

# The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

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

Vol XXXIV, No 11

November 2019

**Big Pharma Spends  
Big Money to Torpedo  
HR 3**

Page 5

## **Reserve Your Place Now for PSARA's Legislative Conference November 18, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.**

**P**SARA's annual legislative conference will be Monday, November 18, from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. in Hall 1 of the Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 1st Avenue, Seattle. This year we have invited Laurie Jenkins, future Speaker of the State House, as our keynote speaker. We'll also hear from our lobbyist, Pam Crone.

Last year we won victories on a number of bills that benefit seniors, including the Long-Term Care Trust Act. At our legislative conference we'll sum up our gains and prepare for the new legislative session, beginning in January.

As part of our preparation, we'll discuss PSARA's 2020 Legislative Agenda, the list of issues we'll be pursuing in Olympia.

The broad outlines of our legislative agenda remain the same as last year:

- Housing/Homelessness. We will advocate for changes to landlord-tenant laws to enhance renters' rights. We also support repeal of the 1981 law that prohibits cities from enacting rent control.
- Health Care. PSARA will continue our support for the Washington Health Security Trust, and we'll push for legislation to control prescription drug prices.
- State Budget. We support a capital gains tax and the elimination of tax exemptions that have no demonstrated public benefit.
- Retirement Security. We will advocate for a state social insurance program to enhance retirement security.
- Climate Justice. We support the Green New Deal, legislation to ensure equity in response to climate change,

and state legislation for clean fuel standards.

- Economic Justice. We support creation of a state bank.

After discussing our 2020 Legislative Agenda, we'll break up into groups by legislative district and plan for meetings with our elected representatives.

Join us on November 18 to prepare for the new legislative session. For more details on PSARA's Legislative Conference, see Page 7.

**Reserve your place now.  
RSVP to [organizer@psara.org](mailto:organizer@psara.org)  
or call 206-261-8110.**



*PSARA Co-President Tim Burns consults with David McLanahan and Mac McIntosh at a previous conference. (Photo: Garet Munger)*

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## **Save the Dates!**

**Sunday, November 10  
Time for a Green New Deal  
2:00 - 3:30 p.m.  
Olympic Unitarian  
Universalist Fellowship  
1033 N Barr Road, Sequim**

**Thursday, December 12  
PSARA Winter Potluck &  
Membership Meeting  
11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
UFCW 21 Joe Crump Hall  
5030 1st Avenue S, Seattle**

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## The Retiree ADVOCATE

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[www.psara.org](http://www.psara.org)  
or visit PSARA on Facebook

## Thanks to Tim Wheeler for a Wonderful Afternoon!



Author, activist, and musician Tim Wheeler helped make PSARA's October 12 book reading a huge success.

Tim read from his book *News From Rain Shadow Country*, a memoir of his childhood and young adulthood on a farm near Sequim.

Tim's stories ranged from a hilarious account of a malfunctioning manure pump (if you weren't at the reading we'll leave you to guess the details), to the time he hosted Barack Obama's father (and wisely refrained from showing him the manure pump).

Tim also talked about his time as a journalist, covering national politics for *The People's World* and the *People's Weekly World*.

After the reading, Tim broke out his autoharp and led us in songs, ending with a rousing chorus of Solidarity Forever.

Thank you to Tim for a wonderful afternoon.

## PSARA Education Fund End-of-Year-Donation

What a year it has been, and 2020 promises to be even more challenging. As you contemplate end-of-the-year donations either on Giving Tuesday or as a holiday charitable donation, please include the PSARA Education Fund in your charitable donations.

The PSARA Education Fund, a 501c3 nonprofit, produces this newsletter at a cost of approximately \$22,000 for twelve issues. The Education Fund has expanded financial support for educational forums that help clarify the issues at stake at both the federal and state levels. In the coming year, climate justice and preserving and expanding Medicare and Social Security will require a demand from the people. Education is the foundation for these demands.

We promise your donations will be used wisely to promote the common good.



