



Breaking News!

**Bulletin from the Colorado School and
Public Employees Retirement Association**



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WEP and GPO Bill in Congress

Have You Earned Both PERA and Social Security Benefits?

Windfall Elimination (WEP) and Gov't. Pension Offset (GPO) in Congress Again

A bill has again been submitted to Congress that would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). Those are federal laws that reduce the Social Security (SS) payment to retirees, spouses, widows, and widowers who qualify for both PERA and Social Security benefits.

The **Social Security Fairness Act of 2017 (S.195)** was introduced by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH). It would repeal the WEP and GPO. The bill has been assigned to the Senate Finance Committee, of which Colorado Senator Michael Bennet is a member.

This is a federal bill, in the national Congress, not our Colorado House and Senate.

A similar bill, submitted last year, would have reduced but not eliminated some of the WEP's impact. That bill was "cost-neutral," meaning it was judged to not financially impact the SS Trust Fund. That bill initially had broad and bipartisan support, but finally failed to pass.

While S.195 has again drawn bipartisan support from both Republican and Democratic Senators, a concern is that S.195 might have a significant cost to the SS Trust Fund. The cost, if any, of this year's new bill to the SS Trust Fund has not been announced. Previous attempts to eliminate the WEP and GPO have been judged too expensive for the SS Trust Fund to handle. **The Trust Fund cost of S.195, and whether current House and Senate majorities would accept a given cost, both remain to be seen.**

CSPERA always informs about and promotes participation in the political processes that impact your retirement. You are encouraged to send comments to Colorado Senators Michael Bennet and Cory Gardner. Contact information follows below.

Personal comments are most effective. An email or phone comment from bill supporters might be phrased as...

Dear Senator Gardner,

I'm contacting you to encourage your support for the Social Security Fairness Act of 2017 (S.195) now in Senate Finance Committee. Repeal of 1983's Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) would restore fairness to retirees who deserve full payment of the benefit they have earned, without penalizing them for having also worked under an additional retirement plan.

Cory Gardner 202-224-5941 (Washington D.C.) Website also lists offices in eight CO cities.

www.gardner.senate.gov Click "Contact"

Michael Bennet 202-224-5852 (Washington D.C.) Website also lists offices in seven CO cities.

www.bennet.senate.gov Click "Contact"

Feeling even more energetic on this topic? Message Senate Finance Chair Orrin Hatch or any/all of the 26 Committee members, with contacts available via: www.finance.senate.gov . On that home page, under "ABOUT," click "Membership," then click "Official website."

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