

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20

WHEREAS, the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) of the federal Social Security Act penalize people who have dedicated their lives to public service by taking away benefits they have earned; and

WHEREAS, nine out of ten public employees affected by the GPO lose their entire spousal benefit, even though their spouse paid Social Security taxes for many years; and

WHEREAS, the WEP causes hard-working people to lose up to sixty percent of the benefits they earned themselves; and

WHEREAS, many workers rely on misleading Social Security Administration statements that fail to take into account the GPO and WEP when projecting benefits; and

WHEREAS, the impact of the GPO and WEP is not just felt in those states in which public employees, including educators, are not covered by Social Security, because people move from state to state and affected individuals are everywhere; and

WHEREAS, the GPO and WEP apply to all vested members of the Public School Retirement System of Missouri; and

WHEREAS, the number of people affected across the country is growing every day as more and more people reach retirement age; and

WHEREAS, some 300,000 individuals lose an average of \$3,600 a year due to the GPO; and

WHEREAS, this amount can make the difference between self-sufficiency and poverty; and

WHEREAS, these people have less money to spend in their local economy and sometimes have to turn to expensive government programs like food stamps to make ends meet; and

WHEREAS, during a national teacher shortage, the GPO and WEP discourage people from entering and staying in the teaching profession, since doing so will mean a loss of earned Social Security benefits; and

WHEREAS, the GPO and WEP are also causing current educators to leave the profession and students to choose courses of study other than education; and

WHEREAS, non-Social Security states are finding it increasingly difficult to attract quality educators as more people learn about the GPO and WEP; and

WHEREAS, the nation should respect, not penalize, public service; and

WHEREAS, the GPO and WEP are established in federal law and repeal of the GPO and WEP can only be enacted by the United States Congress:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-fifth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby urge the Congress of the United States to immediately repeal the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision of the Social Security Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and the members of the Missouri congressional delegation.