Your donations help us to produce education events like this one in Gig Harbor (Photo: Garet Munger)

# Center For Medicare Advocacy Statement: *The President's Medicare Executive Order Expands Bias Toward Private Medicare Advantage Over Traditional Medicare*

Today the Trump Administration issued an Executive Order (EO) entitled "Protecting and Improving Medicare for Our Nation's Seniors." Since the President's speech announcing the EO lacked policy specifics, we looked to the administration's telephone press conference to discern the intentions behind the EO. As expressed by Administration officials on the call, the EO is continuing to promote private Medicare Advantage insurance plans over traditional Medicare. This is part of an ongoing drive to privatize the Medicare program.

In outlining some of the provisions of the EO during the press call, Secretary of Health and Human Services Azar stated a goal is to "ensure that, as much as we can, our Fee-for-Service Medicare program is not advantaged or promoted over Medicare Advantage with respect to its administration."

Referring to the traditional Medicare program as "fee-for-service," Secretary Azar responded: "So the executive order commissions us to examine all practices, regulations, guidance to **just make sure that we're not steering people into Fee-for-Service, as opposed to giving them a genuine choice of Medicare Advantage or Fee-for-Service.**" [Emphasis added].

He continued: "So we'll be looking at all of those issues: how does the enrollment process work when new people come in; how the annual enrollment process works; are we providing adequate information through the various plan-finder tools to ensure people can make informed choices, make sure there's no financial disincentive to being in MA versus Fee-for-Service. So really, across the board that's -- the executive order is the initiation of the process now of examining all of that [...]"

In fact, the Center for Medicare Advocacy (the Center) has documented that



this Administration has been ***promoting Medicare Advantage over traditional Medicare*** through various means, including the program's outreach and enrollment materials, marketing policies, and benefits.

### **Scales Already Tipped in Favor of Medicare Advantage**

The Center continues to draw attention to the Medicare Advantage (MA) program's growing imbalance with traditional Medicare. A number of legislative and regulatory policy changes have tipped the scales in favor of MA. For example, coverage expansions such as the ability to provide new supplemental benefits have been advanced in MA, but not in traditional Medicare. In recent years, this has been exacerbated by a concerted effort on the part of the Medicare program to steer beneficiaries toward enrollment in private MA plans rather than providing objective, neutral information about coverage options.

Despite provisions of the Affordable Care Act that reined in excessive overpayments to MA plans, there is still evidence that MA is costing the Medicare program more than traditional Medicare spends per individual, with mixed health outcomes.

At the very least, there must be payment parity between traditional Medicare and private MA plans. As we have stated elsewhere, wasteful spending on MA should be reinvested into the Medicare program to the benefit of ***all*** people with Medicare, not just those who choose to enroll in private plans.

### **The President Should Work to Improve Health Care for All Rather than Attacking Proposals to Expand Coverage**

Instead of focusing on policy proposals that would improve people's health care now, the President's speech announcing the EO relied on tired tropes about the threat of "socialism" without a hint of irony relating to the red scare tactics used to try to defeat the original passage of the Medicare program. As noted by the Washington Post's Health 202 in September 2018, "Medicare as it exists today – a government-run service for all elderly Americans – is the closest thing America has to socialized medicine. And there's nothing in Democratic proposals that indicate that expanding it would make the program less available for current recipients."

*Continued on Page 11*

# Meeting With Senator Murray on Women's Retirement Security

By Jessica Bonebright

PSARA and several other organizations were invited to meet with Senator Murray on Oct. 1 in Bellevue to discuss women's empowerment and retirement readiness. She is co-sponsor of the Women's Retirement Protection Act of 2019 (WRPA) S.975, which would expand access and add protections to retirement savings plans like 401(k)s. A study by the National Institute on Retirement Security found that women of retirement age typically have an income that is three-fourths that of men, and they are 80% more likely than men to be impoverished.

