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This mid-summer edition will focus on legislation in Congress that NEA/FEA will be watching and what you can do to advance our agenda.

1. GPO/WEP Update—Two Bills are in Congress. There are two bills that have been introduced in Congress to address the unfair penalties of Government Pension Offset/Windfall Elimination Provision on our retirees. HR 2237, the Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act would reform WEP. This bill provides a rebate of \$150 to current beneficiaries (age 62 or older before 2023) and creates a new formula to calculate benefits for future WEP-affected persons. The other bill (HR 82/S 1302) would repeal both GPO and WEP. The NEA supports both of the bills. To see how you can reach out to Congress on both of these bills, visit Education Votes: <https://educationvotes.nea.org/issue/retirement-security/?kiosk=true#actions>

2. Stop DoDEA top-down actions penalizing stateside teachers. DoDEA decided unilaterally to require stateside educators to devote an additional 24 unpaid hours per quarter of “busy work” that hinders our members from preparing instruction and assisting students. We need to let our Congressional representatives know and ask them to intervene to hold DoDEA accountable and ending these anti-labor practices. NEA Education Votes, has a model language that you can use immediately. Visit: <https://educationvotes.nea.org/issue/department-of-defense-schools-dodea/?kiosk=true#actions>

3. Equity in Cost of Living Adjustments in Retirement. The Equal COLA Act (HR 304) has been introduced to provide the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirees with the same annual cost of living adjustment as the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirees. Contact your representative and ask for his/her support of this bill.

4. Success in Congress. On May 20, President Biden signed the NEA-supported COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act. This act strengthens federal efforts to address hate crimes targeting Asian Americans by expediting review of hate crimes by the Justice Department. It would also provide guidance to state and local officials in online reporting of such crimes and require the department to issue guidance to mitigate racially discriminatory language in describing the pandemic.

5. Fighting to lower drug cost. Congress had re-introduced HR 3, the Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act. This bill would enable Medicare to save hundreds of billions of dollars by allowing the program to negotiate for lower prescription drug prices. It would cap out-of-pocket costs for seniors under Part D plans (in Medicare) and crack down on prescription price increases. Let your representative know how you feel about HR 3.

6. Protecting Older Workers. Ten years ago, a Supreme Court ruling weakened the age discrimination laws, making it more difficult to prove age discrimination. A bipartisan bill (HR 2062) would help level the playing field for older workers and restore their rights to fight back against age discrimination. Let your representative know where you stand on HR 2062.

7. NEA's Education Votes. FEA Retired Members may wish to bookmark NEA's Education Votes, <https://educationvotes.nea.org/> This website has several portals that make it easy for members to stay informed and contact their representatives on issues affecting educators and Federal retirees. On the top banner, "Issues and Actions" provides a link to House and Senate bills that NEA/FEA supports along with easy to follow plans for contacting your Congressional Representative/Senators. In this same top banner, "States" will provide our retirees with political issues in the States where we may now reside in retirement.
