

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

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EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

September 19, 2022

MICHAEL McHALE

President
Florida Police Benevolent
Association

The Honorable Richard Neal
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Vice President
Police Benevolent
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Association

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON, CAE

Executive Director
and General Counsel

Dear Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), representing over 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers across the country, I am writing to you to advise you of our strong support for the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82) and respectfully ask the Committee to approve the bill when you consider it tomorrow morning.

Though most police officers must retire after specific time served, usually in their early to mid-fifties, many look for new opportunities to serve their community. Yet, when they retire from a non-Social Security paying job and move to one that does pay into Social Security, they are penalized by the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). Instead of receiving full support from their rightfully earned Social Security retirement benefit, their pension heavily offsets it, thus vastly reducing the amount they receive.

More troubling is the effect of Government Pension Offset (GPO) on a police officer's retirement. If a spouse who paid into Social Security dies, the surviving public safety officer should be eligible for half of the deceased's benefit. However, GPO requires that this amount be offset by two-thirds of the survivor's pension, eliminating most or all of the payment. By professional need, many police officers are outside of Social Security but if they had not served at all, they would receive the full allotment of the spouse's benefit.

GPO and WEP were meant as a "leveling" response but only serve to penalize public safety officers for choosing a public service profession that mandates early retirement by taking away hard-earned and much needed benefits. It is not just public safety officers impacted by these provisions: nearly 3 million public servants are impacted by the GPO and/or WEP. By totally repealing both GPO and WEP, H.R. 82 would preserve the retirement security of those who selflessly serve and protect our communities.

The Social Security Fairness Act has always had broad, bipartisan support over the years and this Congress is no different with 299 cosponsors signed on in support. We urge you and all Members of the Committee to support this important legislation. If we can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me at: (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson, Esq.
Executive Director