Robby Stern

Social Security turns 84 in 2019; Medicare turns 54! The two social insurance programs have made the lives of tens of millions more secure for decades. There will be a celebration of Social Security and Medicare on Saturday, August 3, at 12:30 p.m. in Westlake Park, downtown Seattle. The programs and those who helped to create them will be honored.

The economic realities of income inequality in 21st Century America require expansion of the programs. Candidates in the 2020 election will be judged by where they stand in protecting and expanding Social Security and Medicare.

During the 2016 campaign, the occupant of the White House promised he would protect Social Security and Medicare. But once elected, his budget proposals forwarded to Congress contain very significant cuts to these vital programs.

A grassroots movement is building support around the country to not only protect these social insurance programs, but to improve and expand them. Presidential candidates Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris, and Cory Booker are supporting expansion of Social Security.

Unfortunately, leading contender, Joe Biden, and candidate Sen. Amy Klobuchar support policies that would lead to cuts to the program. Former Vice President Biden has supported proposals to raise the age of eligibility and both Biden and Senator Klobuchar publicly support greater means testing.

In 2019, several bills have been introduced in Congress and have received support from a growing number of members of Congress. Some examples include the Social Security 2100 Act, H.R. 860 & S. 269, which partially scraps the cap by subjecting earning above \$400,000 to the payroll tax. It raises benefits by switching to the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E) to



determine annual cost of living increases. It also boosts benefits for all Social Security beneficiaries by approximately \$65 per month, raises the minimum benefit by 125 percent and raises the threshold for taxation of benefits. It has 206 co-sponsors in the House and was recently introduced in the Senate.

Sen. Sanders and Rep. Fazio, from Oregon, introduced an even more progressive bill, the Social Security Expansion Act, H.R. 1170 and S. 478. It subjects earned and unearned income above \$250,000 to the payroll tax. It switches to the CPI-E, boosts benefits by approximately \$65 per month and raises the minimum benefit by 125 percent.

There are other bills that have been introduced that increase benefits or lift the cap. While none of these bills will become law while the Republicans are the majority in the Senate, the discussion of the necessity of protecting and expanding Social Security is much more present than it has ever been.

On the Medicare front, Senators Warren, Sanders, and Harris support improved Medicare for All as a government-run public plan, and Senator Sanders has introduced a Medicare for All bill in the Senate. PSARA member Rep. Pramila Jayapal introduced

the Medicare for All Act of 2019, H.R. 1384. The bill had the first hearing in Congress ever held on Medicare for All in the Rules Committee. Additionally, committee hearings are planned in the House Budget Committee and House Ways and Means Committee. With 108 co-sponsors, this legislation will benefit all generations. For seniors, it is important to note that the legislation mandates coverage of dental, vision, hearing, and long-term care services.

On August 3, Rep. Jayapal and Washington State Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer April Sims will speak and also serve as masters of ceremony. These two dynamic leaders will set the tone for the celebration. Senators Sanders, Warren, and Harris have been invited to participate. We have also invited Nancy Altman, President of Social Security Works, and Larry Brown, President of the Washington State Labor Council, to participate as speakers.

Protection and expansion of Social Security and Medicare can and should be major issues in the 2020 election. The anniversary celebration in Seattle will help to elevate that discussion.

*Robby Stern is Chair of Social Security Works Washington and President of the PSARA Education Fund.*

# Where's the Future of Clean Energy? Right Here in Washington

By Larry Brown and Scott Farris (reprinted from *The Seattle Times*, April 24)

Climate change and our efforts to address it are among the most significant political struggles of our time. The stories we read about climate change are intense — worsening extreme weather and related impacts like more frequent wildfires and subsequent smoke, partisan bickering and stagnation, and rising temperatures in more ways than one. How can we see through to the other side and imagine the clean-energy future we need not just to survive but thrive?

Imagining the future can be a big leap for us — we don't know what will happen and sometimes that scares us, too. Thankfully, the Washington State Legislature has approved and Gov. Jay Inslee is poised to sign landmark legislation to address our state's climate impact and build investments for a clean, healthy and livable future for all of us.

The foundation to transition our economy is 100% clean-electricity legislation. SB 5116 will ensure that all our state's electricity comes from 100% clean, efficient and affordable sources (like sun, wind and current hydro), phasing out coal by 2025. We're one of the best-positioned states to help lead the clean-energy transition across the nation and show how transitioning off fossil fuels is more than just a dream — it's possible, economically feasible and a launch point for new, good-paying, clean-energy jobs that contribute holistically to the lives of Washingtonians.

