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MRTA Missouri Retired Teachers Association
& Public School Personnel

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PRESS RELEASE

Missouri Retired Teachers and Public School Personnel Association (MRTA)
For Immediate Release

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Missouri Retired Teachers and Public School Personnel Association (MRTA) Applauds Presidential Signing of H.R. 82, Repealing Unfair Penalties on Educators' Retirement Benefits

JEFFERSON CITY, MO – Today marks a historic moment for Missouri's retired educators and public school employees. At 3:00 p.m., President Joe Biden signed H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023, into law at the White House. This landmark legislation repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO), ending decades of unfair reductions to Social Security benefits for countless retirees. This monumental step comes after years of advocacy by the Missouri Retired Teachers and Public School Personnel Association (MRTA) and its members.

"We are overjoyed that President Biden has signed H.R. 82 into law," said Maria Walden, Executive Director of MRTA. "This victory represents decades of advocacy and dedication from MRTA members who refused to give up the fight for fairness. Today, we celebrate the culmination of those efforts and the brighter future it ensures for retired educators."

H.R. 82's passage and presidential approval are the results of relentless grassroots advocacy. MRTA members and supporters wrote thousands of letters, met with lawmakers, and rallied in support of this critical legislation. The bill passed the Senate on December 21, 2024, following overwhelming approval in the House of Representatives earlier in the fall, with a vote of 327 to 75, with one voting present.

This success is the result of sustained advocacy, including countless letters from MRTA members, meetings with lawmakers, and grassroots efforts to garner support for the bill. MRTA has been fighting for this repeal since 1983.

Today is a day to celebrate, but the journey continues. Together, we have achieved something truly remarkable.
-Maria Walden, Executive Director of **Missouri Retired Teachers Association and Public School Personnel**

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MRTA, a 501(c)(4) not-for-profit corporation, is a grassroots advocacy association representing over 110,000 retirees with over 30,000 members. MRTA is independent, nonpartisan, and does not endorse political candidates.

"This is a monumental win for Missouri's retired teachers and public school personnel," said Randy McClain, Legislative Chair of MRTA. "The signing of H.R. 82 proves the power of collective action and what can be achieved when we stand together for a common cause. This victory honors the voices of educators who have tirelessly advocated for equity in retirement benefits."

"We've been advocating for the repeal of WEP/GPO for decades, and this victory would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our members, staff and other education associations, such as MoASSP, MASA, and others," said Maria Walden. "It's a powerful reminder of what we can achieve when we come together and make our voices heard."

As MRTA members and supporters celebrate today's passage of H.R. 82, they also acknowledge the work that lies ahead in ensuring the smooth implementation of this historic legislation.

"Today is a momentous day, but our journey continues," Walden emphasized. "We will work closely with lawmakers and stakeholders to oversee the implementation of this legislation. MRTA remains committed to advocating for the rights and benefits of all retired educators and education employees."

Thank you to our over 30,000 members that answered the call to action to make this day possible.

How You Can Help:

1. Share this victory with your fellow retirees and active teachers. Let them know about the successful passage of H.R. 82. Remind them to answer our survey to receive updates.
2. Renew your MRTA membership for 2025. Your membership helps us continue to advocate for changes like this.
3. Encourage others to join MRTA. Strength in numbers is critical to achieving continued legislative successes.
4. Thank the President and all of the Missouri congressional delegation that voted in favor of H.R. 82.

I celebrate this historic moment as President Biden prepares to sign H.R. 82 into law. This legislation brings long-awaited fairness and financial relief to countless retired educators who have devoted their lives to shaping the future. The emotional relief it provides cannot be overstated.

We commend the Missouri Retired Teachers Association for its unwavering advocacy and tireless efforts over the years. Their leadership, along with members who shared personal stories with legislators, has made this possible. MoASSP is also proud of our members who reached out to Missouri's U.S. Senators, amplifying the voices of retired educators throughout the state.

With this new law, we honor the commitment of those who have contributed to Social Security for years and restore the financial security they so richly deserve.

- Clark Mershon, Executive Director of **Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals**

"Today is a day to celebrate, but the journey continues," Walden concluded.

"Together, we have achieved something truly remarkable," Walden remarked.

"Let's continue to stand united as we honor the past and inspire the future for Missouri's educators."

JOIN OUR FIGHT FOR REPEAL – There is strength in numbers, and the world is run by those who show up! Thank you to all our members for making this victory possible.

For more information or to take action, visit www.mrta.org.

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Our staff, board and members have remained unwavering in their commitment to righting the wrongs of the WEP and GPO provisions, and today we see the fruits of their dedication. Every letter written, every conversation held with lawmakers, and every phone call made to Congress has brought us one step closer to this moment. It is a reminder that when we come together with purpose and determination, we can overcome obstacles and achieve meaningful change.

This victory also sends a powerful message about the value of retired educators and the need for a system that honors the work and service we've given throughout our careers. We celebrate this historic achievement, but we also know that our fight for fairness and equity doesn't end here. We will continue to be a voice for all public school employees and ensure that their retirement security is protected for years to come."

-Randy McClain, Legislative Chair of **Missouri Retired Teachers Association and Public School Personnel**

About MRTA

The Missouri Retired Teachers and Public School Personnel Association (MRTA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to advocating for retired and active educators in Missouri. MRTA works to protect the rights and benefits of public school personnel and to ensure a secure retirement for its members.