

Americans. His discovery ultimately led to a Senate Sub-Committee chaired by the Honorable Senator William Proxmire of Wisconsin to investigate the scandal. This incident is memorialized in the U.S. CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and in the books *Report from Wasteland—America's Military Industrial Complex*, by Senator William Proxmire and *The Pentagonists*, by A. Earnest Fitzgerald.

Our hearts are saddened with the loss of such a precious man, but at the same time we are grateful for his contributions to our country, the state of Mississippi, and his family. I know my colleagues will join me in honoring and appreciating the remarkable life of Mr. John M. McGee.

ELIMINATION OF THE WEP AND GPO

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today I have asked Senator FEINSTEIN to add me as a cosponsor to her bill, S. 1523, which would amend the Social Security Act to permanently repeal the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision. I am pleased to support my colleague Senator KENNEDY and others in their support of this bill.

Massachusetts is one of 15 states in which the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision hits employees and retirees particularly hard, because it is one of the few remaining states where many state employees, such as teachers, do not pay into the Federal Social Security system. Rather, they pay into a state pension fund. For many workers, the formulas in the law that reduce Social Security benefits for these workers can have troubling and unintended consequences.

Listen to the testimonial of one educator from my state. This constituent writes:

I served 13 years in the military and am a wartime veteran. I did not receive a military pension; however, I did pay into Social Security. I am shocked to learn that I may receive virtually nothing from Social Security. My teaching pension in Massachusetts will be small if I retire at 60 with only 22 years of teaching service. I had previously thought that Social Security would help to make up for the smaller teaching pension. I feel that the Federal government is unfairly penalizing those who have embarked on second careers as teachers. They have created a disincentive that will work against filling projected teaching shortages. I feel especially cheated as I did sacrifice much during my military career. It is obvious that I would be much better off financially had I not served at all. I hope this is not the message that the government wants to send.

The government pension offset has a significant impact on the benefits of many retired public employees just like this one. For example, a disabled former school employee and widow who retired in 1986 receives \$403 a month from her school pension. That income results in the elimination of a \$216 monthly Social Security survivor's

benefit, to which she would otherwise be entitled. As a result, her total income is about 70 percent of the Federal poverty level. Another constituent, a retired widow who worked as a school cook, receives \$233 a month from her school pension. Her Social Security widow's benefit is reduced by \$155 because of the automatic offset. Her combined total income is about 76 percent of the Federal poverty level.

It is clear that the GPO and WEP, complex though they are, are causing pain and confusion. They also negatively impact teacher recruitment efforts, at a time where we sorely need teachers, yet the potential reduction in Social Security benefits makes it unlikely that people will turn to teaching for a few years at the tail end of their careers. Consider the irony: Individuals who have worked in other careers are less likely to want to become teachers if doing so will mean a loss of Social Security benefits they have earned, and yet our State and Federal policies are aimed at recruiting just those individuals to teaching as a second career. Retired teachers are also reluctant to return to teaching to help fill urgent needs because of the impact of the GPO and WEP. Finally, there is a fear that current teachers are likely to leave the profession to reduce the penalty they will incur upon retirement.

The reforms that led to the GPO and WEP are almost 20 years old, nearly a generation. They were passed before many of us were members of this body. Now that we are witnessing some of the impacts these 20-year old decisions are having on people's lives, we understandably want to help our constituents, and I support that effort. However, while I support the repeal of the GPO and WEP, I know that if we continue to address Social Security issues on a piecemeal basis, even expanding benefits as certain social needs dictate, without fixing the program's underlying imbalances and demographic challenges, we will make reform more difficult when the time finally comes.

However, for the reasons outlined above, and the effect the provisions are having on my constituents, I believe it is essential that the GPO and WEP be repealed, preferably as part of an overall reform to Social Security, but by themselves if need be. My State, and others affected by the GPO and WEP, cannot afford to provide disincentives to be teachers or other public servants at this critical time.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of last year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred May 14, 1995 in Brooklyn, NY. A gay man was attacked by another man who used anti-gay slurs. The assailant, John McHenry, 25, was charged with second-degree assault, criminal possession of a weapon, and harassment in connection with the incident.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO THE ARKANSAS MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART

• Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, it is my distinct privilege to recognize and pay tribute to the heroes of Arkansas who have been awarded the Purple Heart. This distinguished group of Americans are the recipient of our nation's earliest military decoration and the oldest in the world in present use. The Purple Heart is a combat decoration awarded in the name of the President of the United States to members of the armed forces who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy.

The Purple Heart was originated by General George Washington in 1782 to recognize "instances of unusual gallantry." Referred to then as the Badge of Military Merit, the decoration was awarded only three times during the Revolutionary War. The modern Purple Heart was brought into existence by Army Chief of Staff, General Douglas MacArthur. The medal was designed by Miss Elizabeth Will, in the Office of the Quartermaster General, and was introduced by the War Department on February 22, 1932, the bicentennial of George Washington's birth.

The Military Order of the Purple Heart provides a loud and clear voice on behalf of veterans and the issues that concern them. The crucial work that they do reminds us of just how precious freedom is, and that those who have unselfishly risked everything in freedom's name are worthy of every benefit a grateful nation can afford.

On behalf of the United States Senate, I thank the Arkansas members of the Military Order of the Purple Heart for the sacrifices that they have made in defense of this great nation. ●

HAPPY 275TH ANNIVERSARY BOW, NEW HAMPSHIRE

• Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to give my congratulations to the town of Bow, New Hampshire on their 275th anniversary.

Bow, New Hampshire is a quaint and inviting city and home to nearly 7,200