



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

PATRICK YOES NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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2 March 2022

The Honorable Lance C. Gooden
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Gooden,

I am writing on behalf of the membership of the Fraternal Order of Police to ask that you once again cosponsor the “Social Security Fairness Act.”

The bill was reintroduced in this Congress as H.R. 82 by Representatives Rodney L. Davis (R-IL) and Abigail A. Spanberger (D-VA). It is identical to H.R. 141, which you cosponsored in the 116th Congress. This bipartisan legislation has the support of more than 250 Members of the House, including 85% of Democrats and 30% of Republicans—which may be the most bipartisan support in the House. The bill would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) in current Social Security law, two provisions of the Social Security Act that unfairly reduce or eliminate the Social Security benefits for millions of Americans who have devoted much of their careers to public service. We hope that you will once again demonstrate your support for law enforcement and public employees by joining the over 250 members of the House who have already cosponsored H.R. 82.

We believe that this is an issue of fairness. 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.”

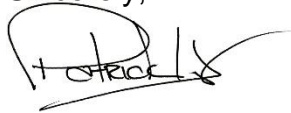
Similarly, the GPO offsets the Social Security benefit to which a surviving spouse is entitled by two-thirds of the monthly amount of any government pension that they might receive. For example, the widow of a retired law enforcement officer who collected a government pension of \$1,200 would be ineligible 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, the FOP believes this is a matter of fairness and that the offset scheme currently in place penalizes those employees least able to afford it. Law enforcement officers are especially affected because, like many public employees, a significant number of officers are not part of the Social Security system.

Ultimately, the "Social Security Fairness Act" is about fairness to public employees who served their communities. When these public employees earn a Social Security benefit through other work, they should receive that benefit in full without being penalized because of their public service. A significant majority of the House shares this view, and we believe this bill has earned the right to be debated on the floor.

On behalf of the more than 364,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I am proud to offer our strong support for this legislation. I hope that you will cosponsor this bill again in this Congress. Thank you for your past support and, if I can be of any help, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in our Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

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

Patrick Yoes
National President