



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTMASTERS
OF THE UNITED STATES

TESTIMONY OF

FRANCES ROSENFELD
RETIRED POSTMASTER

BEFORE THE

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMERCE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

JANUARY 16, 2008

Chairman McNulty, Ranking Member Johnson, and distinguished Subcommittee members, I am Frances Rosenfield, and I am here representing the 40,000 active and retired members of the National Association of Postmasters of the United States (NAPUS). Postmasters manage the operations of the approximately 27,000 Post Offices throughout this Nation. Moreover, retired Postmasters continue to remain actively involved in legislative matters, such as the one the Subcommittee has under consideration today. I would add that I have been a member of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees since 1979.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to have been the Postmaster of two New York Post Offices during 27 years of service to my country and to my postal customers. In 1965, President Lyndon Baines Johnson appointed me Postmaster of Roslyn Heights, New York; and 19 years later, Postmaster General William Bolger promoted me to Postmaster of Great Neck, New York. Upon my retirement, in 1992, I traveled approximately 150 miles up the Hudson River, to become a constituent of Chairman McNulty.

However, my story of how, and what I consider to be an unfair and punitive Social Security law began 53 years ago. My husband, Myron, was a private sector economist; he was in the workforce for about twenty years. In 1955, Myron tragically passed away at the youthful age of 41,

and I became a young widow. Myron left me a single parent of two children, one 10 years old and the other 6 years old. Fortunately, my two children were eligible for Social Security survivor benefits until they reached the age of 18. I worked for a number of years as the editor of community newspaper, prior to being appointed Postmaster. As an employee of the Postal Department, and then the Postal Service, I participated in the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). Indeed, I never thought that the combination of Myron's deferred Social Security survivor benefit, to which I was entitled, and my earned C-S-R-S annuity would be considered excessive or inappropriate. Mr. Chairman, it is not. As result of the Government Pension Offset statute, upon my retirement, my Social Security survivor benefit was recalculated, so that my current payment amounts to only \$825 per month.

Unlike so many of my co-sufferers of the unfair G-P-O, I had a warning that storm clouds were on the horizon. In the early-to-mid1980s, I was NAPUS' New York State Legislative Chair. I was attentive to the politics of reshaping Social Security, and the creation of the Federal Employees Retirement System, which brought postal and federal employees into the Social Security System. Moreover, within my capacity of Legislative Chair, I worked long and hard in a, thus far, unsuccessful effort to undue the legislative mistake made in the late 1970's when Congress passed the G-P-O. Over the past three decades Congress has made numerous attempts to eliminate, or reduce the effects of the G-P-O. In

fact, 336 of your colleagues have joined in calling for the elimination of the G-P-O. Now, this Committee has the opportunity, the skill and the motivation to make due on the commitment to provide non-discriminatory Social Security survivor benefits to federal and postal CSRS retirees. Ironically, had I not been committed to public service, and, instead, been employed in the for-profit sector of the economy, with a private pension, I would not have suffered this fate.

I understand that I am only one of the thousands of public service retirees who have been victimized by an unfair and arbitrary Social Security GPO and the Windfall Elimination Provision. However, I urge this Subcommittee, and ultimately the Congress to pass legislation to remedy the discriminatory treatment many Civil Service Retirement System annuitants suffer. H.R. 82, legislation proposed by Representatives Berman and McKeon, is a bill that NAPUS wholeheartedly endorses. I also understand that the Subcommittee may want to take an incremental approach. In any case, it is important that Congress remedy the situation, in order to provide for the earned benefits for our retirees and their families.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my views.