
From: Robbins <cbrobbins78@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 2:33 PM
To: Office State Actuary, WA
Subject: Permanent cost of living adjustment (COLA) for Plan 1 retirees
Attachments: Cola Plan 1.pdf

CAUTION:External email.

Please see attached letter requesting a permanent cost of living adjustment (COLA) for Plan 1 retirees.

Thank You

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September 19, 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 ask you and the members of the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCC) to take immediate action to restore a permanent cost of living adjustment (COLA) to Plan 1 retirees.

I deeply appreciate the one-time COLA you secured for Plan 1 retirees like me in the last legislative session. The COLA was helpful and provided temporary relief. That said, I know that the SCPP is committed to ensuring equity in the pension systems. However, one-time COLAs, while deeply appreciated, are short-term fixes that never address the real problem: the long-standing systemic inequity that plagues Plan 1 retirees. Year-after-year the state's oldest retirees, who historically receive the lowest pensions, continue to lose purchasing power.

I have found it increasingly difficult to afford to schedule healthcare appointments due to high costs of fuel. I have several health issues that require a 90 mile roundtrip to get treatment, the high cost of fuel makes this very expensive especially since it is difficult to schedule appointments with more than one provider on the same day and I cannot afford to move closer to these providers due to high cost and lack of decent housing.

I have also had to cut spending and delay home repairs that are necessary for me to be able to continue to live in my home without assistance due to increased costs for fuel and materials. A permanent COLA would make a tremendous difference in budgeting daily living expenses and making these projects a reality, knowing that a pension increase would help cover unforeseen expenses.

Only a permanent COLA guarantees financial, food, and housing security in retirement.

With the pay down of the unfunded liability in the Plan 1 pension plan on the horizon, the Retired Public Employees Council (RPEC) asks that you work this legislative session to codify, in law, a trigger point by which the state will fund a permanent COLA for Plan 1 retirees.

I hope we can count on you to embrace this request and lead the path forward to legislation to finally fix this problem.

Thank you for giving RPEC's request your consideration.

Sincerely,

Craig D. Robbins
256 Clark Road
Onalaska, Washington 98570