

LISA MURKOWSKI
ALASKA

COMMITTEES:
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
RANKING MEMBER
APPROPRIATIONS
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS
INDIAN AFFAIRS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0203
(202) 224-6665
(202) 224-5301 FAX

510 L STREET, SUITE 550
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501-1956
(907) 271-3735

101 12TH AVENUE, ROOM 216
FAIRBANKS, AK 99701-6278
(907) 456-0233

4079 TONGASS AVENUE, SUITE 204
KETCHIKAN, AK 99901-5526
(907) 225-6880

851 EAST WESTPOINT DRIVE, SUITE 307
WASILLA, AK 99654-7142
(907) 376-7665

April 29, 2009

Mr. Robert Doll
President
Retired Public Employees of Alaska
3310 Arctic Boulevard, Suite 200
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-4576

Dear Robert:

Thank you for contacting me to express your concerns regarding the Government Pension Offset Provision and the Windfall Elimination Provision of the Social Security Act.

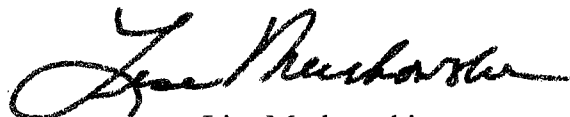
I believe that public employees deserve the chance to earn the same Social Security benefits as private sector employees. For this reason, I cosponsored S. 484, the Social Security Fairness Act, which would repeal the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision. It is my hope that S. 484 will be considered as part of any broad Social Security reform effort that may occur in the 111th Congress.

Under current law, the Government Pension Offset provision (GPO) reduces spouses' Social Security dependent benefits by two-thirds of their own government pension. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the GPO provision has cut benefits for approximately 300,000 Americans by more than \$3,600 per year. Additionally, under the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), a modified formula is used to calculate the Social Security benefits of retirees who also receive a pension from a job at which no Social Security taxes were collected. Some have estimated that WEP reduces the Social Security benefits of public pensioners by over \$4,000 per year.

Nearly one million government and public service retirees nationwide, including hundreds of thousands of teachers, police officers, and firefighters, are affected by GPO/WEP. Most of these retirees reside in states that maintain their own public employees' retirement systems, such as Alaska. The current system creates a serious disincentive to a career in public service at a time when we need to attract qualified people. This inequity must be addressed.

Again, thank you for contacting me.

Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator