Resolution
Opposing the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision

Whereas the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) are two measures in the Social Security Act that unfairly penalize public pensioners who worked in public jobs not covered by Social Security; and

Whereas these offsets reduce or even eliminate Social Security benefits for 25% of public employees nationwide, including millions of retired federal, state and local government employees who worked as teachers, police, firefighters and general employees; and

Whereas the GPO requires affected public retirees to offset two-thirds of their public pensions against any Social Security spouse or survivor benefit to which they would otherwise be entitled; and

Whereas the GPO has a particularly harsh impact on moderate- and low-income pensioners, with women affected disproportionately and more likely to end life in poverty; and

Whereas victims of the GPO would be entitled to collect their full Social Security benefit – based on a spouse's work record – if they had never worked a day in any type of employment,

but are singled out for the offset because they worked in public sector jobs; and

Whereas the WEP applies a similar offset to Social Security benefits earned by public employees themselves in Social Security-covered jobs – held before, during or after their public-service careers; and

Whereas these public pensioners can lose as much as $380 a month from their earned Social Security benefits, simply because they worked at some point in the public sector.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans will work to enact federal legislation to repeal or significantly modify the GPO and WEP in order to protect the Social Security benefits of affected public retirees; and

Be it further resolved that the Alliance endorses S.896 and H.R.1795 – legislation sponsored by Sen. Mark Begich (D-AK) and Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL) – that would repeal both of these unfair offsets and urges ALL state Alliance Chapters to work to ensure the support of their state's U.S. Representatives and Senators, and provide materials and action plans to states so that together we can successfully repeal this unjust denial of earned benefits that affect so many of our members.