

Members of the committee, for the record my name is Frederick Brown. I am a member of WFSE local 793 and am employed as a Psychiatric Security Attendant at Western State Hospital. I have worked at Western State Hospital for 13 years now.

I understand that this committee will make recommendations about including job classes like mine in the Public Safety Employees Retirement System. I came here today to say that I believe that jobs like mine should be given an earlier retirement age just like you already do for Corrections officers, County Parole officers and County Detention Workers.

Last month one of the patients I work with ambushed me and hit me with a sock full of batteries. He hit me in the back, but make no mistake, he was aiming for my head. I was off work due to those injuries for only 4 days, but if things had happened differently, it could have been much worse. It has been much worse for many of my co-workers. When I try to imagine myself working 30 years on this job just to get an unpenalized retirement, I wonder if I can make it.

Working in the environment I do, with the patience I am trained to work with is difficult and it's not for everyone. Weeks and months can go by and nothing happens, then without warning you get attacked. Some attacks can end your

career. I have to face those facts every day and still provide for the safety and well being of the patients I am in charge of.

The report you have been given about high risk job classification says that there are many ways to address the risk factors in jobs like mine other than through pensions. I think those things should be looked into. But I want to be clear that regardless of how much you change the rules, or give us better training, 30 years in a job like mine doesn't make good sense. We can't all promote, and our specialized training only provides so many other pathways to other opportunities.

I'm just asking that you be consistent and provide us with a pension benefit you have already decided is needed in similar areas of public safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my experience with you today.