We had a one hour conversation, and I was able to share these thoughts as PSARA's representative. We were asked to share personal stories, so I described two people who left work before they intended and shared copies of the article "If You're Over 50, Chances Are the Decision to Leave a Job Won't be Yours" ([www.propublica.com](http://www.propublica.com), search for Peter Gosselin). It describes a study showing 56% of older workers were laid off or forced out of their longtime jobs. When personal reasons like poor health or family trouble were added, almost two-thirds of those studied were pushed out of regular work late in their careers before they intended to retire. Many women leave the workforce to care for aging parents or spouses. Care giving is a great value to our entire society, yet the burden falls heavily on women. Adding a caregiver credit to Social Security would relieve some of their burden.

Social Security is key to nearly all US seniors' financial security and is a top priority for PSARA. The Social Security 2100 Act, H.R.860, has 209 co-sponsors (all Democrats). It increases revenues and increases benefits, including changing to CPI-E (consumer price index for the elderly) to reflect rising healthcare expenses so many seniors face.

We're told by mainstream media that young people shouldn't count on Social Security. It's part of a strategy to gain acceptance for cuts. We can't let that happen. In 1983 Congress raised the full retirement age from 65 to 67, which



Sen. Patty Murray (center) and Jessica Bonebright (third from right).

equates to a 13% reduction in benefits for those born in 1960 or later – the total benefit cuts at that time were 23% including taxing benefits and delaying cost of living adjustments.

Republican proposals include raising full retirement age to 70 – which would effectively be a 20% cut to benefits when fully phased in. Compared to current retirees for whom the age was 65, it could be about a 33% reduction (13% + 20%) for today's young people many of whom are struggling with student loans and low wages. Working until age 70 is unrealistic for many reasons – especially for those working in physically demanding jobs. Today Social Security lifts over 300,000 Washington State seniors out of poverty. Imagine if benefits were cut by a third.

With nearly half of seniors of color depending on Social Security for 90% or more of household income, any benefit cuts would drive many into poverty. Instead we should "Scrap the Cap" to raise revenue by taxing the 5% highest income Americans at the same rate everyone else pays.

Compared to similar programs in other countries, Social Security replaces only 38% of pre-retirement income for the average worker who collects at full retirement age compared to an average of 53% for 34 advanced countries (from [oecd.org](http://oecd.org) "Pensions at a Glance"). Women's average social security benefit is just \$1,300 per month compared to \$1,630 for men.

PSARA's presentation "Making Retirement Security Real for Everyone" includes data such as bankruptcy rates among seniors doubling from 1991 to 2016 - increasing faster than other age groups. For most, it's due to falling income and medical expenses – while a large portion report struggling to help their children financially. We need to reverse these trends.

You can help by contacting PSARA to schedule a presentation of "Making Retirement Security Real for Everyone" to your faith or other community organization, or join PSARA's Education Committee to get involved in this work.

*Jessica Bonebright is Co-President of PSARA.*

# Big Pharma Spends Big Money to Torpedo HR 3

## What's Behind the Ads in the *Seattle Times*

By Mike Andrew and Robby Stern

If you read the *Seattle Times* you might have seen an ad on October 10 telling you to call Congresswoman Kim Schrier (D-8) and tell her to “stop HR 3!”

If you live in the 8th Congressional District, you might have gotten a slick mailer with the same information.

HR 3 is a bill in Congress that would:

- Limit drug prices to the International Drug Index,
- Limit drug price increases under Medicare Parts B and D,
- Cap out-of-pocket drug spending under Medicare, and
- Impose an excise tax on drug companies that refuse to negotiate prices.

In an October 17 committee hearing, Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal (D-7) successfully amended HR 3 to include extra protections against drug price spikes above the rate of inflation.

This would be good news for people who rely on prescription drugs or might in the future – in other words, all of us – but bad news for Big Pharma. And that's why the ads and mailers.

Sadly, the sponsors of the *Times* ads include some national labor leaders who have joined the pharmaceutical industry in opposing HR 3.

The outfit paying for the ads is called PILMA – Pharmaceutical Industry Labor-Management Association. If you look at their website, you'll see that their trustees include Big Pharma executives – that's exactly what you'd expect – but also national officers of many building trades and public safety unions.

