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## NSEA Defends Retirement and Health Care Benefits

President Lynn Warne testified Wednesday in front of the Senate Government Affairs Committee, defending members' benefits and an increase in educators' salaries. In the Committee's attempt to give the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce the forum to air out their proposed reforms, President Warne joined with representatives of Police, Firefighters, and other public employee groups to discredit their reports and tell the Committee the real issues facing Nevada.

In her impassioned testimony, she laid out just how important retirement and health benefits were to the members of the Nevada State Education Association. The Chamber's proposal was both short sighted and a detriment to Nevada. She pointed out the lower than average salaries educators are paid throughout Nevada, their inability to collect social security upon retirement, and the hard work and dedication that exists in classrooms all across the state.

In the well attended hearing, the Las Vegas Chamber's report was picked through, exposing the inaccuracies and falsehoods that are littered throughout their presentation, and the Government Affairs Committee certainly took note.

As the fourth week of Nevada's Legislative Session comes to a close, there is no legislation yet to change retirement benefits and to roll back the governor's proposal of 6% salary cuts to all state employees. This hearing was a good start and a good forum for educators to make their case and to encourage their legislators to find other ways to balance Nevada's budget. NSEA encourages you to continue contacting your elected officials to let them know that hurting education employees is not sound fiscal policy and it will only hurt our schools and our children in the long run.

Go to <http://capwiz.com/nea/nv/state/main/?state=NV> to contact your lawmakers today!

## Senate Bill to Repeal Social Security Offsets Reintroduced!

Senators Feinstein (D-CA) and Collins (R-ME) have reintroduced the Senate version of the Social Security Fairness Act, which would repeal the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision. The Senate bill number is S. 484. It is identical to H.R. 235, which was introduced in the House of Representatives in January.

The Senate bill has a total of 11 cosponsors and the House Bill has 181 cosponsors, including Dean Heller and Shelley Berkley who represent Nevada.

**ACTION NEEDED:** Contact Senators and continue to contact House members and urge them to cosponsor S. 484/H.R. 235—the new Social Security Fairness Act. Concentrate on members who cosponsored last year's bill, as well as, all new members of Congress. Go to <http://capwiz.com/nea/nv/state/main/?state=NV> enter your zip code and send a message directly to your representative.

**OUR GOAL:** Rebuild the cosponsor lists for both the House and Senate as quickly as possible to show momentum and convince congressional leaders to take action on the bill.

## Your Involvement Pays Off...Stay Connected to Your Legislators

You're powerful—because you live and vote in your legislator's district. And it's the job of your lawmakers to represent you.

But they can't effectively represent your interests unless you communicate with them around the issues you care about.

Your elected representatives pay close attention to grassroots points of view expressed by their constituents, and take those views into account when the final votes are cast.

That's why YOU, as an informed and active constituent, can play the most important role of all in shaping legislation. Choose to make a difference by becoming an active participant with others in policymaking.

Please share this message with your fellow members and urge them to join you in communicating regularly with their lawmakers. This is the only way our issues will be supported.

NSEA has an easy way for members and the public to become cyber-lobbyists and stay in touch with legislators. Go to <http://capwiz.com/nea/nv/state/main/?state=NV> and choose the issue, if any, that you want to discuss. Talking Points are provided; just click on the ones you want to include or write your own. Then, input your contact information and off you go. It's that simple! Contact your legislators today!

## Read Across America Day—March 2, 2009

NEA's annually sponsored **Read Across America** is next week. Now in its twelfth year, the program focuses on motivating children to read, in addition to helping them master basic skills.

The nationwide reading celebration takes place each year on or near March 2, the birthday of Dr. Seuss. Across the country, thousands of schools, libraries, community centers, and more participate by bringing together kids and books, and you can too!



Your reading event can be as simple or elaborate as time and inclination allow. Whether you choose to scale up or down, keep in mind the basic premise and it's almost sure to be a success:

**On March 2, the National Education Association is calling for every child to be reading in the company of a caring adult.**

Go to [www.nea.org/readacross](http://www.nea.org/readacross) to learn more on how you can join in the fun!

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