

**From:** [Betsy Peirce](#)  
**To:** [Office State Actuary, WA](#)  
**Subject:** PERS 1 COLA  
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**Attachments:** [Pension Policy 9-22.rtf](#)

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September 17, 2022

The Honorable Steve Conway, Chair  
Select Committee on Pension Policy  
P.O. Box 40429  
Olympia, WA 98504-042

Dear Chair Conway:

I am writing to add my voice to those retirees of PERS 1 who are requesting that the SCPP restore our permanent COLA.

My example is not that unusual. I retired in 1997 when I was 52. And please understand that I totally appreciate, and am very grateful for, my excellent pension plan, and acknowledge that more recently retired employees do not have my benefits. But also know that I worked extremely hard for DSHS as a social worker, and stayed with a very difficult job partly because of my pension benefit. Part of the retirement package included a COLA when I became 65. However, as you know, that benefit was eliminated. So, the only COLA's I have received for the entire time of my retirement have been those two (?) received recently. And while I certainly do appreciate those, it seems rather ridiculous to me to spend time on those temporary solutions when a permanent solution should be forthcoming.

So, basically, when I receive my check, it is nearly the same check as when I retired. Oh.... except for the fact that my monthly medical insurance premiums have increased from about \$50 to about \$350. And, of course, increasing inflation and property taxes further decrease the value of my monthly pension. I am also now eligible for a reduction in my property taxes because my pension income has not kept up with my medical insurance expenses. So, really, now taxpayers are helping to support me. It just seems wrong to not have a permanent COLA as was originally promised. I basically have been given an amount that was intended for life 25 years ago. While, as I said, I do appreciate it, it is not what was promised me.

Thank you for supporting the necessary legislation to fund our permanent COLA,

Betsy Peirce  
1100-G Vista Pl  
Wenatchee, WA 98801