
December 2021

IMPORTANT: Do not view this information while you are on government time, government property or while using government equipment. Do not forward this information to any DoDEA or other government email account or to anyone who is likely to view it while on government time or using government equipment.

1. Update on the progress to repeal GPO/WEP. There are currently 3 bills in Congress that address the inequities in the Government Pension Offset(GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). These 2 programs have unfairly reduced Social Security benefits for public employees, including educators. The 3 pending bills are designed to correct these penalties in different ways. NEA supports all three. You can easily let your Senators and Representative know how you feel at www.EducationVotes.nea.org Here's what each one does:

- a. The Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act (HR 2337) starts to fix problems caused by WEP. It does not address GPO.
- b. The Social Security Fairness Act (S 1302/HR 82) would repeal both GPO and WEP.
- c. The Social Security 2100 (S 3071/HR5723) would not only repeal GPO and WEP, but also create a system to provide more secure funding for social security and implement a fairer COLA for Social Security recipients.

2. Oops, we did it again—our number was wrong! Last month, we reported that the increases in the premium for Medicare Part B were expected to be around \$10/month. We were not even close. Unfortunately, during the month of November, it was announced that the increase would be \$21.60 per month. That will reduce the Social Security raise by approximately 20%.

3. The Equal COLA Act. HR 304, the Equal COLA Act would provide Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirees with the same annual cost-of-living adjustments as Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirees. Current law reduces the COLA by 1% for FERS retirees if the adjustment is 3% or greater. HR 304 is currently in the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. If any of the representatives on this committee are in your district, you might contact them to support HR 304, so it can move to the House floor. (Representatives are listed at the end of this newsletter. Contact your House representative, if s/he is listed below at www.house.gov)

4. Does FEA member lobbying make a difference? After hearing from 168,000 NEA members about the failures of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), the Biden administration announced an overhaul of the broken program. Changes to PSLF will mean that 550, 000 borrowers will move significantly closer to student debt forgiveness. FEA has already heard from members who have had tens of thousands of dollars forgiven. Thank you FEA members who continue to reach out to Congress and make your voices heard. It does make a difference.

5. Having your “issues” resolved. Several months ago, we mentioned that some of our retired members were not receiving the NEA-Today—Retired Edition magazine. We checked with NEA and discovered there were some miscommunication and glitches with the mailing list. We

were assured this would be resolved and you should start receiving the magazine again in January.

6. Home for the holidays. Now would be a good time to re-visit NEA Member Benefits for exclusive shopping discounts. By setting up a Rakuten account, members can receive a \$10 bonus for spending \$25 or more at select stores. Right now there are special cash-back deals for Macy's, Nike, Dell, Lenovo, PetSmart, Hello Fresh and many more. NEA-MB provides FEA members with great savings while shopping online in a secure environment. Sign in at www.neamb.com and then click on "Benefits" in the top banner, and then "NEA Discount Marketplace" under "Everyday Savings." Happy Holidays!

7. DoDDS Reunion. Next year DoDDS Reunion will be at the Westin Crowne Center, Kansas City, Missouri, July 13-22, 2022. The current registration fee is \$95, but this will go up after January 1st. Hundreds of retirees have already registered. For more information go to www.mydoddsreunion.com

House of Representatives Committee of Oversight and Reform Members (www.house.gov):

Democratic members: C. Maloney (NY), E. Norton (DC), S. Lynch (MA), J. Cooper (TN), G. Connolly (VA), R. Krishnamoorthi (IL), J. Raskin (MD), R. Khanna (CA), K. Mfume (MD), A. Ocasio-Cortez (NY), R. Tlaib (MI), K. Porter (CA), C. Bush (MO), D. Davis (IL), D. Wasserman-Schultz (FL), P. Welch (VT), H. Johnson (GA), J. Sarbanes (MD), J. Speier (CA), R. Kelly (IL), B. Lawrence (MI), M. DeSaulnier (CA), J. Gomez (CA), Ayanna Pressley (MA), M. Quigley (IL)

Republican members: J. Comer (KY), J. Jordan (OH), V. Foxx (NC), J. Hice (GA), G. Grothman (WI), M. Cloud (TX), B. Gibbs (OH), C. Higgins (LA), R. Norman (SC), F. Keller (PA), P. Sessions (TX), A. Biggs (AZ), B. Donalds (FL), N. Mace (SC), Y. Herrell (NM), J. LaTurner (KS), P. Fallon (TX), A. Clyde (GA), S. Franklin (FL)