As we move to build and invest in new energy infrastructure to power our devices, our homes and our lives, this transition will also include a monumental investment in clean-energy jobs — manufacturing and erecting wind turbines and solar farms, retrofitting buildings for energy efficiency, researching advancing technology for our electric grid, building innovative ways to store clean energy at scale for a rainy or non-windy day, and providing support for all these industries.



**Scott Farris**

But one of the coolest things about clean energy is the variety of jobs. It's not just folks installing solar panels, but also bookkeepers, local manufacturers, electrical workers, researchers and so many more — a whole variety of jobs like we have now in our workforce, but based on a clean, not fossil-based economy.

Research shows investments in renewable and energy efficiency infrastructure create three times more jobs than investments in fossil-fuel infrastructure. These jobs are good jobs, built to last, and can benefit everyone statewide. According to E2, a national, nonpartisan group of business leaders, investors and professionals, nearly 83,000 Washingtonians work in clean-energy and related industries, including 8,500 in rural communities. As these jobs increase (we rank in the Top 10 nationwide), it's critical that we also invest in the workers in those jobs.

SB 5116 does that by prioritizing projects that pay workers a living wage; incorporate apprenticeships; prefer local, women, minority, and veteran businesses and workers; and encourage community workforce agreements in project development. Our growing



**Larry Brown**

renewable-energy economy can be one that combats climate change and deepens our societal commitment to a fairer, more just economy.

Imagining a Washington that benefits from transitioning our economy to clean energy is closer than we think. What does investing in 100% clean energy by 2045 hold for us? More clean energy in our communities. Healthier air and lower energy bills. Quieter cities with cleaner transportation. And jobs in our communities and in a clean-energy economy that is powering a livable future for all.

*Larry Brown is president of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, and a member of PSARA.*

*Scott Farris manages government and regulatory affairs in the western United States and Canada for EDP Renewables, the world's fourth-largest developer of renewable power, including on- and offshore wind, solar, and storage.*

*SB 5116 was passed by the Washington State legislature and signed into law by Governor Jay Inslee.*

# NAFTA 2.0 or USMCA: Pricy Meds and Mystery Meat

By Brent McFarlane

What, you may ask, is going on with the renegotiation of The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)? Although this has been almost invisible and less reported on in the news lately, the US Trade Representative and the Trump Administration will nonetheless be pushing to pass NAFTA 2.0, the US, Mexico, Canada Agreement (USMCA) this year if they can muster the votes. Based on what we do know about it, the agreement should be rejected. Here are just a few of the reasons why.

**Giveaways to big Pharma:** The USMCA would grant pharmaceutical firms new monopoly rights beyond the original NAFTA and WTO. People who have counted on "generic" brands for affordable medicines would see much longer waits for medicines to become generic with the new rules. Patent "evergreening" policies would provide additional monopoly protections for "new" uses, forms, and combinations of older medicines. ("Evergreening" means extending monopoly rights and easing patent standards to allow for keeping older medicines under monopoly control longer -- thus allowing corporations to continue charging higher prices.) Special marketing "exclusivity" periods mean that (in US, Mexico, and Canada) more people will pay higher prices or go without the medicines they need.

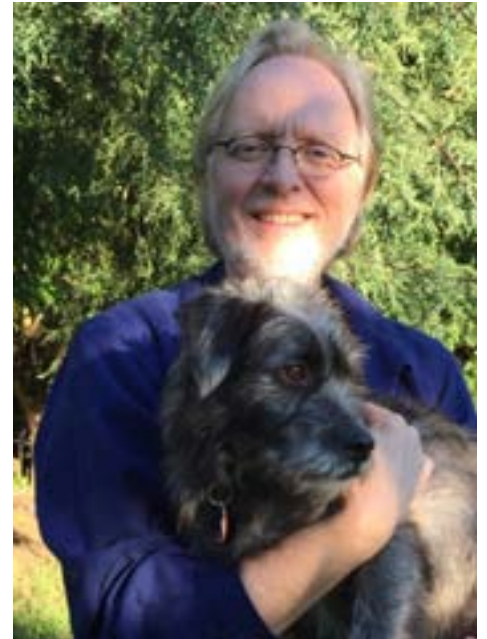
**Expensive Medicine:** This agreement would help keep prescription drug prices high and would export the worst of US policies to Mexico and Canada. The new NAFTA 2.0 text includes intellectual property and other exclusive provisions that extend beyond the original NAFTA terms. New language would require 10 years (or more) of government-granted "marketing exclusivity" for biologics, new and yet to be developed medicines -- such as cancer treatments. The Pharma industry-friendly 10-year exclusivity period

would lock the United States into its current (regressive) system keeping cancer medicine prices high. It would delay access to more affordable cancer treatments as they become available with new research. For some patients, such delays can mean the difference between life and death.

**Food insecurity:** Under USMCA, countries would be given new powers to challenge food safety inspectors when they stop food shipments. Equivalency terms in the agreement establish that food safety systems and inspections will be the same in all three countries—effectively reducing the level of food safety inspections at the border. A major concern in this regard would be the inability of governments, including the US, to sufficiently fund enforcement of existing food safety rules. As it stands, the US Food and Drug Administration has conducted less than one-third of the inspections of foreign facilities exporting into the US as required under the current national food safety law, partially due to a lack of funding. Note that the lack of funding is due to the budget priorities (political will) of elected governments.

Genetically Engineered food labeling or identifying product information would not be required by this agreement, nor would Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) for food products. Should it be a "trade violation" to let people know where and how their food is produced? Not COOL at all.

"Good Regulatory Practices" (GRP) chapters added throughout the USMCA may sound harmless at a glance but in fact have the opposite effect of enabling the lowest regulatory standard -- for all countries in the agreement. GRP language extends to 23 policy areas, including chemical safety risk assessment, meat inspection, aquaculture, and others. Instead of public agencies protecting public health and civil



*Brent McFarlane and Pepe, a rescue dog*

society, we'd get regulatory cooperation agreements taking place, between private industry and public organizations. The industries being regulated are setting the standards for regulation. This makes for an environment where the lowest common denominator sets the ceiling on regulation. There is strong business and investor pressure to "harmonize" standards down to the least regulated. We'd get a regulatory framework less burdensome to industry and in the process less accountable and less protective of the public. No, this is not the trade agreement that we need after 25 years of the first NAFTA.

In April, 2019, AFL-CIO Trade Specialist Celeste Drake stated (excerpt):

"This revised NAFTA needs fixing. Without better rules and swift and certain enforcement, Mexico's workers will

*Continued on Page 11*

# Fo' Real: Education is Real; So is Culture

Stories of Equity/Selfishness, Inclusion/Exclusion, History, Acculturation, Education

By Bob Shimabukuro

Thought of compartmentalizing these stories. But each story is about everything. We need to see this "problem" holistically. We're really talking about culture, which captures everything.

"If we had infinite energy power, we would be inundated with infinite junk." -- attributed to Carl Sagan (the Neil deGrasse Tyson of the 1950s-80s).

Competition breeds excellence. Not. Competition breeds cheating.

## Reed College, circa mid 1960s

"In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king. Write about this statement."

"Nothing comes to mind...except nothing," I wanted to write, but decided against it.

This was a "Sociology for Idiots" class that they had for non-majors who needed to pass a social science class.

So I wasn't taking it too seriously, but I needed it to pass for graduation. After 10-15 minutes of mindless thought, I began to notice other students completing the assignment and dropping off their papers into a little box on the professors' desk.

I remember thinking about it more seriously, noticing that some were writing long answers and some were going with two or three sentences. I couldn't read them but this was something they were taking seriously.

"Bob, don't worry about that," my anthropology major friend said. "He was just taking temperature on what kind of class he was teaching, beginning social science majors or ones just taking the class for credit. What did you end up answering?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"Well, it was really 'N-o-t-h-i-n-g.' If I ever find myself in that situation, I'll let you know." I really did well in K-12 by

figuring out what the "right" answers were. Here, the "right" answers are not readily available.

"That was a good answer. A 'right' answer. You're a novice looking for a credit. The serious ones have probably heard the question before."

## On Education

I couldn't help but be amused AND upset by a front-page article in the *Seattle Times* stated "SAT adding measures that rate hardship." I mean, really, "measuring hardships?" Take a meaningless test that does not really measure college preparedness and add meaningless points for hardships, well you certainly don't get more equity.

