



**2013**

---

**REVISITING THE  
TRTA LEGISLATIVE  
TRAINING INITIATIVE**





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION 1</b> Executive Summary	<b>1</b>
<b>SECTION 2</b> 83rd Legislative Session Overview	<b>2</b>
<b>SECTION 3</b> Senate Bill 1458 Overview	<b>4</b>
<b>SECTION 4</b> The Importance of the Interim	<b>7</b>
<b>SECTION 5</b> Change on the Horizon	<b>9</b>
<b>SECTION 6</b> Still An Issue	<b>11</b>



# INDEX

**SECTION 1. Executive Summary** 1

**SECTION 2: 83rd Legislative Session Overview** 2–3

**SECTION 3: Senate Bill 1458 Overview** 4–6

- A. General TRS Fund Improvements 4
- B. Benefit Enhancements for TRS Retirees 4
- C. Changes for Active School Employees 4–5
- D. School District Information 5
- E. Commonly Asked Questions About Senate Bill 1458 5–6

**SECTION 4: The Importance of the Interim** 7–8

- A. Saying Thank You to Our Legislators 7
- B. Maintaining Contact with Legislators and Educating Them 7–8
- C. Voting in Primary and General Elections 8

**SECTION 5: Change on the Horizon** 9–10

- A. Potential for Changes to the TRS Pension Fund Next Session 9
- B. Retiree Health Care Funding Challenges Will Escalate 9–10
- C. Texas Political Landscape Will Change 10

**SECTION 6: Still An Issue** 11–12

- A. Public Pension Plan Attacks Will Continue 11
- B. Changes to Social Security Will Continue to Get Some Attention 11–12



## SECTION 1: Executive Summary

2013 was a very productive year for the Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA), but our work is not done yet!

Included in the Revisiting the TRTA Legislative Training Initiative: 2013 edition is an overview of the 83rd Texas Legislative Session, a bulleted summary of the changes that were made to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) pension fund by the passage of Senate Bill 1458, what our members should be doing now to maintain our successes and the changes and issues we can still expect to face in the near future.

Perhaps the most significant takeaways from the 83rd Legislative Session and Senate Bill 1458 are as follows:

- TRTA started the session fighting to receive 6.4% state contribution to the TRS pension fund and 1% state contribution to TRS-Care
- As the session progressed, Senator Robert Duncan and Representative Bill Callegari drafted Senate Bill 1458, and through several drafts and meetings with both retired and active teacher groups, the bill finally passed unanimously in May 2013
- SB 1458 provides a 3% cost-of-living increase (not to exceed \$100 per month) to about 200,000 TRS retirees (those who retired as of August 31, 2004 or before)
- The state contribution to the TRS pension fund will be 6.8% in 2014 and 2015; the active employee contribution will increase gradually from 6.4% in 2014 to 6.7% in 2015, 7.2% in 2016 and cap at 7.7% in 2017; and a new school district contribution of 1.5% goes into effect in 2015. All of these contributions combined vastly improve the revenue stream for TRS, making the fund actuarially sound for the first time in many years.
- A new minimum retirement age of 62 was introduced, but will only include TRS members who are not vested as of September 1, 2014 (to be vested, one must pay into TRS for 5 years or more).



*Now is a great time for members of TRTA to thank their legislators*

for making TRS a priority in 2013. Their timely efforts will prevent the pension fund's liabilities from growing rapidly when the new GASB rules go into effect in 2014.

The success of the 83rd Legislative Session, though hard won, is not guaranteed without continued vigilance from TRTA members. It is possible that active teacher groups or school districts will protest some of the provisions of SB 1458. TRTA members must also be prepared to face changes in their TRS-Care health insurance program, as it faces a shortfall of \$1 billion within the next two years.

Other changes that are inevitable include many new faces in the Texas Legislature and in leadership positions. This means we must educate hundreds of candidates about TRS and we must VOTE! Our members must also expect to continue the fight against public pension plan attacks at both the local and national levels, and become re-engaged in talks about Social Security that impact their benefits.

## SECTION 2: 83rd Legislative Session Overview

When the 2013 Legislative Session began, TRTA was ready to push an aggressive agenda for higher state contributions to TRS, financial relief for retirees, and protection of TRS–Care. These items were introduced in various bills by our many friends in the Legislature. TRTA's focus was on making the fund actuarially sound, which would allow for better opportunities to protect TRS–Care in 2015.

