



# NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

PATRICK YOES NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JIM PASCO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

328 Massachusetts Ave NE | Washington DC 20002

(202) 547-8189 | [www.fop.net](http://www.fop.net) | [legislative@fop.net](mailto:legislative@fop.net)

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3 March 2023

The Honorable Sherrod D. Brown  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan M. Collins  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Brown and Collins,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to offer our strong support and express our sincere gratitude to you both for introducing S. 597, the "Social Security Fairness Act." The bill, which would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) in current Social Security law, is one of the top legislative priorities of the Fraternal Order of Police.

We believe as you do—this is an issue of fairness. When the WEP was enacted in 1983, its stated purpose was to remove a "windfall" for persons who spent some time in jobs not covered by Social Security and who also worked other jobs where they paid Social Security taxes long enough to qualify for retirement benefits. This provision has created a very real inequity for many public employees, particularly law enforcement officers, who retire earlier than other government employees and often begin second careers which require them to pay into the Social Security system. Law enforcement officers who have had second careers face as much as a 60% cut to their Social Security benefits. This is a reduction of a benefit to which they are entitled because they paid into the system—not an adjustment for a "windfall."

Similarly, the GPO offsets the Social Security benefit to which a surviving spouse is entitled by two-thirds of the monthly amount of any government pension that they might receive. For example, the widow of a retired law enforcement officer who collected a government pension of \$1,200 would be ineligible to collect the Social Security survivor's benefit of \$600. Two-thirds of \$1,200 is \$800, which is greater than the spouse's benefit of \$600, thus making her unable to collect it. If the spouse's benefit was \$900, she would collect only \$100, because \$800 would be "offset" by the government pension.

Ultimately, the "Social Security Fairness Act" is about fairness to public employees who served their communities—local governments which chose decades ago to construct a retirement system separate from Social Security Act. However, when these public employees earn a Social Security benefit through other work, they should receive that benefit in full without being penalized because of their public service.

On behalf of the more than 364,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you both for your leadership on this issue. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in our Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

Patrick Yoes  
National President