

1-1 By: Hughes S.C.R. No. 17
 1-2 (In the Senate - Filed February 25, 2021; March 18, 2021,
 1-3 read first time and referred to Committee on State Affairs;
 1-4 April 9, 2021, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 7,
 1-5 Nays 0; April 9, 2021, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7				
1-8	X			
1-9			X	
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12	X			
1-13	X			
1-14	X			
1-15	X			
1-16			X	

1-17 SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-18 WHEREAS, Social Security is the foundation for retirement for
 1-19 tens of millions of American workers and their families, with many
 1-20 reporting that they rely on the program as their sole source of
 1-21 income; and

1-22 WHEREAS, Two Social Security provisions, however, the
 1-23 Government Pension Offset (GPO), enacted in 1977, and the Windfall
 1-24 Elimination Provision (WEP), enacted in 1983, severely and unfairly
 1-25 penalize recipients of public pensions; and

1-26 WHEREAS, The GPO effectively prohibits some government
 1-27 retirees from collecting both their own pension and full Social
 1-28 Security benefits as a surviving spouse; an estimated 9 out of 10
 1-29 public employees affected by the GPO lose their entire spousal
 1-30 benefit, even though their spouses paid Social Security taxes for
 1-31 many years; and

1-32 WHEREAS, The WEP reduces the Social Security benefit for
 1-33 public employees who did not participate in Social Security while
 1-34 working for the government, but who at some time in their careers
 1-35 were in jobs where they paid Social Security taxes for the period
 1-36 required to qualify for retirement benefits; the WEP can deprive a
 1-37 retiree of nearly \$450 a month in Social Security benefits duly
 1-38 earned by that individual; and

1-39 WHEREAS, Although these provisions were intended to curtail
 1-40 the payment of windfall benefits to highly paid government
 1-41 employees, in practice they have had and continue to have
 1-42 devastating consequences for low-income employees who worked for
 1-43 many years as public servants; more than two million government
 1-44 employees and retirees are affected by either the GPO or the WEP or
 1-45 both, and the repercussions are felt most acutely in Texas and 14
 1-46 other states where a high proportion of public employees
 1-47 participate in state or municipal retirement systems that do not
 1-48 include Social Security; and

1-49 WHEREAS, These punitive and discriminatory provisions target
 1-50 hundreds of thousands of teachers, police officers, firefighters,
 1-51 and other public servants; although the vast majority of Texas
 1-52 school employees participate in the state's teacher retirement
 1-53 system, and therefore are not required to and do not participate in
 1-54 the Social Security system, many Texas teachers and other public
 1-55 school employees nonetheless have earned Social Security benefits
 1-56 on their own behalf through other employment, the WEP
 1-57 notwithstanding, or would be entitled to spousal Social Security
 1-58 benefits based on their spouses' lifetime earnings were it not for
 1-59 the GPO penalty; these provisions cause veteran teachers to retire
 1-60 prematurely and discourage qualified individuals from entering the
 1-61 teaching profession at precisely the time that Texas and the nation

2-1 face a severe shortage of highly qualified educators; and
2-2 WHEREAS, The GPO and WEP as applied to public employees are
2-3 unreasonable and unjust and will cause tens of thousands of
2-4 government retirees to experience a diminished quality of life or
2-5 be forced to return to work to make up for the effects of these
2-6 provisions; now, therefore, be it

2-7 RESOLVED, That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas
2-8 hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to
2-9 repeal the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination
2-10 Provision of the Social Security Act; and, be it further

2-11 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
2-12 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
2-13 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
2-14 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
2-15 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
2-16 this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record
2-17 as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

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