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Office Of The Sheriff

UNION COUNTY, OHIO

Sheriff Malcum J. "Jamie" Patton

Social Security Fairness Act

June 4, 2024

Chair Sherrod Brown
Ranking member Tillis
Members of the sub-committee

Thank you for allowing me to present testimony in support of the Social Security Fairness Act sponsored by Senator Brown and Senator Collins. I have been in law enforcement for over 34 years, the last 13 years as the Sheriff of Union County. In addition to my law enforcement career, I'm also a grain farmer and my farm is in the northern part of Union County. I have been in the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System-Law Enforcement for the same number of years that I worked serving the citizens of Union County.

Since 1984, 40 years, I've paid into social security and I'm one directly impacted by the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). I'm one of millions of public sector employees impacted by the WEP and GPO.

Most recently, I was speaking with one of our County Commissioners about giving testimony here today on this important issue. He is another example of having owned his own business, a local Pharmacy and two decades in public service as a city council member, State House of Representatives, State Senator and now County Commissioner. He will be penalized for working multiple jobs providing for his family.

If you've paid into social security, then "why" won't you receive the benefits upon retirement age, no matter what additional retirement systems you have participated in. It surely doesn't make sense for a public employee to be penalized for being a public servant to their community.

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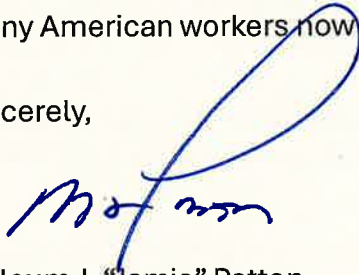
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The Social Security Fairness Act, which would change the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) in the Social Security Program. The current formula used by Social Security workers with mixed careers has a reduced factor in the Social Security benefit. This one-size fits all WEP formula does not allow for any exceptions. Most individuals who have worked in the private and then transitioned into a life of public service are penalized because they have contributed to two (2) different pension systems.

I, as an appointing authority, struggle to find able, capable, and willing persons to fill vacancies at my agency. This WEP is an obstacle that should not stand in the way of qualified individuals as employees or elected officials.

Again, I want to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this discussion that affects many American workers now and in the future.

Sincerely,



Malcum J. "Jamie" Patton
Sheriff – Union County