The need for action on actuarial soundness became even more apparent as we learned more about new pension reporting methodologies. This elephant in the room is known as the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Rule 68.

The new GASB statement, which begins implementation in January 2014, is the result of growing concerns over public pension funding across the United States. Statement 68 changes the way public pension funds' liabilities appear on a state's balance sheet. If a public pension fund is deemed as not having a "funding period" (a time when the plan will be 100% funded), the plan cannot use board determined investment return assumptions. Instead, they are forced to use a much lower "blended rate," which has a large impact on the assumed funded balance. GASB 68 meant that if TRS was considered 80% funded in 2013 it could be as low as 60% funded under the new rule by 2014.

That looming reality, along with the knowledge that TRS retirees had now not had a cost-of-living increase in 12 years, urged TRTA members to action. TRTA was also surprised to learn that no members of the House Pensions, Investments, and Financial Services Committee from the previous session were reappointed to the new House Pensions Committee.

Despite all of this, TRTA quickly found many friends in the Texas Legislature who wanted to help. Representative James Keffer filed HB 1383, urging the state to increase its contributions to the fund gradually over time, from 6.4% to 7.4%. At the time, this stair-step approach was considered the most reasonable one and perhaps the only option available for protecting the fund. Representative Larry Gonzales, who championed a 13th check bill in 2011, returned with the same bill in 2013 (HB 103). Senator Bob Deuell carried the bill in the Senate (SB 643).

Although TRTA did not write the legislation, longtime retiree supporter Senator Robert Duncan along with Representative Bill Callegari came together to formulate a TRS omnibus bill that effectively would end the overwhelming worries about the GASB 68 rule for TRS.

SB 1458, now known as the "TRS Actuarial Soundness Bill," was crafted over several weeks of lengthy discussions among legislators, TRTA, active education employee/employer groups and TRS actuaries. We worked closely with our friends in the active educator community, but made it clear that our primary function was representing the interests of all current and future TRS retirees. Our top priority was long-term solvency for TRS. Solvency protects our vital TRS defined benefit plan and makes increases possible for retirees.

As discussions progressed, TRTA lent its support to Senator Duncan and Representative Callegari while working with groups such as ATPE, TASB, TASA and TEPSA to improve the bill. By early May, actuaries indicated that it may be possible due to current investment returns and contribution changes to provide some retirees with a 3% cost-of-living increase.

Initially, this extended only to retirees who retired in 1994 or before. Soon, as the bill added a school district contribution to the TRS fund for the first time in the fund's history, that COLA was extended to retirees who retired in 1999 or before. Still, this included only about 100,000 of 300,000 retirees. The bill

SB 1458, the "TRS Actuarial Soundness" bill

became acceptable in mid-May to the majority of active teacher groups as Senators Wendy Davis, Kirk Watson and Royce West worked with Senator Duncan to improve some of the bill's provisions. As a result of their efforts, an additional \$100 million was added to TRS.

With this bipartisan effort, SB 1458 received unanimous support and passed out of the Senate. The bill was then sent to the House Pensions Committee, where Chairman Callegari and committee members accepted the bill in its new format.

Before the bill made it to the House floor for a vote, some concern over the COLA for retirees was raised. From the House floor, Representative Bill Callegari added an amendment which expanded the COLA to those who retired as of August 31, 2004 or before, meaning nearly 200,000 retirees, many of whom are in their seventies and eighties, now would receive a benefit increase!

While TRTA worked aggressively to expand the COLA, our friends in the active community raised some contention over the grandfathering provision for active educators. State Representatives Armando Walle and Phil King passed amendments to the bill to address this issue and also included language for all TRS retirees to receive a 13th check. SB 1458 then passed the House, again with unanimous support!

The Senate did not agree with all of the new amendments, so a conference committee was appointed to negotiate the final details. It was later determined that keeping Representative Walle's amendment would have prevented the fund from becoming actuarially sound and hence, the 13th check provision was removed. If kept, no retiree would have received a COLA or a 13th check. It was determined that the expanded COLA provision could remain and still maintain the fund's actuarial soundness; however, extending the COLA beyond the 2004 date would make the fund not actuarially sound.

With the expanded 2004 COLA intact and all other provisions in place for increased state, member, and school district funding, the "TRS Actuarial Soundness Bill" was finally passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature! Governor Perry signed the bill into law in the summer of 2013, and



TRS retirees who retired as of August 31, 2004 or before will receive a 3% cost of living increase (not to exceed \$100 per month) beginning in October 2013.

