

# BARACK OBAMA

October 22, 2008

Dear NEA Members,

I appreciate the opportunity to share a few thoughts about your retirement and what I will do to protect you and make sure you get the benefits you've earned. Nobody should be penalized for serving our children, and that's why I support repealing the GPO/WEP and will work to do so as President.

As you know, the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset have a serious detrimental impact on hundreds of thousands of educators and your spouses. That's why as a Senator I co-sponsored the Social Security Fairness Act, which would repeal these provisions. The first provision cuts the spousal benefits of some public employees, while the second cuts the Social Security benefits that some public employees earned themselves.

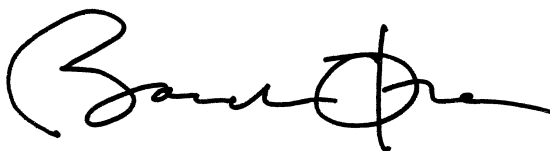
These provisions also hurt police officers, firefighters, and other public employees. I believe that we have a responsibility to take care of workers who have devoted their lives to public service and that we shouldn't discourage young people from working in these essential jobs at a time when so many teachers are at or near retirement age and we're struggling to replace them.

I will work to repeal GPO and WEP, but I won't stop there. We need to think now about how we provide retirement security for today's retirees and workers retiring 20 or 30 or more years down the road. Let me tell you about my comprehensive plan.

It starts with protecting Social Security. It is one of the most successful social programs in American history, and we need to preserve and maintain it, without risky privatization plans. I will work to forge a bipartisan consensus that will keep the program financially secure for future generations. I will also encourage personal savings and hold companies to their pension promises by reforming the bankruptcy code so that companies do not use it to take benefits away from their workers. And since almost half of full-time workers do not have a job with a retirement savings plan, my retirement security plan will automatically enroll workers in a workplace pension plan. I will also expand the existing Savers Credit to match 50 percent of the first \$1,000 of savings for families that earn under \$75,000, and make the credit refundable. Coupled with the automatic workplace pension plan, this proposal will stimulate tens of millions of new Americans to invest for their retirement.

Improving retirement security for educators through sensible steps like these will be a high priority for me as President. I greatly appreciate the support I have from the NEA, and I look forward to working with you as President to create the changes we all want to see in our country.

Sincerely,



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