Hello,

I understand that a proposal is being considered to allow retirees under the 2008 ERF to return to work in a covered position for a limited number of hours each year.

I am an example of how the current system doesn't work.

I retired in April 2021 using the 2008 ERF. I was forced at that time to resign my elected position as a City of Granite Falls councilmember due to the fact that the position pays a whopping $100 per month. DRS staff will be quick to point out that I wasn't "forced" to do anything, I could have chosen to forfeit my pension each month I was on the city council or chose to retire with a very much reduced benefit. Two "choices" that are completely non-sensical and too ridiculous to consider for even a moment.

I offered to not accept the $100 per month, or to work to have city code revised to make the payment optional. DRS staff insisted that if payment was available, it was considered earned and was not allowed. It is noteworthy that not one penny of that $100 per month was ever sent to DRS as the hours are too limited to qualify for earning service credits. So where is the state's interest in limiting my participation in city government?

I cannot believe that the legislature intended for the 2008 ERF to prevent participation in local government elected positions. I whole-heartedly support the changes that are currently being discussed. Additionally, I think that the work hours allowed should be unlimited for elected positions so long as the elected official chooses to not participate in the state retirement system. Participation in our state and local government elected positions should be encouraged for all.

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