The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) is an unfair federal provision preventing retirees from receiving the Social Security benefits they are owed. The WEP, which took effect in 1983, provides a means of eliminating the “windfall” of Social Security benefits received by beneficiaries who also receive a pension based on work not covered by Social Security.

Ninety-five percent of Texas public school employees do not pay into Social Security through their work with Texas schools. However, many have other jobs before, during, or after their employment in education in which they do pay into the federal program.

Congressman Kevin Brady’s (R–The Woodlands) Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act (HR 711) would replace the current WEP formula with a new, fairer one. TRTA representatives visited Washington, D.C. in March 2015, and advocated for HR 711’s support from all Texas congressional members. TRTA also provided information about WEP’s negative impact on Texas public education retirees.

On average, the WEP reduces TRTA members’ monthly incomes by $400. HR 711 will reduce the WEP for current retirees by as much as 33 percent. Future retirees will see the WEP reduced as much as 50 percent. Any increase in our Texas education retirees’ fixed incomes greatly bolsters their retirement security.

Many of HR 711’s 26 cosponsors are from Texas. However, the bill needs much more support in order for it to move forward. Presently, it is sitting in the House Committee on Ways and Means.

HR 711, if passed, would guarantee public servants receive the benefits they earned while they paid into Social Security. It would also increase lifetime Social Security benefits by between $20,000 and $32,400. HR 711 will not impact the Social Security trust fund and will treat retired educators just like everyone else!

Let’s create a national movement to give a better retirement to our public pension recipients!