Knowledgeable sources tell the *Advocate* that Big Pharma has promised that all their future construction will be built with union labor if the building trades unions join their fight to keep US drugs the most expensive in the world.

That's quite a concession for the pharmaceutical industry to make. According to the Center for Construction Research and Training, wages for union construction workers are on average

46 percent higher than for non-union workers (and the quality of the work is better).

Big Pharma is actually willing to spend that much to buy support for their profits? You bet! They can afford that much and more.

According to *Axios* reporter Bob Herman, pharmaceutical companies are among the most profitable in any industry in the world.

Let's look at the numbers. In the third quarter of 2018 alone, the health care industry made \$50 billion in profits worldwide. Just 10 companies accounted for half of that total – and of the 10, nine were drug companies.

Drug companies generated 23 percent of the health care industry's \$636 billion in revenue, but 63 percent of the total profits. That means drug company investors make a much higher return than those who put their money into insurance companies, for-profit hospitals, or drug retailers like Walgreens or CVS.

The single biggest profit-maker was Pfizer, with \$4.1 billion of profits in a single quarter. And sure enough, a Pfizer exec is vice chair of PILMA.

With profits like that at stake, no wonder they can afford to buy ads, send mailers, and also try to buy the support of some unions.

While the union leaders who lined up with PILMA may be well-meaning – they want to see their members work – they are being shortsighted.

Yes, their members might make some money today building new pharmaceutical plants, but what happens to them and their families tomorrow when they're sick and need medications?

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) estimates that the cost of prescription drugs will continue



*Big Pharma*

to increase more than 6 percent per year. That's more than three and a half times the rate of inflation. Over time – and not much time at that – increases in drug prices can eat up anything workers might have made building the next Pfizer plant.

HR 3 requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate lower prices for 250 of the most expensive drugs covered by Medicare. The legislation, according to the Congressional Budget Office, would reduce drug prices AND save Medicare \$345 billion over the next decade.

Taking a long-term view, HR 3 is good for everybody in this country, except for Big Pharma's top executives and investors.

Let's not let drug companies stand in the way of needed reforms. Tell your Congress person to support HR 3. If you are a union member, ask your union officers if your national union leadership supports the bill, and if they don't, ask why not.

# Congratulations to Community 2 Community on their 15th birthday

By Bob Shimabukuro

Rosalinda Guillen: We believe that another world is possible, and we are active participants with other popular people's movements. We strive to reclaim our humanity by redefining power in order to end settler colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy in their external and internalized forms. We need to welcome and honor those who have helped us because that is the way to build/create the community we want to live in.

Alice Ito: You can do a lot if you don't need to take credit for it.

But of course, someone else might claim it.

BS: always thought about this second line, but Rosalinda answered it beautifully.

RG: We need to acknowledge all the people who support me, so that they will continue to carry on the work.

That's what she was saying. And she called all the people who had supported her all these years to step forward. It's important, she said. And urged maybe a dozen more to come up to the stage.

\* \* \*

**Emma C**

Emma Catague: What dis mean?

BS2: We should start thinking about a title.

Emma C: How do you do that?

BS2: What do you think is the most important word in successful community organizing?



*Cindy Domingo, Rosalinda Guillen, Alice Ito, and Bob Shimabukuro*

Emma: What do you think?

\* \* \*

BS2: "Trust."

Bob : What did you learn from me?

Emma: No, I think "Passion."

NT: You said, never be a bridge. You'll get crushed. You never win.

"Organizing with Passion," it was.

So why are you trying bridge work now?

\* \* \*

**Norma Timbang**

Congratulations, Norma: "Passion," Bob. That's what you need to stay in this business.

Learned that from Bob S and Emma; Why?

BS2: I always thought you need anger and humor.

Sounds like "passion" to me.

Bob: That's the only thing I can do, know how to do.

Now I know why "passion" important to her. Get third way. Passion.

I cannot get angry. Then no can breathe. Maybe get my brain going again.

