



# Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters

## Strength in Numbers 95,000

William Hamilton, President & Eastern PA Legislative Coordinator – Joseph Molinero, Sec.-Treasurer & Western PA Legislative Coordinator – Tim O'Neill, Consultant – Dan Grace, Trustee & Legislative Advisor – Robert Baptiste, Esq. Legal Advisor

# LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

## Keep Our Promise Pension Act

**Sanders-Baldwin Bill Introduced on 5/9/2017**  
**Restores Pensions Of 10 Million Workers Cut By Congress**

13 News EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (WEAU)

Introduced on Tuesday, May 9, 2017 by democratic senators from across the nation would reverse a provision passed in 2014 that allowed for dramatic cuts to financially troubled multi-employer pensions.

“Hardworking people who build their future, should never, never have to doubt the security of their retirement,” says Wisconsin Senator Tammy Baldwin who is one of the co-sponsors of the bill.

“We still have to make sure that Washington starts respecting work, not just wealth,” says Baldwin. In December of 2014, congress approved, and President Obama signed a spending bill that under this provision, the pension benefits of retirees could be cut by 30% or more.

Before the law was changed, it was illegal for an employer to cut the pension benefits retirees have earned. “It was one year ago that Wisconsin workers are retirees finally got to hear some good news. Last May the treasury department rejected cuts to earned pensions proposed by the central states pension fund,” says Baldwin.

Senator Bernie Sanders is also one of the bills co-sponsors. “You've got people right now who are prepared to provide many hundreds of billions of dollars in tax breaks for the two tops of one percent. **If they can support crap like that, surely we can support justice for millions of American workers.** We will not allow the earned pension benefits of up to 10 million workers be cut by as much as much as 60%. Aint gonna happen,” says Sanders.

Baldwin says its community support that will keep this bill moving forward. “We've seen that we can win this fight by working together and never giving up.”

See entire Article at:

<http://www.weau.com/content/news/Baldwin-Sanders-among-senators-who-unveiled-pension-plan-421824004.html>



# Keep our Pension Promises Act

---

To be introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders and Rep. Marcy Kaptur

The Keep our Pension Promises Act will protect earned pension benefits and strengthen multiemployer pension plans for participating employers and workers.

## Background

For more than 40 years, U.S. law prevented ongoing pension plans from unilaterally cutting workers and retiree's promised benefits. But provisions gutting these protections and decimating our multiemployer pension system were slipped into the 2014 omnibus spending bill passed to avoid a government shutdown. This made individuals who worked hard their entire careers, giving up pay raises and other benefits for the promise of a pension, vulnerable to having their promised benefits slashed and being thrown into poverty in retirement.

More than 10 million Americans depend on a multiemployer pension plan for their retirement security. These pensions, along with single-employer pensions covering another 30 million Americans, are overseen and insured by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC). Currently, if a plan becomes severely underfunded, retirees can see their benefits drastically reduced, in some cases by as much as 60 to 70 percent.

The PBGC multiemployer insurance system itself is at great risk of becoming insolvent over the coming decade. Something must be done to ensure the workers and retirees in these plans, individuals who played by the rules and worked hard to build this country, are able to keep the promise made to them for a secure retirement. The Keep our Pension Promises Act would close two tax loopholes used by the wealthiest Americans to provide additional funding for our multiemployer pension system. It is currently the only legislative solution to our looming multiemployer pension crisis.

The bill will:

- **Protect retirees by restoring the anti-cutback rule**

These pensions were earned by individuals through a lifetime of hard work and are crucial to their retirement security. This bill would restore anti-cutbacks rules so that retirees in financially troubled multi-employer pension plans will not see their earned pension benefits cut.

- **Strengthen multi-employer pension plans**

This bill gives participating employers relief from having to shoulder the full financial burden and risk of underfunded "orphaned" participants, workers and retirees whose former employers went bankrupt or pulled out of the plan without paying everything they owed. This will help ensure that plans can become financially secure and strong.

- **Provide additional funding to help protect retirees and the PBGC**

A legacy fund would be created within the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) to help ensure that participants in financially troubled plans will continue to receive the benefits they depend upon. The cost to shore up the PBGC and create this legacy fund would be covered by closing tax loopholes used by the very wealthy to accumulate expensive artwork and hundreds of millions of dollars in tax-advantaged savings.

- **Protect employers participating in multi-employer plans**

This bill ensures pension obligations are prioritized during bankruptcies. This helps the remaining employers by making it less likely they become responsible for underfunded plans.