

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 19, 2022

Chairman Richard Neal
Ways and Means Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Kevin Brady
Ways and Means Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady,

We write to encourage the Ways and Means Committee to swiftly advance H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, to the House floor for a vote without any significant changes. H.R. 82 currently has 298 co-sponsors – only 16 of the more than 10,000 bills introduced this Congress have more co-sponsors - and it's time for the House to vote.

The Social Security Fairness Act would remove both the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) from the Social Security Act. The WEP and the GPO have substantially reduced more than 2 million retired public sector employees' Social Security benefits, affecting about 4 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries. In 2021 the WEP reduced benefits for 47,723 Virginians¹ and the GPO reduced benefits for 7,856 Virginians.²

Thousands of retired police officers, firefighters, federal employees, educators, and widows have contacted my office to share stories about how the WEP and GPO have harmed their financial security in retirement. In Spotsylvania, a constituent retired after a 25-year career in law enforcement only to see the WEP reduce her monthly benefit by 30%. In Chesterfield, the GPO reduces one widow's benefit from her late husband's Social Security just because she served her country in the CIA for 26 years.

Bipartisan legislation to repeal the WEP and GPO has been introduced in every Congress since 2002, but has never once received a vote. Repealing the WEP and GPO would have significant benefits for our constituents. Public servants and their families should not have their benefits held hostage as bargaining chips in entitlement reform efforts – especially when over 290 members of the US House have signed on to legislation to restore them. The 117th Congress can finally be the one that fixes this long-standing inequity and protect the benefits of retirees who dedicated their careers to public service. We urge your Committee to live up to this historic moment by reporting H.R. 82 favorably to the full House and joining our calls for the House to vote as soon as possible.

¹ CRS "Social Security: The Windfall Elimination Provision." Updated March 7, 2022. Available at: <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/98-35.pdf>.

² CRS, "Social Security: The Government Pension Offset." Updated February 8, 2021. Available at: <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/RL32453.pdf>.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Abigail D. Spanberger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Abigail D. Spanberger

Member of Congress