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

# PSARA Legislative Conference Monday, November 18

**1:00 - 3:00 p.m.**  
**Seattle Labor Temple, Hall 1**  
**2800 1st Avenue, Seattle**

Metro Route 1 to 1st & Broad; Routes 3, 4 to 3rd & Vine; Route 8 to Denny & Broad; Route 29 to 1st & Broad.

We have invited Rep. Laurie Jenkins, future Speaker of the State House of Representatives.

We will also hear from PSARA's lobbyist, Pam Crone



Join us to discuss PSARA's 2020 Legislative Agenda, meet with PSARA members from your legislative district, organize in-district meetings with your legislators, and plan for PSARA's Lobby Day in Olympia.

RSVP to [organizer@psara.org](mailto:organizer@psara.org) or 206-261-8110

# City Council Elections in SeaTac

By Rick Harwood

There is a lot going on in SeaTac! More than just the location of our regional international airport, the city of about 28,000 residents is in the throes of a struggle for political leadership between advocates for progressive change that represents the interests of the very diverse population versus those who prefer to maintain the status quo of more corporate and private property interests. Going into the 2019 election for four seats (out of a total of seven) on the SeaTac City Council, these issues have become the battleground in the contest that pits challengers against incumbents.

The most pressing issue in dispute in SeaTac has to do with affordable housing and city support for low-wage and fixed-income families and individuals. A study was conducted by a private consulting firm in the winter of 2017/2018 contracted by the City of SeaTac Parks, Community Programs and Services Department at the direction of the City Council. The study involved data analysis and direct engagement with the community through forums and individual interviews. The study found that the highest priority for future city services was "safe and affordable housing."

The City Council, in effect, rejected that recommendation. They chose to attempt to cancel their contract with the consulting firm and refused to allow the full report to be presented to an open meeting of the council.

The council has failed to prevent the eviction of over 100 families, mostly Latinx, living in the Firs Mobile Home Park by the property owner who wants to develop the site into another large hotel complex that would primarily serve SeaTac Airport users. Several of the council members have stated there is nothing they can do about the evictions because the owner of the property has a right to do whatever he wants with the property. In fact, the council could implement zoning restrictions that maintain the property for use only as a mobile home park.

Another mobile home park in SeaTac is facing a similar fate. The Bow Lake Es-



Rick Harwood

tates, a park of about 400 mobile homes, which is inhabited primarily by seniors living on fixed incomes, was recently purchased by a private investment and development corporation. This corporation has a history of purchasing properties for future redevelopment and has already increased rents at the park by \$100 or more a month. The residents are justifiably worried. Their personal investment in homes that they hoped would be affordable for the rest of their lives is now threatened. The current council members have shown no interest in taking any steps to protect these homeowners from displacement.

The city has several undeveloped properties that it could use to create more affordable housing, but the current council has made no such moves. They canceled negotiations with the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) for the sale of the lot where the old firehouse sits, which would have been developed into affordable housing.

Most recently, the current council approved the sale of the Bakaro Mall property that sits directly across International Boulevard South from the Tukwila light rail station. The previous city council purchased this property with the intent of developing it into a city center that would

include an international market of small businesses and affordable housing. The current council, several of whom have publicly stated that the city should not be in the business of owning and developing property, chose to sell the property and evict the 50 small businesses owned primarily by women of color. The development company that purchased the property intends to construct a building for almost 700 units of market-rate apartments along with space for new

small businesses. Again, the city rejected the idea that it could do anything other than sell off the property to the highest bidding corporate developer.

In addition, the City Council chose not to join an affordable housing consortium of small King County cities created by the King County Council Affordable Housing Task Force. Councilmember and Mayor Erin Sitterley stated that her reason for taking this position was that the benefits to the city do not outweigh the costs.

