

Richard G. Thissen
National President



Jon Dowie
National Secretary/Treasurer

July 13, 2016

Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Levin and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I urge you to oppose the substitute version of H.R. 711, the Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act of 2015, when the committee considers it at markup today. The original bill would have provided long-overdue relief to the more than one million individuals facing the unfair effects of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). Unfortunately, the substitute does little for those currently affected, while leaving many individuals with substantial private-sector job experience worse off. The substitute is a big step back, and we strongly urge the Committee to support the original bill instead.

The WEP unjustly deprives dedicated public servants of the full Social Security benefits they earned through their contributions to the system. They are denied these benefits solely because they also worked outside of Social Security-covered employment in government service. The WEP penalty often comes as a rude awakening, as the actual benefits received fail to meet the expectations created by the estimates provided by Social Security. All told, the WEP has cost public servants hundreds of millions of dollars of Social Security benefits that they rightfully earned.

In its original form, H.R. 711 would have helped mitigate the effects of the WEP by providing some relief for both current beneficiaries, through a reduced WEP penalty, and for future Social Security recipients, by improving the formula going forward. This relief has been a long time coming. Under the substitute, relief for those currently affected is substantially reduced until 2026. While some relief is better than none, the substitute bill is a huge step backwards and NARFE cannot support it.

For these reasons, I urge you to reconsider and support the original version of H.R. 711. For a lengthier discussion of NARFE's views on this bill, please refer to the testimony submitted to the Subcommittee on Social Security on March 22, 2016, available [here](#).

Thank you for considering NARFE's views. If you have any questions or comments regarding this request, please contact NARFE Legislative Director Jessica Klement at 703-838-7760 or jklement@narfe.org.

Sincerely,

Richard Thissen
National President

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

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