

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2503

November 10, 2008

The Honorable Michael J. Astrue  
Commissioner of Social Security  
6401 Security Boulevard  
Baltimore, MD 21235

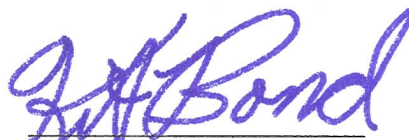
Dear Commissioner Astrue:

Recently my office was contacted by Missouri school board members, elementary and secondary school teachers, superintendents and school administrators regarding their concerns about what appears to be a new interpretation by the Social Security Administration (SSA) of Missouri's definition of "teacher" as it applies to Section 218 of the Social Security Act impacting employees under Missouri's Public School Retirement System. It appears that the new interpretation of this section will negatively impact the retirement benefits of thousands of education employees in Missouri and impact the school districts' ability to attract quality employees.

According to Missouri educators, most of the Section 218 agreements were initiated prior to 1984 when the Missouri statutory definition of "teacher" changed and the interpretation of the agreements made prior to 1984 appears to have remained the same for more than forty years. To change the interpretation of Section 218, making certain public school employees in Missouri now subject to Social Security, will cause a dire hardship on Missouri school districts and have significant ramifications on the retirement security of thousands of education employees in Missouri and might have the added effect of subjecting them to the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). Accordingly, I respectfully request a meeting to discuss the issue as well as a detailed explanation in writing of the SSA's rationale for this significant change to the Section 218 agreements.

Please contact Cheh Kim of my office at (202) 224-5721 with any questions and to schedule a meeting. I look forward to your prompt explanation of this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Bond