The current council has a history that reflects a lack of support for the very diverse population of SeaTac. The city's residents are more than half people of color with a large number of immigrants. In one of its earliest actions after being elected in 2015, the council appointed a new city manager. In January, 2016, it was revealed that this person requested that the city geographic information services staff conduct a study showing the residences of all Shiite and Sunni Muslims in the city. This was revealed in an investigation into harassment complaints lodged by another city employee. In that investigation it was reported that the city manager's intent was to address his "concerns about Muslims committing

*Continued on Page 10*

# WTO Protests, 20 years later

By Stan Sorscher

Many of us were part of history in November and December 1999, when activists and workers came from around the country to protest the WTO meeting in Seattle.

The entire city was caught off guard by huge rallies, dramatic marches, and very effective direct action that blocked diplomats, negotiators, and corporate lobbyists from the buildings where they were supposed to meet.

Peaceful demonstrators were tear-gassed, dragged off, and arrested. Downtown Seattle was paralyzed for days.

This was not a fight between trade and protectionism, no matter how often we see that in the press. No one is against trade. This was a protest against corporate-centric undemocratic, unaccountable rules for the global economy that would go badly for workers, communities, and the planet.

Trade policy is like any other policy. We can have good or bad policies for health care, education, transportation, and energy. Trade policy is no different.

We can have good trade policy that raises living standards generally, or we can have bad trade policy that weakens worker bargaining power, de-industrializes our economy, and moves millions of jobs out of our communities to low-wage countries where workers have no power. Bad trade deals block legitimate public policies that promote public health and protect our water, air, food, and ecosystems.

That was the message of the WTO protests in Seattle in 1999. That message was right in 1999, and is still right today. It's time for a new approach to globalization.

On December 7, 2019, labor unions, activists, and organizations from civil society will come back to Seattle for three events to mark the 20th anniversary of the 1999 protests.



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## WTO+20: Another World Is Possible

By Michael Righi

It was the mid-1990's. I was engaged with the Jubilee2000 campaign, working to get the debt of poor Global South countries cancelled, and to expose the role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in upholding debt bondage. Activists from South countries were well familiar with the dark side of "globalization".

Movements were growing in the North as well including: students against global inequality, labor unions against job and wage losses, communities of faith against global poverty, environmental activists against destructive trade rules. We all came together in a thrilling upsurge in Seattle in 1999, exposing corporate globalization as predatory and inhumane.

The Seattle WTO protests did not just spontaneously happen. They were organized with months of work and training. Today, we have intersecting crises of climate, inequality, racism and war. How do we confront these?

On November 30 local activists and organizations will gather at Seattle's Town Hall to honor the power of non-violent direct action through story-telling, trainings, and movement-building workshops. Activists who were part of the WTO protests will share stories and lessons learned from a movement which made history by successfully preventing the WTO - one of capitalism's most powerful global institutions - from further consolidating its power. We will hear from leaders of today's movements for justice: Washington farmworkers, indigenous leaders, youth, organizers for a Green New Deal.

**Saturday, November 30, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., doors open at 9:00 a.m.**

**Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101**

**For more information, and a more detailed schedule, go to [cagi.org](http://cagi.org).**

*Continued on Page 11*

*Michael Righi is a retired economics professor and a member of PSARA.*

## City Council Elections in SeaTac

Continued from Page 8

acts of terrorism” and to identify “radicalized Muslims” living in the city. The city manager resigned soon after the report was released, citing a lack of support for him by those on the City Council who had appointed him in the first place.

The challengers who are running for SeaTac City Council reflect the community’s diversity.

The candidates include:

**Senayet Negusse**, a 24-year-old dual language learner specialist with the Puget Sound Educational Service District and a daughter of Ethiopian immigrants;

**Mohamed Egal**, a social worker in the state DSHS providing employment assistance primarily in the Somali community, a parent of seven, and an immigrant from Somali who moved to the US 28 years ago and has lived in SeaTac for 11 years;

**Damiana Merryweather** has lived in SeaTac for 6 years, owns several small restaurants in Burien and White Center with her husband, and is the parent of two young children; and

**Takele Gobena**, an organizer with the Teamsters union, the parent of three young children, has lived in SeaTac since 2011.