This reminds me of an Oregon Secretary of State, who when asked about affirmative action in her office answered, "We're doing really well, we even hired some people who weren't really qualified..." So much for affirmative action. This is not affirmative. It's condescending action.

## Friend Hava J, Bosnian refugee (c.2004-5)

"I don't understand Americans; they'd rather have fascism than communism. Yugoslavia was not a communist country, like all the news here said it was. President Tito was, but the country wasn't. He was elected. While he was president, I had free medical care, went to school free from elementary school thru graduate school (law school)."

## Bob Shimabukuro, 1963

Reed College closed the dorms for Christmas. Few remained anywhere near campus. Those who were living close to the college would rent their places to students staying in Portland. I rented a room from a couple who were going to Reed. I would wake up late in the morning, walk up to East Moreland,



Bob Shimabukuro

I think it was called, on Woodstock Avenue. Going uphill to buy some canned goods to eat, I saw a gas station. Sho's Mobil, think the sign said. Noted that the last name was Sakakibara. Decided to remember that name. Just past the gas/car repair station was a barber, so I thought I may as well get a haircut. I hadn't had one since I got to Portland. Sat there as he cut it short, and as he got his razor out to do the trimming, he said, in a very menacing way, "What do you think about the president being shot?"

Answered slowly "Uh, I didn't like that," hoping that was the 'correct' answer.

"Yeah, well, them colored folks, two presidents have been shot dead because of them."

"Two of them? And why 'because of them'?"

"Because they were friends with colored folks. That's why." And then he added, "Say. You got hair like them colored folks too, don't you?"

He was smirking, I could see in the mirror. But he was done.

I paid him and got out of there in a hurry. Didn't look back. I'm sure he was laughing hard.

Continued on Page 11

# Don't Miss PSARA's Summer Potluck and Membership Meeting!

Thursday, June 20  
Greenwood Senior Center  
525 North 85th Street, Seattle

11:30 a.m.: Silent Auction and Raffle  
Noon: Potluck and socializing  
12:45 p.m.: Speakers and Q&A

Featured Speakers:  
Rep. Nicole Macri (D-43)  
Harry Katz and Victoria Hsieh from the Sunrise Movement

*Metro routes #45 and #355 stop in front of the Greenwood Senior Center. Route #5 stops at 85th and Greenwood, requiring a short walk to the center. Plan your trip with Metro's Trip Planner.*

*Please RSVP to [organizer@psara.org](mailto:organizer@psara.org) and indicate how many will be coming and what dish you'll bring to share with other PSARA members.*



*You can always count on delicious food, lively conversation, and good company at PSARA's membership meetings.  
(Photos: Garet Munger)*

# PSARA's 2019 Legislative Scorecard

The 2019 legislative session saw a number of measures advocated by PSARA passed by the State House and Senate.

## Retirement Security:

PSARA supported efforts to create a state-based long-term care social insurance program to enhance retirement security. **The Long-Term Care Trust Act passed and has been signed into law!**

## State Budget:

PSARA supported a more progressive revenue system and legislation to increase transparency and accountability in the budget process including a progressive capital gains tax. **The House passed a capital gains tax, But the Senate failed to do so due to opposition by conservative Democratic Senators. Lawmakers did pass a more progressive real estate excise tax, which will be dedicated to education, and a B&O tax increase for large banks and certain professional businesses. Some tax exemptions were also eliminated.**

## Housing:

PSARA supported allocation of at least \$200 million to the Housing Trust Fund to provide a much larger stock of low-income housing for the growing population of seniors who rely in great part or solely on Social Security as their source of income, as well as for many Washington residents who are unable to afford adequate housing. **The legislature voted \$175 million for the Fund – the largest sum ever!**

PSARA supported raising the senior property tax exemption for lower-income seniors, simplifying it, and indexing it to inflation (SB 5160/HB 1320). **The legislature did increase the exemption and index it to inflation!** The form is still too complex, however.

PSARA supported changes to the landlord-tenant laws (SB 5600/HB 1453

and SB 5733/HB 1656), which presently allow for unjust evictions, unfair leases, and steep financial penalties charged to tenants, all of which can push low-income people, including seniors, into homelessness. **SB 5600 passed!** See Xochitl Maykovich's article on Page 10.