## SECTION 3: Senate Bill 1458 Overview

*Senate Bill 1458 protects all TRS members.*

### General TRS Fund Improvements

- SB 1458 helps make the TRS fund actuarially sound and protects the benefit plan for retired and active public school employees;
- The bill increases contributions to the TRS fund from the state by over \$200 million this biennium;
- Additional state and employer revenue to TRS in the coming biennium totals \$530 million;
- The state's contribution to TRS is 6.8% in FY 2014 and 6.8% in FY 2015;
- TRS-Care (the retiree health care program) will receive approximately \$80 million more in funding this biennium;
- TRS is restricted by a budget rider in SB 1 (the budget bill) to maintain existing premiums for the coming biennium for TRS-Care.

### Benefit Enhancement for TRS retirees

- TRS now will be actuarially sound;
- **TRS retirees who were retired on or before August 31, 2004 will receive a 3% cost-of-living increase;**
- The COLA provides a cap that limits the annuity increase to \$100 per month;
- The COLA provision brings the TRS amortization period to 29.5 years;
- Expanding the COLA to those who retired 9-1-2004 or later would have made the fund not actuarially sound, thus making the COLA invalid for any retiree;
- The COLA provision will help over 195,000 TRS retirees and/or surviving spouses;
- **Future increases will be more likely with the fund's improving actuarial status.**

### Changes for Active School Employees

- TRS members may retire once they satisfy the Rule of 80 (combination of age and years of service that equals 80);
- SB 1458 implements an early retirement age-adjusted annuity;
- The age-adjusted annuity provision reduces an employee's retirement benefit by 5% for every year of age less than age 62 at time of retirement;
- The bill grandfathers all vested active employees (those with 5 years of service as of 9/1/14) from the minimum age retirement provision;
- This part of the bill is prospective to FY 2014, meaning active employees will earn another year of service that may be used towards vesting;
- All active TRS members will make higher contributions to the TRS pension fund;
- Increased member contributions will be phased in over time, allowing for a smoother transition to the higher rate;
- The new rates are:
  - ◇ 6.4% in FY 2014 (no change);
  - ◇ 6.7% in FY 2015;
  - ◇ 7.2% in FY 2016; and
  - ◇ 7.7% in FY 2017
- Requires a future retiree to meet the Rule of 80 with a minimum age 62 in order to participate in TRS-Care 2 or 3;
- Any active member who retires prior to age 62 will have access to TRS-Care 1 and will be able to join TRS-Care 2 or 3 at age 62;

- This TRS–Care provision grandfathers any current active member **who meets the Rule of 70 (combination of years of service and age equal 70 or more) or who has at least 25 years of service as of September 1, 2014;**
- Existing retirees participating in TRS–Care *are not affected by this change.*

### School District Information

- School districts not paying into Social Security will be required to pay into the TRS fund at 1.5% of the district payroll based on the minimum salary schedule;
- While this is a new contribution, it is prospective and will not go into effect until FY 2015 and is far less costly than contributing to the federal Social Security program as some school districts do;
- The state is providing the funding to school districts for this new contribution in FY 2015 to ease the transition and assist with future budget planning.

This legislation assures TRS members that the fund is actuarially sound. Because the fund is projected to be actuarially sound, TRS likely will avoid major penalties and scrutiny that would occur due to the new GASB 68 provision being implemented in January 2014.

It also protects the TRS defined benefit plan for all future retirees. SB 1458 protects the retirement security of 1.3 million Texans, many of whom do not have Social Security.

### *Commonly asked questions about Senate Bill 1458*

*What elected officials supported SB 1458?* All present and voting Texas Senators and Representatives voted in favor of the final version of SB 1458. There were not any Senators or Representatives who voted against the bill.

*During legislative session, I was told my Representative and/or Senator did not support SB 1458. Now I am reading that they all voted for it. How did this change of opinion occur?* During the course of the legislative session, SB 1458 changed significantly and new versions were created on an almost weekly basis. Legislation tends to be very fluid and changes rapidly during a quick, five-month session. Once the bill had the support of all active teacher groups, all Senators and Representatives showed their support for the bill by voting for it.

*Who qualifies for the cost-of-living increase?* TRS retirees who retired as of August 31, 2004 or before qualify for the cost-of-living increase.