There are slightly more than 13,000 registered voters in the city, but turnout for elections in the past few years has been below 30 percent. This can be attributed primarily to a lack of effort to reach out to all voters by previous council candidates. All four challengers and their supporters have been going door to door throughout the city to talk with voters.

Voter registration has been an additional focus, with many new residents and young people of voting age being targeted for registration. This election in SeaTac could result in significant progressive change that will benefit the under-represented and often ignored residents of the diverse community.

*Rick Harwood is a retired Principal at Highline Public Schools and a member of PSARA.*

## Protectors of the Salish Sea Call on Governor Inslee to Declare a Climate Emergency

By Bob Barnes

What began as a march from Puget Sound Energy’s Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plant in Tacoma to Olympia with a stop at the Environmental Protection Agency’s offices, has turned into an ongoing occupation at the State Capitol. The march kicked off on



September 20 to coincide

with the Global Climate Strike. The action was led by the Protectors of the Salish Sea, an indigenous environmental group that works to protect the lands and waters of the Salish Sea. They arrived at the Capitol four days later and, early that morning, set up four tarpees (tipis made from tarps) in front of the Legislative Building.

The Protectors came with four demands for Governor Inslee:

1. Declare a climate emergency in Washington State, which would enable state agencies to consider the climate impacts of their decisions and actions, as well as making it easier to access funds to help efforts to combat climate catastrophe and mitigate damage to communities affected by it.
2. Issue an executive order to halt all fossil fuel projects in the state. These include the LNG facility in Tacoma, methanol refinery in Kalama, Par Pacific Tar Sands Expansions Project, Puget Sound Pipeline Tar Sands Expansion, and the North Seattle Lateral Upgrade project.

3. Commit to convening a special session on climate change in the 2020 legislative session. Ensure that this session includes voices from youth, indigenous leaders, and other communities in Washington State who are disproportionately affected by climate change.

4. Honor treaty rights, which meeting the above demands would go a long way toward satisfying.

The hope was that Inslee, the professed “Green Governor,” would act on these demands or, at least, meet with the Protectors to discuss the demands. Instead, he was in New York urging other states to take action on climate change while, in the middle of the night, 70 heavily armed riot police raided the village and forcibly removed the Protectors and their tarpees.

The Protectors returned the next day. They called for a major action on October 5 and invited the Governor to meet with them at noon that day. Disappointingly, Inslee did not show up. The group plans to continue the occupation until their demands are met. They have had a presence on the Capitol grounds, once a native village and gathering place called Sta,chas, since then.

What can you do to help:

1. Call Governor Inslee at 360-902-4111 and urge him to declare a climate emergency;
2. Follow Native Daily Network & Protectors of the Salish Sea for updates and calls to action;
3. Stop by and show support at the Sta,chas Village site, also known as the Legislative Building on campus (416 Sid Snyder Ave SW, Olympia).

*Bob Barnes is Co-Chair of PSARA’s Climate and Environmental Justice Committee.*

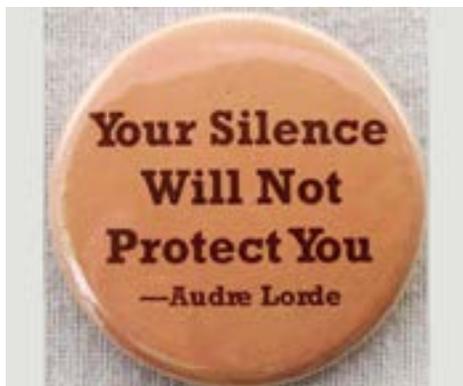
## Center for Medicare Advocacy Statement

Continued from Page 3

Further, as noted in today's *Health 202*, "the president will promise to strengthen Medicare Advantage as a way of improving health-care coverage for millions — even as his administration refuses to defend the Affordable Care Act in a high-stakes lawsuit in which a ruling is expected any day now."

