



The Honorable Lloyd Doggett
U.S. Ways and Means Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Doggett:

Our organizations, the Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA), the Association of Professional Educators (ATPE) and the Texas Classroom Teachers Association (TCTA) express our deep gratitude for your co-sponsorship of HR 2337, The Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act authored by Chairman Richard Neal.

We truly appreciate your willingness to support this legislation and seek a bi-partisan solution to a longstanding problem facing a large majority of Texas public educators. Your leadership and assistance with issues affecting Texas public servants, in particular educators, is well-known. It is your commitment to fighting for educators that has brought our organizations together to ask for your help once more.

Today, retired educators live on stagnant, modest pensions, going years—nearly two decades—without an increase in benefits. Rapidly rising costs are eating away at retirees' fixed incomes, and many cannot afford to pay their bills and must make difficult choices about food and medicine.

Active school employees live with low salaries in an environment where negative and harmful rhetoric is directed at our public schools daily. Devastating teacher shortages in Texas are made worse by the understandable reluctance of active teachers to continue to stay in a profession at their current pay and under the scrutiny being leveled at them.

Retirees and active educators need help, and they need hope. They want to maintain the dignity they deserve in retirement, and the perseverance to keep working through these tough times in public schools. Full repeal of the Social Security offsets as proposed in HR 82 is a preferable outcome for our members, but we are concerned about the bill's likelihood of failure in the Senate at this time. Our members need financial relief now. We consider the Neal approach to be the right step to provide that relief.



We believe you are the right leader in the right position to advocate for that help and hope; we believe that after decades of educators waiting and being penalized, action must be taken during this Congress to pass Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) reform through Chairman Neal's bill. Our hope is that you will encourage Chairman Neal to compromise with Congressman Brady and forge a deal that will pass during the current Congress.

We implore you to use your position as a majority member of the House Ways and Means Committee to be a positive impetus for this legislation and to speak with Chairman Neal about a path that will bring HR 2337 to a vote before this Congress concludes. The timing is dire, as we risk losing our bi-partisan support with the impending retirement of Congressman Kevin Brady.

Thank you for all you have done throughout the years to advocate for our dedicated public servants. Now is our moment of greatest need, and we ask you to please help our deserving educators once again.

Sincerely,

Timothy R. Lee
Executive Director
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Teachers Association*

Ann Fickel
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