



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

PATRICK YOES NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JIM PASCO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

328 Massachusetts Ave NE | Washington DC 20002

(202) 547-8189 | www.fop.net | legislative@fop.net

17 November 2020

The Honorable Nancy P. Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin O. McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Madam Speaker, Senator McConnell, Senator Schumer and Representative McCarthy,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to respectfully request that the House consider including the “Social Security Fairness Act” in any future legislation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The repeal of the “Windfall Elimination Provision” (WEP) and the “Government Pension Offset” (GPO) in current Social Security law would simultaneously end a gross unfairness against retired public employees and help to stimulate the economy by eliminating a reduction in the Social Security benefits for these Americans. This would have an immediate positive impact on public employees—putting additional cash in their pocket as they and their families struggle in these trying times.

When the WEP was enacted in 1983, its stated purpose was to remove a “windfall” for persons who spent some time in jobs not covered by Social Security and who also worked other jobs where they paid Social Security taxes long enough to qualify for retirement benefits. This provision has created a very real inequity for many public employees, particularly law enforcement officers, who retire earlier than other government employees and often begin second careers which require them to pay into the Social Security system. Law enforcement officers who had second careers face as much as a 60% cut to their Social Security benefits. This is a reduction of a benefit to which they are entitled because they paid into the system—not an adjustment for a “windfall.” In the current climate of the pandemic, these reductions have a detrimental impact on our vulnerable retirees and on the economy.

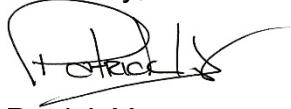
Similarly, the GPO offsets the Social Security benefit to which a surviving spouse is entitled by two-thirds of the monthly amount of any government pension that they might

receive. For example, the widow of a retired law enforcement officer who collected a government pension of \$1,200 would be ineligible to collect the Social Security survivor's benefit of \$600. Two-thirds of \$1,200 is \$800, which is greater than the spouse's benefit of \$600 and thus making her unable to collect it. If the spouse's benefit was \$900, she would collect only \$100, because \$800 would be "offset" by the government pension. Again, this offset scheme currently in place penalizes those employees least able to afford it and to an older population that is at greater risk during the pandemic. We believe this "offset" is a drag on the economy and its repeal would provide the economic stimulus our nation desperately needs right now.

The "Social Security Fairness Act" has wide bipartisan support. The Senate bill, S. 521, has 38 cosponsors and the House bill, H.R. 141, has 262 cosponsors—nearly two-thirds of that body. We believe that the repeal of these two provisions will help our vulnerable retirees make it through this pandemic and will help stabilize our nation's economy.

On behalf of the more than 355,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I urge that you make the repeal of the WEP and GPO a part of any bill Congress considers to further address the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our views on this matter. If I can be of any assistance whatsoever, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Yoes", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Yoes
National President