## Health Care:

PSARA believes that comprehensive, affordable health care is a fundamental human right. We support legislation that furthers the goal of universal health care coverage in Washington. PSARA member David Loud, our representative to the Health Care is a Human

Right Coalition, will have a special summary of health care legislation in next month's *Advocate*.

## Environmental Justice and Climate Change:

PSARA supported all efforts to achieve environmental justice to counter the disastrous effects of climate change. **The Clean Buildings Act (HB 1257) passed!** **HB 1112, banning hydrofluorocarbons passed!** **SB 5116, banning the use of coal for electricity generation by 2025 and mandating 100% clean energy for electricity generation by 2045, passed!**

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## The Barbed Wire

By Barbara Flye



Never doubt that a small group of Putin's oligarchs can change the outcome of a US election. Indeed.



# If You Understand Souvlakia You'll Understand International Trade

By Mike Andrew

The price of Greek souvlakia, the delicious bits of grilled pork on a skewer that are popular with tourists and Greeks alike, will increase 10-15 percent, the Association of Hellenic Meat Processing Industries (SEBEK) said on April 18.

That means that the cheap snack will soon cost three Euros, about \$3.36. Still not expensive by American standards, but a hefty price in a country where the median income is only 1,066 Euros or \$1,194 a month.

The reason for the price hike is a shortage of meat in Greece. Greeks eat about 300,000 tons of pork per year, of which two-thirds comes from other countries – Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands.

You might think that for a small, relatively poor country like Greece it would be “natural” to import food. But that’s not the case.

Let’s look at the recent history of Greek food. Sixty years ago, souvlakia would have been made with lamb, which was the meat commonly consumed in Greece for most of the 20th Century. In those days Greeks usually ate meat only a couple of times a week, fish a couple of times a week, plus cheese and lots of vegetable proteins from beans, lentils, and split peas.

The demand for meat really soared starting in the late 1950s, driven by demographic trends. People started to leave their villages and settle in Athens, meaning they started to buy all their food rather than producing most of it themselves. And people had money to spend on meat, which would have been a luxury during the ‘40s (the German occupation) and early ‘50s (the aftermath of the Greek Civil War).

This meant that meat production had to become more industrialized to meet the rising demand. And that, in turn, meant that people had to eat pork instead of lamb. Sheep don’t thrive in industrial feed lots, but pigs tolerate them despite the hardships. Lamb now



is reserved for special occasions – weddings and Easter – and pork is the meat used for everyday dishes like souvlakia.

Even with these changes in eating habits, Greece managed to meet its own food needs.

In 1980, prior to entering the European Economic Community, Greece produced 85 percent of the pork its people consumed and 66 percent of the beef. In other words, Greece was once almost entirely self-sufficient in meat production, but today it’s totally dependent on imports from Northern Europe.

How did that happen?

When Greece joined the EU (European Union), it agreed to the “Common Agricultural Policy,” which directs Northern European countries to produce meat and dairy products and Southern countries to concentrate on agricultural products – in Greece’s case olive oil, fruits, and vegetables.

Unfortunately for Greece, the value of its agricultural exports to the EU do not equal the value of the meat it imports, so the country – already devastated by EU-imposed austerity policies – bleeds money every time Greeks buy common food items like souvlakia.

Worse still, the fruits and vegetables Greece produces in abundance are

destined for export to Northern Europe, meaning that Greece has to import the same kinds of fruits and vegetables to feed its own people.

For example, Greece imports 3 million Euros worth of oranges, 19 million Euros worth of lemons, 18 million Euros worth of apples, and 77 million Euros worth of potatoes, all of which grow readily in Greece.

Although Greece has been especially badly handled by the EU, every international trade treaty fosters divisions of labor like that. Some are explicitly spelled out in instruments like the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy, and some are merely implicit. The division of labor that sends manufacturing jobs to Latin America or Asia and leaves tech and service sector jobs in the US is an example of the implicit variety.

On the surface it might seem like this the “natural” outcome of economic laws that are not susceptible to human intervention, but in reality it’s a policy outcome – a deliberate choice made by people in positions of power.

This outcome is not to the benefit of poorer countries like Greece, and it’s not to the benefit of working people anywhere. This is something to think about as we chew on our souvlakia.

