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There are more than 24,000 PERS retired public employees in Nevada, more than 8,000 of them members of RPEN. On their behalves we strongly support AJR 3.

This measure would eliminate the unfair government pension offset which can leave a person with absolutely no benefit from his or her deceased spouse's social security simply because one of them was a Nevada public employee retiree. To do that for the simple reason that one of them spent a career in public employment is wrong.

So too is the windfall elimination provision that can result in a major reduction of social security benefits just because the person worked under both social security and public employment. Making this worse is the fact that had the individual been eligible to have collected at least a part of his or her public service retirement pension by an arbitrary date in the mid 1980's there would be absolutely no reduction of that benefit.

Consider also that many public employee retirees have had to return to work in the public sector after their retirement to earn enough credit to qualify for Medicare—something essential to keeping health care costs manageable for them in retirement.

In summary, if retirees who might otherwise be able to remain independent, at home become indigent and wards of the state because of the inequities in these social security provisions, it's clear a strong message must be sent. AJR 3 will do just that and Nevada's retired public employees support it enthusiastically.