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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, In 1977, Congress amended the Social Security Act to provide that pensions earned in federal, state, or local government employment not covered by social security be treated as if they were social security benefits, specifically requiring that if a person receives such a government pension, the social security benefits payable to that person as a spouse or surviving spouse be reduced by the amount of the government pension, which provision is commonly known as the Government Pension Offset; and

WHEREAS, Congress further amended the Social Security Act in 1983, reducing the amount of the Government Pension Offset to an amount equal to two-thirds of the amount of the government pension, but simultaneously enacted what is commonly known as the Windfall Elimination Provision, which requires reductions in the primary social security benefit earned by a person in employment covered by social security if the person also receives a pension from a federal, state, or local government not covered by social security; and

WHEREAS, Government employees in 15 states, including Illinois, earn pension benefits that are not covered by social security; and

WHEREAS, The retirement security and economic well-being of over 300,000 government retirees is degraded by the Government Pension Offset, some of whose benefits are also subject to reduction pursuant to the Windfall Elimination Provision; and

WHEREAS, Each provision has had unintentional consequences, the Windfall Elimination Provision causes a relatively larger reduction in benefits paid to workers with low incomes, while the Government Pension Offset applies

1 disproportionately to women, often dropping their income in
2 retirement below the poverty line, with the ironic effect of
3 making them eligible for more costly welfare benefits, such as
4 food stamps; and

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6 WHEREAS, Growing awareness of the inequities imposed by the
7 Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension
8 Offset threatens efforts to attract and retain persons into
9 public service in the affected states, particularly into
10 teaching.

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12 WHEREAS, There is pending before the 108th Session of
13 Congress the Social Security Fairness Act of 2003, H.R. 594 and
14 S.R. 349, which would repeal both the Government Pension Offset
15 and the Windfall Elimination Provision; and

16
17 WHEREAS, The repeal of these provisions would restore
18 fairness and equity to the most vulnerable federal, state, and
19 local government retirees and eliminate disincentives for
20 public service in the affected states; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
22 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
23 the members of the House of Representatives hereby urge
24 Congress to amend the Social Security Act by repealing the
25 provisions, commonly known as the Government Pension Offset and
26 the Windfall Elimination Provision, that require reductions in
27 the amount of social security benefits paid to persons who also
28 receive pensions earned in federal, state, or local government
29 employment not covered by social security; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
31 delivered to the Vice President of the United States as the
32 presiding officer of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
33 Representatives, and each member of the Illinois Congressional
34 Delegation.