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March 2026 Newsletter



Welcome to our new subscribers!

Dear Subscriber -

Since March 1st, over 250 new subscribers have joined the Senior Citizens for America mailing list. We are delighted to welcome all of you to the SCFA family.

We are at a significant juncture. First, in just a few days, the United States Senate will take up the proposed "SAVE Act". In our February newsletter, we asked how you felt about this legislation. The responses were unanimous in their opposition. This month, our lead article goes into depth on the subject. The article concludes that as beguiling as the legislation's announced purpose may be, it would have the pernicious real-

world effect of making it more difficult for millions of American citizens to vote, persons who are perfectly entitled to do so. Given the imminence of Senate action, we strongly urge you to reach out to a number of key senators and tell them to vote “no”. Now! Today! While you can still make a difference! Their contact information is at the end of the article.

And, of course, there is the Iran War. We wrote two weeks ago that the Congress should be consulted before military action should take place. That advice changed very few minds. Today, we ask you a question about how it’s going Please scroll down to This Month’s Question and let us know your thoughts.

Finally, with a leadership change in prospect at the Department of Homeland Security, we explore how DHS might be changed for the better if Congress were forcefully to use its Article One powers. The below article by Richard Davis, an SCFA member and former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, outlines how that might be done!

The Editor

It’s Time to Oppose the SAVE ACT



Whatever state you live in, you can do something for your country right now: call or write to your senators and tell them:

First, to vote against the so-called Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act when it comes up for a vote in the U.S. Senate, and

Second, to communicate to the White House that the President has no right to bypass Congress and issue an executive order to do the same thing.

What's at stake? Nothing less than the ability of all Americans to have a voice in their government!

The original version of the Save Act was passed by the House of Representatives in 2025. More recently, in amended form, it again passed in the House. In both cases, the votes were strictly along party lines. The proposed legislation has been sent to the Senate. Word is that it will be voted on this coming week. It will pass the Senate if it receives 60 votes there. If it reaches the President's desk, there is no doubt that he will sign it.

We called your attention to this legislation in our last newsletter. Broadly, it would wrest control of the registration and voting processes away from the states, where they constitutionally lie, and mandate a federal set of requirements, including proof of citizenship, before anyone could register and vote in any federal election.

Everyone agrees, of course, that non-citizens shouldn't vote. But there is virtually no evidence that they actually do. It is already illegal, and cases of non-citizen voting are rare to the point of being nonexistent.

So, what's really going on? If you look under the hood, it becomes clear that the legislation is a way to deny the franchise to massive numbers of American citizens. In the real world, many people don't have passports, can't locate their birth certificates, don't have their current names on documents, or don't have current addresses on their drivers licenses due to a recent move. Additionally, mail registration, voting by mail, and voting online would be burdened by these new

requirements. At the end of the day, the poor will be disadvantaged to a greater degree than the well-to-do.

On top of these problems, the legislation introduces a whole new set of issues:

- The states would be obliged to turn their voter registration lists over to the Department of Homeland Security for comparison against its database, effectively requiring them to share their citizens' personal information with the federal government. There are no restrictions on what DHS could do with it then.
- Election officials who make errors become subject to criminal action and penalties.
- A new private right of action is created, enabling individual citizens to sue election workers if they should mistakenly register a non-citizen. Vigilantism would be encouraged. (Interestingly, no right of action is provided in those cases where an election worker might fail to register someone who should be registered.)

* * * * *

Here is contact information for some of the key senators:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
Susan Collins (Maine) (R)	2022242523	susan.collins@senate.gov
Lisa Murkowski (Alaska) (R)	2022246665	lisa.murkowski@senate.gov
Mitch McConnell (Kentucky)(R)	2022242541	mitch.mcconnell@senate.gov
John Thune (South Dakota)(R)	2022242321	john.thune@senate.gov
John Fetterman (Penna.) (R)	2022244254	john.fetterman@senate.gov
Dave McCormick (Penna.) (R)	2022246324	dave.mccormick@senate.gov

Call or write them today!

Note: New York's and New Jersey's senators are reliable votes against the SAVE Act. You should commend them for that.

This month's poll



For better or worse, we are in a war with Iran. There are plenty of reasons to hope for the downfall of its hardline, autocratic leadership. But, one month from now, will we be:

Closer to that outcome _____

Not any closer to that outcome ___

Further than ever from that outcome ___

Send your response to:

seniorcitizensforamerica@gmail.com



Reforming the Department of Homeland Security

Richard Davis, former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury
(Enforcement and Operations)

We need to address the mess at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). While there has been a change at the top, with Markwayne Mullen replacing Kristi Noem as Secretary, real change will only come through Congress's use of its appropriations power and the mandating of organizational change.