*Why didn't every retiree in the TRS system receive an increase?* Because the TRS pension fund must be actuarially sound in order for the Texas Legislature to approve raises for TRS retirees, not all of the retirees were able to qualify for the raise. Actuaries that calculate the financial status of TRS provided input on a variety of potential scenarios, and it was concluded that the system could not sustain a raise for all of its 300,000+ retired members. In other words, the system simply could not be actuarially sound by state law if it provided raises for all of its retired members.

*What exactly is a cost-of-living increase?* A cost-of-living increase is a raise in salary. Your monthly annuity will be impacted permanently by the 3% cost-of-living increase. The new monthly amount that you begin receiving in October 2013 will remain the same, barring any changes in your tax bracket or insurance coverage that is deducted from your check. Your monthly annuity could be impacted again if another



What is a COLA?

cost-of-living increase is awarded in the future.

*How much more money will I receive in my monthly annuity?* The cost-of-living increase is a 3% raise (calculated on your gross income), but not to exceed \$100 per month.

*Will we receive more raises in the future?* Although cost-of-living increases are not guaranteed to retirees of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS), the possibility of receiving one is higher when the system is actuarially sound. All raises must be approved by the Texas Legislature through legislation that meets state statute. SB 1458 made the TRS pension fund actuarially sound for the first time since 1995, which gave the Texas Legislature the opportunity to provide a raise for some retirees. TRTA will continue to advocate for raises and for maintaining the fund's financial soundness.

*How does SB 1458 impact the active education employees?* Active education employees will contribute more from their salary toward their retirement beginning in 2015. The active employee contribution rate has remained at 6.4% since 1985. The new rates are: 6.7% in FY 2015; 7.2% in FY 2016; and 7.7% in FY 2017.

*How does SB 1458 impact school districts?* For the first time in the history of TRS, school districts that do not pay into Social Security will begin paying in a 1.5% employer contribution to the TRS fund. The state's contribution will be 6.8% in 2014 and 2015.

 Combining the state and school district contribution means that the total employer contribution to the fund will be 8.3%.

For the first year of the new school district contribution, the state is picking up the tab.

*Did SB 1458 have the support of active teacher lobbying/advocacy groups?* Initially, active employee organizations did not support SB 1458. This is because early versions of the bill called for cuts to active employees' retirement benefits. After considerable discussion and compromise, active employee groups expressed the desire of their members to pay more into the system now rather than take a cut in their annuities upon retirement. As a result, the active teacher contribution rate will begin increasing in 2015 and will cap at 7.7% in 2017. Active employee groups also had concerns about the grandfathering provisions that were introduced initially, and worked with TRTA and legislators to grandfather all employees who are vested in TRS by September 1, 2014. To become vested in TRS, an employee must pay into TRS for at least five years. Those employees who are not vested by September 2014 and new hires will have a new minimum retirement age of 62, with a cut of 5% in retirement benefits for every year of age away from age 62 at the time of retirement. Once these changes were made to the final version of SB 1458, all active teacher groups expressed their support of the bill.

## SECTION 4: The Importance of the Interim

### *Saying Thank You to Our Legislators*

Now that the 83rd Legislative Session and its special sessions are over, TRTA members' first contact to their legislators should be to express gratitude for the work that was done to protect and preserve TRS. TRTA encourages all members to send a handwritten note to their Texas Senator and Representative as soon as possible.

Write a  
"Thank You"  
note to your  
legislator!



The note may be simple and forthright: "Dear Representative or Senator (Name), I am a member of the Texas Retired Teachers Association and your constituent. I am writing today to thank you for supporting Senate Bill 1458, which made the Teacher Retirement System pension fund sound for the first time in many years. SB 1458 also provided the first cost-of-living increase for many retirees since 2001. Thank you for all of your hard work during the 83rd Legislative Session and for supporting retired public education employees."

If you are a retiree that has not yet received a raise, we encourage you to express thanks to your legislators for preserving the TRS pension fund. Without SB 1458, the fund would have faced a multi-billion dollar shortfall in 2014 that would have prevented all retirees from receiving cost-of-living increases for the foreseeable future and would have jeopardized the benefits of future retirees.

We appreciate you taking the time to show gratitude to your legislators. Please remember that all members of both the Texas Senate and Texas House of Representatives voted in favor of SB 1458.

