Repeal the Government Pension Offset

Cost of GPO Repeal = 0.06 of 1% of Covered Payroll (Total salary and wages used for Social Security contributions)

The California Retired Teachers Association supports the repeal of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) to protect the survivor benefit. The survivor benefit was paid for by the Social Security earner as part of the Social Security payroll tax. The survivor benefit was created to ensure that the surviving spouse was not put into poverty. The effect of the GPO, however, is to totally eliminate the survivor benefit even with a modest public pension. When the GPO is applied to the survivor benefit, it can often relegate the surviving spouse into poverty conditions.

Women are disproportionately impacted by the GPO in California. Approximately 72 percent of teachers in California are women who receive less service overall than men due to their disproportionate role as the primary caretakers of children and seniors in their family.

Of those impacted by the GPO nationally, 54 percent were spouses and 46 percent were widows or widowers. Out of the total potentially beneficiaries, 72 percent lose all Social Security benefits, leaving those impacted without a safety net.

**Annual Cost of Social Security** = $885 billion

**Annual Covered Payroll** = $7.137 trillion

**Cost of GPO Repeal** = $4.282 billion annually

The harsh fiscal impact of the GPO is the number one cause of plummeting a retired teacher into low-income and poverty status.

**Teachers’ Voices**

“I have depleted my savings by supplementing my teachers pension since I retired in order to cover my bills. I now must sell my house. The Social Security widows’ benefit would have saved me and would help me now. Please repeal GPO/WEP.” – Laurie B.

“It is unfair and penalizes those who have exerted extra efforts to earn income for their families. While I worked for 35 years in California’s public education system, I concurrently worked for 20 years as an adjunct professor in the public and private university system in California. During those 20 years, I contributed fully, 100%, as required into the Social Security system. We should not be penalized by having our earned pensions from that system reduced as currently exists.” – Joe A.