

one of the most honorable professions. I credit our teachers with laying the foundation for the future of our country and the world. In addition to teaching children the basic skills they need, teachers are an important guiding force for our children. After parents, they are one of the greatest influences on children. We therefore need to make sure we have well-qualified and well-paid teachers educating students.

As you know Mr. Speaker, passage of this bill before us would reduce the spousal Social Security benefits for countless teachers. H.R. 743 also affects school support personnel, police officers, firefighters, and other public servants. At a time when multi-billion dollar tax breaks are being given to our country's top income earners, our teachers and other public servants would be penalized through this bill. These are people we should be protecting and rewarding. We should not make them pay for the tax cuts we give those who are more fortunate. For this reason I cannot support the original version of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I have co-sponsored H.R. 594, a bill introduced by my colleague, Mr. MCKEON, that will eliminate the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provisions that target our teachers and other public servants by denying them the opportunity to retain their full spousal Social Security benefits. This bill would be a more appropriate permanent solution to the unfair treatment of teachers' social security benefits. However, until we can pass that bill, I strongly urge my colleagues to support the Green Substitute, oppose H.R. 743 unless it is amended, and continue to support our teachers. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reluctant opposition to HR 743, the Social Security Protection Act. While this bill contains many provisions worthy of support, it also removes the only means by which many widowed Texas public school teachers can receive the same spousal social security benefits as every other American. As I am sure my colleagues are aware, widowed public school employees in Texas, like public employees throughout the The Government Pension Offset even applies if the public employee in question worked all the quarters necessary to qualify for full social security benefits either before or after working in the public school system!

The effect of the Government Pension Offset is to punish people for teaching in public schools! However, current law provides widowed Texas public school teachers a means of collecting the full social security spousal benefits. Unfortunately, this bill removes that option from Texas teachers. Since I believe the Congress should repeal the Government Pension Offset by passing HR 524, which repeals both the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision, another provision that denies public employees full social security benefits, I must oppose this bill.

Instead of punishing public school teachers, Congress should be encouraging good people to enter the education profession by passing my Teacher Tax Cut Act (HR 613) which provides every teacher with a \$1,000 tax credit, as well as my Professional Educators Tax Credit act (HR 614), which provides a \$1,000 tax credit to counselors, librarians, and all school personnel. Congress should also act to protect the integrity of the Social Security Trust Fund by passing my Social Security Preservation Act (HR 219), which ensures that

Social Security monies are not spent on other programs. Congress should also pass my Social Security for American Citizens Only Act (HR 489), which ensures that non-citizens who have not worked the required number of quarters and illegal immigrants do not receive social security benefits.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 743. First, I would like to acknowledge Mr. MATSUI for working diligently on the Social Security Act of 2003.

As we all know, H.R. 743 will extend the direct fee withholding program payment to attorneys who represent supplemental security income claimants, thus encouraging more attorneys to represent them.

It is vital that we pass legislation that addresses the major concerns of our seniors, the blind, and the disabled.

This legislation imposes greater standards on individuals and organizations that serve as representative payees for social security and supplemental security income recipients; this legislation will make non-governmental representative payees liable for "misused" funds and subject them to civil monetary penalties; H.R. 743 will reduce the fee assessments from the Social Security Administration that charges attorneys for fee withholding.

Overall, the Social Security Act of 2003 will be beneficial to recipients and those who serve as representatives for recipients.

Furthermore, H.R. 743 will make a number of technical changes designed to reduce social security fraud and abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I will close my statement for the RECORD with supporting H.R. 743.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LINDER). All time having been yielded back, it is now in order to consider the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in House Report 108-54.

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE OFFERED BY MR. GREEN OF TEXAS

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

Amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. GREEN of Texas:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Social Security Protection Act of 2003".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.

TITLE I—PROTECTION OF BENEFICIARIES

Subtitle A—Representative Payees

Sec. 101. Authority to reissue benefits misused by organizational representative payees.

Sec. 102. Oversight of representative payees.

Sec. 103. Disqualification from service as representative payee of persons convicted of offenses resulting in imprisonment for more than 1 year or fleeing prosecution, custody, or confinement.

Sec. 104. Fee forfeiture in case of benefit misuse by representative payees.

Sec. 105. Liability of representative payees for misused benefits.

Sec. 106. Authority to redirect delivery of benefit payments when a representative payee fails to provide required accounting.

Subtitle B—Enforcement

Sec. 111. Civil monetary penalty authority with respect to wrongful conversions by representative payees.

TITLE II—PROGRAM PROTECTIONS

Sec. 201. Civil monetary penalty authority with respect to knowing withholding of material facts.

Sec. 202. Issuance by Commissioner of Social Security of receipts to acknowledge submission of reports of changes in work or earnings status of disabled beneficiaries.

Sec. 203. Denial of title II benefits to persons fleeing prosecution, custody, or confinement, and to persons violating probation or parole.

Sec. 204. Requirements relating to offers to provide for a fee a product or service available without charge from the Social Security Administration.

Sec. 205. Refusal to recognize certain individuals as claimant representatives.

Sec. 206. Penalty for corrupt or forcible interference with administration of Social Security Act.

Sec. 207. Use of symbols, emblems, or names in reference to social security or medicare.

Sec. 208. Disqualification from payment during trial work period upon conviction of fraudulent concealment of work activity.

Sec. 209. Authority for judicial orders of restitution.

TITLE III—ATTORNEY FEE PAYMENT SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

Sec. 301. Cap on attorney assessments.

Sec. 302. Extension of attorney fee payment system to title XVI claims.

TITLE IV—MISCELLANEOUS AND TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS

Subtitle A—Amendments Relating to the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999

Sec. 401. Application of demonstration authority sunset date to new projects.

Sec. 402. Expansion of waiver authority available in connection with demonstration projects providing for reductions in disability insurance benefits based on earnings.

Sec. 403. Funding of demonstration projects provided for reductions in disability insurance benefits based on earnings.

Sec. 404. Availability of Federal and State work incentive services to additional individuals.

Sec. 405. Technical amendment clarifying treatment for certain purposes of individual work plans under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program.

Subtitle B—Miscellaneous Amendments

Sec. 411. Elimination of transcript requirement in remand cases fully favorable to the claimant.

Sec. 412. Nonpayment of benefits upon removal from the United States.

Sec. 413. Reinstatement of certain reporting requirements.

Sec. 414. Clarification of definitions regarding certain survivor benefits.