

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

October 18, 2007

The Honorable Charles Rangel  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Rangel:

We are writing to urge you to support the Social Security Fairness Act, legislation that would eliminate the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination provisions (WEP) that limit the retirement security of more than 1.3 million federal, state, county and municipal employees and their spouses, including thousands of teachers and first responders.

According to the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, every year of Congressional delay in repealing the arbitrary WEP penalizes an additional 60,000 Americans. The National Education Association warns that Congressional inaction "discourages prospective educators from entering the profession."

Accordingly, approximately 75 percent of the Members of the House of the Representatives have cosponsored this legislation. Last year, you signed a petition to discharge the Social Security Fairness Act from the Ways and Means Committee for a vote on the House floor. In a June 27 letter, you stated your intention to schedule a hearing on the bill, while expressing new concerns about the bill. That said, we appreciate your "promise to revisit the issue."

The penalty for lower paid workers under the WEP is one of many reasons why your committee should address broader Social Security reform sooner rather than later. The Social Security Trustees warn that Congress' failure to act only makes a solution more painful for future generations of taxpayers and retirees. According to the Social Security Administration, every year of delay costs taxpayers and retirees an additional \$6 billion. Lower paid workers who are penalized by the arbitrary WEP shouldn't have to wait until 2009 or later for your committee to move Social Security legislation to the floor.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. We look forward to working to improve our nation's retirement security while making Social Security solvent and sustainable for current and future generations.

Sincerely,

  
  


  
  
