

Dear Members of the Commission.

I understand one of the things that you will examine is the Windfall Elimination Provision and government Pension Offset penalties. I also understand none of you are from a non-contribute state but all of you have constituents in your district who are retired under a federal pension and are affected by this.

How can a government who has no trouble triple and even home run penalizing people have the audacity to call us double dippers? First of all under the WEP all of us are double contributors. Yet, most will receive half of what they deserve.

Look at what the government has no problem doing. It has no problem telling a spouse they cannot collect any of their spouses Social Security yet impose another penalty because they are not collecting it. Because of a law that was passed in 1972 that stated that a person could not collect less Social Security than they did the previous year, this year those paying Medicare B did not have an increase in their premiums, that is everyone but those under the GPO penalty. Why because they are not collecting Social Security. Why are they not collecting Social Security? Because the Government says they are not entitled to it under the GPO. So they are not only penalized once but twice because naturally in 1972 no one knew that this was going to become effective in 1982 to make it one of the exceptions!

In addition the definition for eligibility for Medicare is 65 years of age. Now the only people who will not have their 40 units in Social Security by that age are those in a WEP/GPO job so if they get the 40 units after 65 they are put under a 10% penalty per year for every year above 65 that they were. And once on it is on for life! The Medicare B penalty was meant for those who chose to be underinsured.

These people, retired from the federal government or a community were on a plan as good as or better than Medicare still they were penalized. HOW MANY TIMES ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP PENALIZING THIS GROUP?

Would it be hard to say eligibility for Medicare is 65 years of age and 40 units in Social Security either in their own right or as a spousal benefit? Thus the penalty would not be imposed on those for whom it was never intended!

In 1953, when I began my working career as a sixteen year older the US Government entered into a contract with me that if I worked and got 40 units under Social Security I would collect. They never told me as long as I was not foolish enough to enter into a public service job. SINCE WHEN IS IT FASHIONABLE FOR GOVERNMENT TO BREAK ITS WORD TO ITS PEOPLE!

You have the opportunity to start turning this around. There are 331 members of the House signed on to repeal the WEP/GPO---because they know it is fair and the right thing to do. There are 31 Senators. Please testify in favor of the fairness act!

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