

(SUBMITTED BY AFGE)

Resolution

Protecting Federal Employees: The Federal Government as a model for providing workers a secure retirement.

Whereas the Federal Government directly employs around two million public servants, and should be a model for the private sector on providing workers a secure retirement after a lifetime of hard work; and

Whereas a Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA) is determined to ensure pension payments continue to cover rising costs, yet employees under the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) arbitrarily receive a COLA that can be up to one-third less in years of high inflation; and

Whereas federal first responders, including firefighters, law enforcement officials, Border Patrol officers, and others lose their early retirement benefits if they are injured on the job and return to federal service in another position; and

Whereas the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) unfairly harm millions of American households, including hundreds of thousands of federal retirees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS); and

Whereas the CPI-U, the current measurement of inflation used for Social Security, CSRS, and as the basis for FERS

with a reduction in high inflation years, is an inaccurate measurement of the spending patterns and inflation faced by retirees and other older Americans; and

Whereas in 2012 and 2013, mandatory pension contributions of our federal public servants were increased significantly with the funds raised not going to their retirement, but instead used as general revenue to pay down the deficit; and

Whereas District of Columbia workers used to be covered under the federal pension system until 1987 reforms left new District public servants without adequate pension coverage; and

Whereas millions of Federal Retirees and other older Americans depend on the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide them with assistance in claiming their needed retirement benefits, but have seen offices close and services suffer while SSA's budget has been slashed by 13 percent in inflation adjusted terms from 2010 to 2021, even as the number of Social Security beneficiaries grew by 21 percent.

Whereas the Alliance for Retired Americans supports the repeal of the WEP and GPO, which would help federal retirees and other retired public employees receive their earned benefits; and

Therefore, be it resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans supports the Equal COLA Act, S. 3147 and H.R. 304, sponsored by Senator Alex Padilla (D-CA) and Representative Gerald Connolly (D-VA), which would ensure federal retirees under FERS do not face an arbitrary reduction in their COLA during high inflation years; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans supports the First Responder Fair RETIRE Act, S. 129 and H.R. 521, sponsored by Senator John Tester (D-MT) and Representative Gerald Connolly (D-VA) to ensure that federal firefighters, law enforcement officials, Border Patrol officers, and other federal first responders qualify for full retirement benefits if they are injured in the line of duty; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans supports using a more accurate measure of inflation for retirees, the CPI-E, to calculate the COLA for all retirees; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans supports the repeal of provisions enacted in 2012 and 2013 that raise mandatory pension contributions of new federal employees to 4.4 percent and apply any part of the retiree contribution to deficit reduction instead of funding federal employees' retirement; and

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans supports ensuring that all District of Columbia public workers be given access to a pension that will ensure a secure retirement after a lifetime of hard work; and

Therefore, be it finally resolved that the Alliance for Retired Americans supports increasing the funding for the operations of the Social Security Administration so that it can better serve federal retirees and the American public.