



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

12 January 2023

The Honorable Garret N. Graves
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Abigail A. Spanberger
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Graves, and Spanberger,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to offer our strong support and express our sincere gratitude to you both for re-introducing H.R. 82, the “Social Security Fairness Act.” Your legislation, which would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) in current Social Security law, is one of the top legislative priorities of the Fraternal Order of Police.

We believe as you do—this is an issue of fairness. We also believe that, in addition to ending this unfairness against retired public employees, the legislation will help to stimulate the economy by eliminating a reduction in the Social Security benefit for these Americans. This would have an immediate positive impact on retired public employees collecting Social Security by putting additional cash in their pockets 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 have 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, 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, 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.

On behalf of the more than 364,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you both for your leadership on this issue and the FOP will do everything it can to assist you in moving your bill forward. If I can be of any further assistance, 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 large, stylized initial "P" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Yoes
National President