Here are some ideas:

Under the 2025 Big Beautiful – Ugly! - Bill. ICE received \$75 billion to spend over four years (way above its normal annual appropriation of about \$10 billion) and the Border Patrol received similarly extravagant amounts. ICE's budget is more than the annual budget of all other federal law enforcement

agencies combined. To make matters worse, these amounts are locked in. They will be available to ICE no matter how much or how little Congress decides to appropriate for these agencies in the regular yearly appropriations process.

Ideally these provisions could be repealed and Congress could use its appropriations power each year to set DHS priorities as would appear appropriate that year. There certainly is a strong argument for doing so. The amounts appropriated under the Big Bill are so large that they far exceed what would be necessary to arrest and detain violent criminals. The statistics bear that out. Less than 14% of those detained by ICE have been charged or convicted of violent crimes.

Unfortunately, repeal is extremely unlikely so long as Trump is President. Still, if the make-up for Congress were to be changed in the midterm elections, there are steps that it could take:

First, since ICE and Border Control will be coming back to Congress each year for the usual annual appropriation on top of what they are already “guaranteed” by the Big Bill, Congress is in a position to reduce the size of the annual appropriations normally made, forcing them to dip into the “guaranteed” amounts. This would at least spend down faster the amounts appropriated in the Big Bill.

Second, ICE should be reorganized. It now has two components: Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). These were merged when DHS was established. ERO focuses on immigration enforcement. HSI has a far broader and different mandate, including child exploitation; human smuggling and trafficking; illegal technology procurement; sanctions violations; narcotics smuggling; terrorism and national security threats; weapons trafficking and more. Unfortunately, President Trump has ordered that HSI agents be diverted from these critical responsibilities to immigration enforcement. To correct this, HSI should be removed from ICE and made into a separate agency.

Third, during the new war in the Middle East, we have already seen Iran lashing out at its neighbors and at U.S. installations in the region. It has threatened to strike at the U.S. itself. Accordingly, HSI's mission to protect us against terrorism and national security has never been more important. Accordingly, in addition to creating HSI as a separate agency, Congress should, in an appropriations bill, prohibit monies allocated to HSI from being bled off from its primary mission and used in immigration enforcement. Meanwhile, Congress could make arresting and detaining migrants a separate appropriation within the DHS appropriations bill, limiting all government agencies, both inside and outside DHS, from being diverted from

their missions to perform immigration enforcement-related functions.

Fourth, Congress should use the appropriations power to impose limitations on how DHS performs its immigration responsibilities. A number of riders are now being debated in connection with the stalemate over the pending DHS Appropriations Bill. One rider would prohibit appropriated money from being used to detain any person participating in the immigration process to allow them to stay unless they had been convicted or charged with a violent crime. No more arresting people when they show up for their court dates.

Fifth, a reorganized DHS would be better - and more responsibly - able to carry out its duties. Today, over 25 positions - including 9 operating agencies - report to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary. Among these agencies are ICE; U.S. Customs and Border Patrol; the Secret Service; the Transportation Security Agency; the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; the Coast Guard; the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center; and FEMA. This report structure means that none of them is receiving the kind of ongoing supervision which is essential. In the pre-9/11 Treasury Department, during the Carter Administration, I oversaw the operations of Customs, Secret Service, BATF and the Federal Law Enforcement

Training Center. What I learned is that even well-run law enforcement agencies benefit greatly from oversight of their operations and budgets.

At a minimum, an Under Secretary position should be created to oversee the hard-core law enforcement agencies: Secret Service, ICE (or hopefully the new separate EROS and HSI agencies), Customs and Border Patrol and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. These are the kinds of agencies which most require someone to work with them to make sure their officers are appropriately trained, that they have appropriate policies and are performing their responsibilities in an effective manner while also acting in conformance with all legal requirements.

In summary, DHS plays a vital role in protecting our country. However, the Trump Administration has both undermined its effectiveness and created conditions in which abuse can take place. Congress needs to perform its responsibilities to make sure that this does not continue.

In closing, we take this opportunity to wish our Irish American members a Happy St.

Patrick's Day!



Have a wonderful time on March 17th!

(Note:: The first, second, and fifth images in this newsletter are courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.)

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