#### Mailing address for Texas Senators:

The Honorable (Full Name)  
Texas Senate  
P.O. Box 12068 – Capitol Station  
Austin, TX 78711

#### Mailing address for Texas Representatives:

The Honorable (Full Name)  
Texas House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, TX 78768-2910

#### *Maintaining Contact with Legislators and Educating Them*

As you will read in the next section, Change on the Horizon, there are going to be many new legislators joining the Texas Legislature in 2015. There were also 50 new legislators in 2013, meaning that nearly half of the entire body will have less than two years of experience once the 84th Legislative Session begins.

Newer members have a lot of information to learn and process, and they need people like you to educate them about issues impacting TRS retirees. Please make the effort to mail, email, call and make personal visits to legislators in their district offices during the interim. Contacting your legislator once per month is not excessive, and will help you establish a rapport with him or her.

Even officials that have been in office for a considerable amount of time appreciate receiving new information about TRS. We already know that TRS–Care, for example, will be a significant issue in the 84th Legislative Session. TRS–Care will experience numerous changes, and it is important that you let your legislators know what actions you think should be taken to protect the health insurance program. Your legislator will want to know what role you think the state should play, as well as what role you think you and other retirees should assume in funding TRS–Care. In other words, be prepared to express what you are and are not willing to compromise on when it comes to your healthcare.

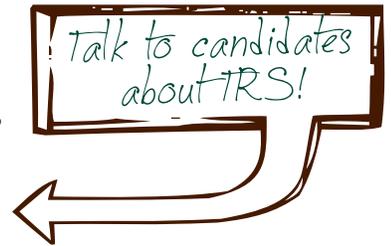
To locate your legislators' district offices and phone numbers, please visit the Texas Legislature "Who Represents Me?" feature: [www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx](http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx).

#### *Voting in Primary and General Elections*

Knowing that many changes are expected in leadership roles in the Texas Legislature and other state offices in 2015, it is important for our members to research and communicate with all candidates for political office.

Be especially attentive to races in your area which may result in a change of your Senator or Representative. Please ask candidates the following questions:

- ◇ Do you support a defined benefit plan for all current and future TRS retirees?
- ◇ Do you support providing reasonable, affordable healthcare for TRS retirees?
- ◇ What will you do as my legislator to ensure that the TRS pension fund and TRS–Care health insurance program are preserved and improved?



Please report back to TRTA with any responses you receive, both positive and negative. Send an email to [info@trta.org](mailto:info@trta.org) with the subject line "Elections."

## SECTION 5: Change on the Horizon

### *Potential for Changes to the TRS Pension Fund Next Session*

Although the passing of SB 1458 was a tremendous success, we must remain vigilant in maintaining its tenets to protect all TRS retirees now and in the future. We must be aware that although we had the support of all active teacher organizations upon the final passage of the bill, their members may express opposition to some features of the bill and prompt those organizations to change them.

For example, it is possible that school districts might push back on the newly created 1.5% contribution. We have also heard discussion about non-Social Security Districts being made to contribute to the TRS pension fund.

Active member groups may try to reduce the plan contribution rates for active employees. Active member groups may also try to grandfather more members from the minimum age 62 (currently, this applies only to employees who are not vested in TRS by September 1, 2014 and new hires).

We must always remember that the current Texas Legislature cannot commit future Legislatures to budget items. Because of this, the state may consider lowering their contributions. The state may also divert contributions from the pension fund to help fund TRS-Care.

Cost-of-living increases for post-2004 retirees will be discussed in 2015. TRTA will prioritize this concern in the 2015 legislative session, while working with active organizations to maintain a sound pension fund. Please bear in mind that all of these potential circumstances create financial repercussions for the TRS pension fund. Certain changes to the system could cause it to once again become not actuarially sound. Recall from our previous materials that unless the system is actuarially sound, cost-of-living increases for current retirees cannot be approved by the Texas Legislature due to state law (statute 821.006).

### *Retiree Health Care Funding Challenges Will Escalate*

Despite a new TRS Medicare Advantage plan and prescription coverage changes, TRS-Care is still projected to have a shortfall of over \$1 billion in the next biennium. TRS conducted a legislatively mandated study on the health insurance program during the previous interim, and will update that study in 2014.

TRS is seeking ways to save the program money while preventing retirees from shouldering more of the burden. However, a close look at the program's finances indicates that an increase in retiree premiums in the next biennium is a very real possibility.

TRTA feels it is best for all members who use TRS-Care to be aware of potential changes in costs, coverage, or both in the coming years. All members should read carefully any information they receive from TRS regarding their health insurance. TRTA will also keep its members informed through the *Inside Line* and *The VOICE*.



