



# American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

115th Congress

### APWU Supports Fair Benefits for America's Seniors

America's seniors have earned their benefits. The sad truth remains that, despite their contributions, current provisions and calculations have placed an undue amount of financial burden on those who already paid their fair share into the system.

APWU supports expanding Medicare to guarantee the right of healthcare for all Americans. Further, America's seniors should see their benefits expanded with fair increases to Social Security benefits, Cost of Living Adjustments based on calculations which adequately takes into consideration the spending habits of seniors, and the repeal of predatory provisions which penalize those who paid their fair share into Social Security.

### Legislation to Strengthen our Social Safety Net

#### Social Security Fairness Act

**S. 915**

**Sponsored by Sen. Sherrod Brown (OH)**

**H.R. 1205**

**Sponsored by Rep. Rodney Davis (IL-13)**

- Repeals the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provisions.
- The Government Pension Offset (GPO) reduces Social Security benefits to spouses or widows by two-thirds if they are currently receiving a retirement or disability pension based on prior employment, during which they did not pay into Social Security.
- The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) affects those who receive a pension from employment where they did not pay into Social Security but did qualify for Social Security benefits from other employment.
- Unfairly, these two provisions produce undue hardship for those who have met the requirements for Social Security benefits but are nevertheless penalized for previous employment under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS).

#### Social Security Expansion Act

**S. 427**

**Sponsored by Senator Bernie Sanders (VT)**

- Extends the solvency of the Social Security trust funds.
- Increases benefits.
- Scraps the cap on payroll income above \$250,000.
- Applies a 6.2% Social Security tax on investment income for high-income households.

#### CPI-E Act of 2017

**H.R. 1251**

**Sponsored by Rep. John Garamendi (CA-3)**

- COLAs are currently based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners (CPI-W). This measure of inflation does not adequately take into consideration the spending habits of seniors.
- CPI-E (Consumer Price Index for the Elderly) has been calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics but has never been applied.
- Using the CPI-E would more accurately reflect what seniors spend the bulk of their money on, such as healthcare.