



WEA
WASHINGTON
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

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Office of
The State Actuary

October 13, 2014

Select Committee on Pension Policy
PO Box 40914
Olympia, WA 98504-0914

Dear Members of the Select Committee on Pension Policy,

During the September meeting of the Select Committee on Pension Policy, Senator Conway raised questions about the current state policy which restricts retirees from working in any capacity for an employer that is covered by the state pension system if that person utilized the 2008 Early Retirement Factors. I am writing to voice the Washington Education Association's support for changing the post retirement work rules for this set of employees to allow for 867 hours of work per year, consistent with other state policies that govern post retirement work.

If an individual retires using the 2008 ERF factors, their pension benefit will be suspended in any month in which they work for a covered employer before they reach age 65. This prohibits experienced educators from returning to our schools as substitutes. To eliminate the pension payment for any month in which a retiree works even one day makes it financially impossible for these educators to agree to occasional work in support of our schools and students. The price is too high for these educators. The result is that, in some regions of our state, schools are struggling to find a sufficient pool of substitutes – which ultimately impacts the students in the classroom.

To address this issue, the Washington Education Association recommends that the post retirement work rules for those who retire using the 2008 Early Retirement Factors be changed to allow these retirees to work 867 hours in a year before their benefit would be suspended. This change would provide parity by aligning post retirement work rules within the state pension system. In addition, schools and students would benefit by having a greater number of experienced educators available to help when substitutes are needed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kim Mead', with a stylized, cursive script.

Kim Mead
President, Washington Education Association