

August 2, 2022

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
U.S. Senate  
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Peters, Ranking Member Portman and members of the Senate  
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

On behalf of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), which is dedicated to advancing the interests of the more than 5 million federal employees and retirees, as well as their spouses and survivors, I urge you to favorably report H.R. 521, the First Responder Fair RETIRE Act, when it is considered by the committee.

The First Responder Fair RETIRE Act honors the service of federal public safety employees who suffer from a disabling injury or illness in performance of their job and helps mitigate the severe disruption placed on their lives as a result. Current law requires federal public safety employees to pay a higher percentage of their pay toward their annuity to retire after 20 years of service at age 50, or after 25 years of service at any age, with mandatory separation from service at age 57.

However, should a public safety employee be prevented from continuing their job because of a work-related disability, they are no longer eligible to retire under the same system, upending years of service to this nation and responsible planning for the future.

H.R. 521 corrects this unfair situation by allowing affected workers to remain in the public safety retirement system should they choose to continue their federal service outside that system. The bill also allows affected employees to receive a refund of their accelerated contributions should they be separated from service before they are entitled to an annuity. Our nation's federal firefighters, law enforcement officials, Border Patrol officers, and other federal first responders should not have to face additional hardship for sacrifices made for this nation.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to support the First Responder Fair RETIRE Act. Thank you for your consideration of our views. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact NARFE Staff Vice President for Policy and Programs John Hatton at [jhatton@narfe.org](mailto:jhatton@narfe.org).

Sincerely,



Ken Thomas  
NARFE National President