



**Association of Texas
Professional Educators**
305 E. Huntland Dr, Suite 300
Austin, TX 78752-3792

Phone: (512) 467-0071
Fax: (512) 467-2203
info@atpe.org
atpe.org

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The Honorable Kevin Brady
U.S. House of Representatives
301 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Brady,

On behalf of the Association of Texas Professional Educators, we would like to thank you for introducing H.R. 711, the Equal Treatment for Public Servants Act, which permanently repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and replaces it with a new and balanced formula. We appreciate your continued commitment to reforming the WEP.

As you know, the WEP impacts approximately 1.3 million public service employees, including thousands of Texas public educators. Under the existing formula, public education employees subject to the WEP have been penalized through reduced retirement benefits under Social Security, which they earned while paying into the federal program during Social Security covered employment. The legislation would replace the existing arbitrary formula with a new formula that determines a worker's Social Security benefit based on the proportion of the worker's average career earnings subject to Social Security taxes.

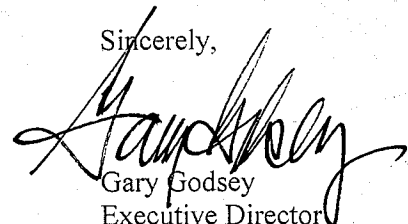
We believe that your proposal offers a preferred path forward for existing retirees affected by the WEP and ensures that future beneficiaries will see fairer treatment of their benefits under the modified formula, which more accurately reflect their full work history and contributions into Social Security.

Since the provision was established in 1983, the WEP has created unintended consequences to the detriment of many educators; furthermore, it has been a significant disincentive to private sector employees who may consider entering into the education profession and discouraged current educators from staying in the field.

Texas has one of the largest beneficiary populations who are currently subjected to the WEP. ATPE has made Social Security and teacher pension issues a top legislative priority and remains committed to fixing the WEP formula, which impacts over a hundred thousand retired educators and public service employees in the state of Texas. This legislation will provide meaningful relief from the WEP, with a 32% benefit increase (on average) for current retirees subject to the WEP under current law and would allow for potentially substantial benefit increases for future retirees, who would have been subject to the WEP under current law.

We look forward to working with you and Members of the Texas Delegation to enact much needed reform on the Windfall Elimination Provision. Thank you for your continued support and leadership on issues important to Texas public education employees.

Sincerely,



Gary Godsey
Executive Director

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