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Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, we urge you to VOTE YES on the bipartisan Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82) during tomorrow's markup. A long-standing priority for educators and other public-service workers, H.R. 82 has nearly 300 co-sponsors. We applaud the leaders of this committee and this bill for bringing it forward. Votes on the issue may be included in NEA's report card for the 117th Congress.

H.R. 82 would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) that deprive more than 2.5 million educators and other public employees of Social Security benefits they have **earned**.

The WEP affects 1.9 million people. It reduces the Social Security retirement, disability, spousal, or survivor benefits of people who work in jobs in which they pay Social Security taxes and jobs in which they do NOT pay Social Security taxes—for example, educators compelled to take part-time or summer jobs to make ends meet.

The GPO affects nearly 700,000 people. It reduces the Social Security spousal or survivor benefits of people who get a government pension (federal, state or local) but did NOT pay Social Security taxes themselves. Two-thirds of the government pension is deducted from the Social Security benefit—for example, for someone receiving a \$600 monthly government pension, the Social Security benefit is reduced by \$400. Some people lose their entire Social Security benefit.

These offsets discourage people from becoming educators, especially those in mid-career who stand to lose Social Security benefits they have already earned. That, in turn, can adversely affect the quality of the education our students receive and contribute to the educator shortage facing our nation.

We strongly urge you to support H.R. 82 to fully repeal both the GPO and WEP.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association