Only about one-third of Medicare beneficiaries are enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans; the rest choose traditional Medicare. Proposals that only help those enrolled in private MA plans leave behind the vast majority of older adults and those with disabilities who rely on Medicare, while building a path to a private, HMO-like Medicare program. The Center for Medicare Advocacy has developed a Medicare Platform that outlines various proposals that would improve the program for all, including parity between traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans.

As Judith Stein, Executive Director of the Center for Medicare Advocacy, notes, "This Executive Order is designed to bolster the insurance industry by steering beneficiaries into private Medicare Advantage plans, at the expense of most beneficiaries and Medicare's future. If the Administration truly cares about improving access to Medicare and health care, it will work to improve quality coverage for *all* Medicare beneficiaries, including those in traditional Medicare."



## WTO Protests, 20 Years Later

Continued from Page 9

**Saturday, December 7:**

**Rally at 10:00 a.m. in Occidental Park, Pioneer Square,  
Interactive breakout sessions in the afternoon at Town Hall at 7th and Seneca, and  
Evening keynote with Nobel Prize economist Joseph Stiglitz at Town Hall.**

The morning rally will recreate the spirit of the protests. Organizers have invited leaders from the AFL-CIO; Mike Dolan a union trade specialist who played a major role organizing the protests in 1999; plus speakers from environmental and social justice groups.

The breakout sessions will look more closely at various policy areas.

The evening keynote speaker, Joseph Stiglitz, understands that we need a political system in parallel with our global economic system to manage globalization in a way that does as much for workers, communities, and the environment as it does for global corporations. Stiglitz was Chief Economist at the World Bank. He understands that global financial institutions like the WTO, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund serve the interests of investors, and puts workers around the world at a disadvantage.

Instead, we could start by saying the purpose of an economy is to improve economic well-being and raise living standards. To that end, government plays a legitimate role in dealing with the defining problems of our time, such as inequality, de-industrialization of our economy, and climate change.

We should have national strategies for education, health care, workforce training and lifelong learning, transportation and infrastructure, research and development, taxes, and strong protections for labor and the environment. If that becomes our domestic policy, we would need a new trade policy - one that reflects those new priorities.

The 20th anniversary events will come just as the presidential campaigns are heading into the caucus and primary season. The 20th anniversary events are well-timed to put presidential candidates on notice that we need a new approach to globalization.

*Stan Sorscher is a retired SPEEA member and a member of PSARA.*

## 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

**West Seattle Hot Topics for Seniors & Senior Wannabes:** Noon – 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 6, Southwest Library, 9010 35th Ave. SW, Seattle, (35th & Henderson). Topic: *Medicare Advantage – Stealth Privatization of Medicare?* Brown bag lunch.

**PSARA Climate and Environmental Justice Committee:** 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Thursday, November 7, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

**PSARA Government Relations Committee:** Noon – 1:30 p.m., Thursday, November 7, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

**Time for a Green New Deal:** 2:00 – 3:30 p.m., Sunday, November 10, Olympic Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1033

N Barr Road, Sequim. Bobby Righi, Co-Chair of PSARA's Climate and Environmental Justice Committee, presents a workshop on climate justice.

**PSARA Education Committee:** 2 p.m., Tuesday, November 12, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

**PSARA Southend Committee:** 1 p.m., Thursday, November 14, Burien Library, 400 SW 152nd St., Burien. Annual meeting and potluck. Please RSVP to [sawczuk@sawczuk-bmc.com](mailto:sawczuk@sawczuk-bmc.com) and bring something to share.

**PSARA Legislative Conference:** 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., Monday, November 18, Seattle Labor Temple, Hall 1, 2800 1st Ave., Seattle. For details see the article on Page 1.

**PSARA Whidbey Island Committee:** 6:30 - 8:00 p.m., Monday, November 18, 654 3rd St., Langley. Potluck and discussion of climate justice presentation.

**PSARA Fundraising Committee:** 11:00 a.m. - Noon, Tuesday, November 19, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

**PSARA Race and Gender Equity Committee:** 11 a.m.– Noon, Thursday, November 21, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

**PSARA Executive Board:** 12:30 p.m. – 3 p.m., Thursday, November 21, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.