



April 9, 2019

Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Social Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our three million members and the 50 million students they serve, we thank you for holding a series of hearings on Social Security. We would like to submit for the record the comments below in connection with tomorrow's hearing, "Comprehensive Legislative Proposals to Enhance Social Security."

Social Security is the most successful anti-poverty program in America's history. Roughly 52 percent of working-age households are at risk of being unable to maintain their standards of living in retirement. Without Social Security, 21.9 million Americans, including 15.2 million seniors and 1.1 million children, would be living in poverty. To make Social Security even more effective, we urge Congress to:

Lift the cap on taxable income to strengthen the Social Security Trust Fund

- At present, annual earnings up to \$132,900 are subject to the Social Security payroll tax.
- To put Social Security on a firm financial footing over the long term, we support lifting the cap on earnings subject to the payroll tax.
- Lifting the cap would not affect the vast majority of workers—only about 5 percent earn more than the current cap, according to the [Wall Street Journal](#).

Address long-standing inequities in benefits for certain public servants

- Eliminate the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) that deprive 2.5 million hard-working Americans of Social Security benefits they have earned—educators, police officers, firefighters, and other employees of state and local governments who dedicate their lives to public service.
- The GPO reduces, by two-thirds, the Social Security spousal or survivor benefits of people not covered by Social Security themselves.
- The WEP reduces, by up to 50 percent, the Social Security retirement, disability, spousal, or survivor benefits of people who work in jobs covered by Social Security and jobs NOT covered by Social Security over the course of their careers—for example, educators compelled to take part-time or summer jobs to make ends meet.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments and stand ready to work with you to enhance and strengthen Social Security.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association