# Victory! Legislature Passes Eviction Reform

By Xochitl Maykovich

After a year of organizing from the community, including groups like Washington CAN, PSARA, and the Housing Justice Project, the Washington State Legislature passed SB 5600, which reforms the eviction process. This legislation will help tenants stay housed and avoid eviction.

Previously, if a tenant was late on rent, the landlord would give the tenant a three-day Pay Or Vacate Notice. If the tenant did not pay the back rent in this time period, the landlord could proceed with the eviction. The landlord did not have to accept rent after the three-day Pay Or Vacate Notice and could still evict the tenant. Landlords could charge the tenant for the attorney's fees accrued by the landlord. Judges did not have discretion to consider the tenant's circumstances, such as a medical emergency or sudden

portionately impacted by eviction. Seniors were not immune to the eviction crisis: in 2017 the oldest tenant evicted was 85 years-old.

Because the eviction process pushed people into homelessness after one emergency, tenants organized to push for reform. Senator Patty Kuderer (D-48) and Representative Nicole Macri (D-43) responded by introducing legislation to reform the eviction process. The legislation that passed makes several drastic improvements for tenants, such as:

The three-day Pay Or Vacate Notice is extended to 14 days.

Judges have discretion to order payment plans or other alternatives to eviction.

There are limitations on landlords charging tenants for their attorney's fees.



Xochitl Maykovich

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***SB 5600 creates a more equitable and humane eviction process. Most tenants will be able to avoid eviction because they will have enough time to find rental assistance and there are limitations on the fees landlords can charge.***

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job loss. Essentially, if the tenant was behind in rent, regardless of the reason or how much, landlords could evict the tenant. Landlords could evict tenants for any financial costs, like late fees. The overall process could take as little as three weeks.

As detailed in *Losing Home: The Human Cost of Eviction*, a report authored by the Seattle Women's Commission and the King County Bar Association Housing Justice Project, Washington's previous eviction process desperately needed reform. The leading reason tenants faced eviction was for falling behind a month or less on rent. Most evicted tenants fell into homelessness, and communities of color were dispro-

Landlord's can't evict for only non-rent charges, and all payments made to the landlord are applied to rent first.

One of the biggest reforms is the reinstatement of tenancy process. Previously, a tenant with a termed lease could save their tenancy if they paid all of the rent, attorney's fees, court costs, and late fees within five days after receiving a judgment. Month-to-month tenants did not have this option. Because these costs are so high, most tenants could never really use this reinstatement process.

But, with SB 5600, more tenants will be able to save their tenancy with the reinstatement process. Landlords now

have to accept payments from the tenant, even after the 14-day notice has expired. During the 14-day notice period, tenants only need to pay rent to save the tenancy. After that notice period is up, the tenant needs to pay rent and a late fee up to \$75 (if late fees are in the lease) to save the tenancy. If the eviction case is filed, the tenant needs to pay for the rent, late fee up to \$75, and court costs incurred. When the judgment is awarded, the tenant needs to pay rent, late fee up to \$75, court costs incurred, and attorney's fees that are awarded by the court (which are limited).

This new legislation creates a more equitable and humane eviction process. We anticipate that most tenants will be able to avoid eviction because they will have enough time to find rental assistance, and there are limitations on the fees landlords can charge. Everyone who reached out to their legislators to support this legislation should know they had a hand in passing legislation that will fight homelessness in our community!

*Xochitl Maykovich is Organizing Director at Washington CAN! and a member of PSARA.*

## NAFTA 2.0

Continued from Page 5

continue to face threats and violence when trying to join an independent union. Without a union and a contract, Mexico's workers will continue to make wages of \$2 per hour or less. If the new rules allow corporate CEOs to continue to close shop in the US and move to Mexico in pursuit of low wages and weak labor and environmental standards, the renegotiation will have been a failure.

"And some of the revised deal's rules are even worse than the current NAFTA, including monopoly rights for pharmaceutical corporations that will keep drug prices sky high and new rules that will undermine public interest protections, such as workplace safety.

"Rather than accepting that this is the best that the three countries can do, we're urging the parties to go back to the table to fight for an ironclad agreement that working people can endorse and be proud of. Let's get a deal that puts families and communities first."

Sources: Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy, ReplaceNAFTA.org, Public Citizen, AFL-CIO.

*Brent McFarlane is a SPEEA member and a member of PSARA.*

## Fo' Real

Continued from Page 6

I walked past Sho's on the way back. Wondered how he got along with his neighbor. Well, he didn't have curly hair. I can't remember having a white male barber cut my hair since.