Read all information you receive from TRS about your health insurance plan!

Major changes of the Affordable Care Act will take effect in 2014. The impact is generally unknown. We have also heard that Medicare Advantage plans may be affected by these changes. Overall funding for Medicare is cut significantly under the Affordable Care Act legislation. As this legislation takes effect, TRTA will pay close attention to any impact this may have on TRS–Care programs.

*Texas Political Landscape Will Change*

Texas will have a new Governor, Attorney General and State Comptroller during the 84th Legislative Session that begins in January 2015. Current Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst faces many challengers who already have announced their candidacy for the position he holds.

The makeup of the Texas Senate and House of Representatives could change significantly as well. Several current members have indicated their intention to run for other elected offices, while some have resigned to pursue other interests.

We have the advantage of being aware that change is imminent, and must pursue a path of educating ourselves and candidates about issues impacting TRS retirees.

*Educate legislators and candidates NOW,  
before the next session begins!*

## SECTION 6: Still An Issue

### *Public Pension Plan Attacks Will Continue*

Many of our members have heard about changes to public pension fund accounting that will go into effect in 2014. These changes are being introduced by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and came about when numerous pension plans struggled during the recession.

One of the reasons Senate Bill 1458 was passed in Texas in 2013 was because the new GASB standards would have made TRS' liabilities increase significantly to \$24 billion. Remember from our 83rd Legislative Session Overview that GASB Statement 68 meant that TRS could be considered as low as 60% funded by 2014. Because Texas made several changes to TRS now, the new GASB standards will have less impact on TRS because it is now actuarially sound.

While Senate Bill 1458 helped improve the condition of the TRS pension fund, defined benefit pension plans in general will continue to be attacked. The GASB reporting requirements will negatively impact public DB plans overall. Many believe the 8% investment return assumption is not reasonable in the current low-interest environment.

The Society of Actuaries "Blue-Ribbon Pension Study" will study current DB plans and probably recommend using a risk free return rate to price liabilities, which would make the liabilities appear much larger than what is reported currently. Moody's requirement for reporting pension liabilities as part of the bond rating process also will negatively impact public DB plans.

The John and Laura Arnold Foundation continues to "reform America's public pension systems." Bankrupt local governments in Detroit, California and Alabama will put more pressure on pension reforms. Congress is looking at tax reforms and the taxability of pension fund contributions.

← Based in Houston, Texas

As you can see, there are many concerns about public pension plans in general, and our members must be aware of national discussions, studies and attention given to these plans to gain insight into whether or not TRS will be affected.

The TRTA Facebook page is a great resource for learning more about what is happening with pension plans across the nation. We frequently post articles and updates about national and international pension funds. Find us on Facebook here: [www.facebook.com/pages/TRTA-Texas-Retired-Teachers-Association/126989714019649](http://www.facebook.com/pages/TRTA-Texas-Retired-Teachers-Association/126989714019649).

### *Changes to Social Security Will Continue to Get Some Attention*

The topic of mandatory Social Security is still alive and kicking. TRTA expects hearings about this issue to occur before the end of 2013. If mandatory Social Security were to become instated, our school districts would have to find the 6.2% employer portion from their already pinched budgets.

TRTA does not support mandatory Social Security and has been asked to testify on this issue before congressional subcommittees in the past. TRTA expects another invitation to testify this year.

Many of our members continue to be concerned about the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). H.R. 1795 by Representative Rodney Davis calls for the repeal of the GPO and the WEP. The legislation has 88 cosponsors and was referred to the House Committee

on Ways and Means in April of 2013. The Senate companion bill, S. 896 by Senator Mark Begich, was referred to the Senate Committee on Finance in May 2013. It has 12 cosponsors. No significant action has occurred on either bill since being referred to their respective committees.

TRTA expects that the mandatory Social Security issue will take precedence over the elimination of the GPO and WEP this year.

Remember, you can use the Texas Legislature Online “Who Represents Me?” feature to find out who your state as well as national elected officials are ([www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx](http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx)). Call or write to your Congressmen (your Representative and your Senator) and ask them to support H.R. 1975 and S. 896.

TRTA will provide updates through the *Inside Line*, *The VOICE*, and our Facebook page as we learn more about the mandatory Social Security discussions in D.C.



Mandatory Social Security is a hot topic in Congress



