



# News from Washington

## House committee holds hearing on WEP and GPO repeal


**O**n Nov. 21, the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security held a hearing on the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82). The bill would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), parts of Social Security law that unfairly reduce, or sometimes eliminate, Social Security benefits of public employees, including letter carriers, who have earned pension benefits from public employee pension plans such as the Civil Service Retirement System.

The hearing was held at the St. George Fire Department Station 60 in Baton Rouge, LA, a city in Rep. Garrett Graves's (R-LA) district. Graves co-leads the bipartisan bill with Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-VA).

Witnesses, all from Louisiana, included Patrick Yoes, national president of the Fraternal Order of Police; Ann Dugas, retired state employee; Bernard Piro, retired firefighter; and Paula Porter, retired teacher.

The hearing brought awareness to the issue through the testimonies of the witnesses who are affected by the WEP and GPO. Several witnesses said they did not know about the impact of these provisions until after they retired and that they likely would have considered different careers had they been informed. Others stated that if these provisions are not overturned, it will be more difficult to recruit and retain employees.

NALC President Brian L. Renfroe and Louisiana State Association of Letter Carriers President Troy Scott submitted comments to the committee for this field hearing explaining how the WEP and GPO affect letter carriers and the importance of repealing the provisions.



# NALC

**National Association  
of Letter Carriers**

BRIAN L. RENFROE President

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Dear Chairman Smith, Chairman Ferguson, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

We are submitting these comments on behalf of the Louisiana State Association of Letter Carriers (LSALC), which represents nearly 3,800 active and retired city letter carriers.

First, we would like to express our appreciation for the hearing held in Baton Rouge on Nov. 20. Your questions and the witnesses' testimonies emphasized the true hardship the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) have had on the nation's retired public servants in Louisiana and nationwide.

These provisions are unfair and wrongfully reduce or sometimes eliminate the benefits that letter carriers and other public workers have paid into and earned throughout their careers.

Letter carriers spend their working lives serving their communities and providing an essential service that all Americans rely on. We are lifelines for seniors who need medications. We ensure our customers receive paychecks and bills on time. We deliver essential packages six and sometimes seven days a week. We are proven devoted public servants who deserve to receive the full Social Security benefits that we have earned.

Our retired members, who are living on fixed incomes, are not asking for anything extra. We, alongside millions of other public employees, are asking you to repeal the WEP and GPO so that we can receive the benefits we are entitled to and enjoy the modest retirement that we worked for and expected.

This benefit reduction does not happen in the private sector, and if it did, it would likely be tried in court. We must do better by treating our public servants better. We cannot allow the government to keep taking from our earned retirement benefits. It is time to finally repeal the WEP and GPO, with your help and support.

We appreciate your consideration of the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82), and the LSALC is hopeful that the committee will hold a markup on the legislation soon.

Sincerely,

Brian L. Renfroe  
President, National Association of Letter Carriers

Troy Scott  
President, Louisiana State Association of Letter Carriers

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The next step for the bill, which has 300 co-sponsors, to move forward in the House is for the Committee on Ways and Means to schedule a markup.

"NALC appreciates the subcommittee holding a hearing on this important legislation," President Renfroe said. "Far too many letter carriers and

other public servants are victimized by the WEP and GPO. They work hard and pay into Social Security throughout their careers and deserve to receive the full benefits they have earned. We urge Chairman Jason Smith (R-MO) to prioritize this issue and hold a markup on H.R. 82." **PR**