

**Association of Texas Professional Educators
California Public Employees Retirement System
California Retired Teachers Association
Colorado School and Public Employees Retirement Association
Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund
International Union of Police Associations, AFL-CIO
Illinois Retired Teachers Association
Louisiana Retired Teachers Association
Missouri Retired Teachers Association
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
National Association of Police Organizations
National Conference of State Social Security Administrators
Ohio Public Employees Retirement System
Retired State, County and Municipal Employees Association of Massachusetts
School Employees Retirement System of Ohio
School Employee Retirees of Ohio
Texas Retired Teachers Association**

March 14, 2016

On behalf of our members, we are writing to respectfully request that you co-sponsor H.R. 711, "The Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act of 2015" a bipartisan proposal introduced by Congressmen Kevin Brady (R-TX) and Richard Neal (D-MA).

Our organizations have been working for years to repeal or reform the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) of the Social Security Act. WEP reduces the Social Security benefits that retired public employees earned through payroll tax contributions during Social Security-covered employment (e.g., private-sector employment) based on their non-covered public employment. More than one and a half million retired public employees, from every state, are currently impacted by the WEP, with countless active employees set to fall victim to reduced Social Security benefits upon retirement.

Over the years, we have advocated for a full repeal of the WEP law. However, given the fiscal challenges associated with that effort, we have worked closely with one another to find common ground on a meaningful WEP reform proposal. Our collaboration, together with the leadership of both Mr. Brady and Mr. Neal, has resulted in H.R. 711.

H.R. 711 would reform the WEP formula, replacing it with a new Social Security benefit formula designed to more accurately account for years a public employee paid into Social Security versus the years paid into a public pension system in a non-Social Security covered position. As a result of this change, the Social Security actuary has projected that current retirees impacted by WEP would see one-third of their benefit restored. Those becoming eligible for Social Security after January 1, 2017 would have their benefit calculated under the new formula, thus receiving a benefit that more accurately reflects their actual participation in Social Security.

We believe the approach taken in H.R. 711 is not only fair, but also provides a workable solution to a problem we have struggled to resolve for over thirty years. Most importantly, the Social Security Administration has certified the approach taken in H.R. 711 is cost-neutral over the ten year window and

actually produces savings over a 75-year horizon. Cost neutrality comes as a result of enhanced benefit accuracy procedures now set to take effect in 2017.

Your support and advocacy for the passage of H.R. 711 will go a long way towards finally achieving positive change for current and future public retirees. With your help, we believe there is a realistic opportunity to advance this bill to the President's desk during the current Congress.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Association of Texas Professional Educators (*Josh Sanderson – 800.777.2873*)

California Public Employees Retirement System (*Tom Lussier – 703.684.5236 or Tony Roda – 202.659.8201*)

California Retired Teachers Association (*David Walrath – 916.441.3300*)

Colorado School and Public Employees Retirement Association (*Kathy Zinter – 303.326.1808*)

Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund (*Tony Roda – 202.659.8201*)

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Louisiana Retired Teachers Association (*Rodney Watson – 225.927.8837*)

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National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (*John Hatton – 703.838.7760*)

National Association of Police Organizations (*Andy Edmiston – 703.549.0774*)

National Conference of State Social Security Administrators (*Maryann Motza – 303.318.8061*)

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (*Carol Nolan Drake – 614.348.5611 or Jim Miller 614.277.9421*)

Retired State, County and Municipal Employees Association of Massachusetts (*Tom Lussier – 703.684.5236*)

School Employees Retirement System of Ohio (*Laurel Johnson – 614.222.5918*)

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Texas Retired Teachers Association (*Tim Lee – 800.880.1650*)