### Sharing Power

Let's stop talking about diversity. Diversity is just a sideshow for not doing anything. We need to ensure that the non-majority White population will accept the fact that the power must be shared. That requires replacing the 500-year fake narrative/history of white supremacy.

As you can tell, I don't like slogans like "Make America Great Again" or "Nothing's Wrong With America."

What we really need is the Strong Underclass that's been doing the heavy weight for millennia.

And if you've been reading this column, you know who I'm referring to, the women of color. They have carried us on through the worst of times.

*Bob Shimabukuro is Associate Editor of the Advocate and Co-Chair of PSARA's Race and Gender Equity Committee.*

## Proofreader Wanted

By Amy Davis

The *Retiree Advocate* seeks another proofreader to join our small copy-editing team. If you are someone who loves to spot typos, has an eye for adding and dropping commas, and is agile with hyphens and dashes, then this may be the job for you.

The proofing team meets one morning each month for several hours at the PSARA office. Mike Andrew will send you the draft issue the previous day, so you'll have time to read it over and make corrections. We generally begin at 8:00 or 9:00 a.m.

Our job is to clean up errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling and make sure the articles read clearly. We have a great time doing it.

If this sounds enjoyable to you, please consider joining us. Even if you can only come occasionally, we'd still like to talk to you.

Perks include getting to preview the *Advocate* before anyone else does, working closely with a dynamite team, and best of all, the chance to make an important contribution to the *Advocate*, better known as the best non-award-winning newsletter in the country.

If interested, or for more information, please contact *Advocate* editor Mike Andrew at [organizer@psara.org](mailto:organizer@psara.org)

## Join PSARA for LGBT Pride

**Saturday, June 1**  
**Burien Town Square Park**  
**480 SW 152nd St, Burien.**  
**Look for the PSARA booth.**

**Sunday, June 30**  
**Gather on 4th Ave in Downtown**  
**Seattle and march to**  
**Seattle Center.**

**Look for more details in your**  
**email in-box.**

## To Renew or Donate

PSARA Education Fund  
321 16th Avenue S, Seattle WA 98144

- Basic contribution: \$20
- Limited income/living lightly: \$15 or whatever you can afford
- Supporting: \$50  New contributor
- Sponsoring: \$100 or more  Renewing contributor

Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Meetings and Events

**Making Retirement Security Real for All:** 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., Thursday, May 30, Third Place Commons, Town Center at Lake Forest Park, 17171 Bothell Way NE, Lake Forest Park. Presentation and interactive discussion on Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and Long-Term Care. All are welcome.

**Burien Pride:** 10:00 a.m., Saturday, June 1, Burien Town Square Park, 480 SW 152nd St, Burien. Look for the PSARA booth.

**West Seattle Hot Topics for Seniors & Senior Wannabes:** Noon – 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 5, Southwest Library, 9010 35th Ave SW, Seattle, (35th & Henderson). Topic: *Buy Local/Eat Local Movement*. Brown bag lunch.

**PSARA Climate and Environmental Justice Committee:** 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Thursday, June 6, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave S, Seattle. All are welcome.

**PSARA Government Relations Committee:** Noon – 1:30 p.m., Thursday, June 6, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave S, Seattle. All are welcome.

**Making Retirement Security Real for All:** 2:00 p.m., Sunday, June 9, Olympic Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1033 N Barr Rd, Sequim/Port Angeles. All are welcome.

**PSARA Fundraising Committee:** 11:00 a.m. - Noon, Monday, June 10, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

**PSARA Education Committee:** 2 p.m., Tuesday, June 11, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

**PSARA Summer Potluck & Membership Meeting:** 11:30 a.m., raffle & silent auction; Noon, potluck; 12:45 p.m., speakers. Thursday, June 20, Greenwood Senior Center, 525 N 85th St, Seattle. RSVP to [organizer@psara.org](mailto:organizer@psara.org).

**Seattle Pride Parade:** 11:00 a.m., Sunday, June 30, Gather on 4th Ave in Downtown Seattle and march to Seattle Center. Details to follow.

**Save the Date: PSARA BBQ.** Saturday, September 14, 2821 2nd Ave, Seattle, Beaumont Room. Details in future issues of the *Advocate*.