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Senator John Braun
PO Box 40420
Olympia, WA 98504-0420

Dear Senator Braun,

I began my certificated teaching career in the state of Washington in 2004. At the time of my hire, I was informed that TRS Plan 3 was the only available retirement plan for new employees. This was the case for all Washington state educators who were hired during the time period of 2002- 2007. TRS Plan 3 provides a 1% defined benefit for each year of service, with another 1% being based on market-dependent earnings. Like my colleagues and fellow constituents who were hired across Washington state during these years, I was placed in Plan 3 and have been contributing to this plan for the duration of my career. I recently learned about Washington state legislative changes that were made years ago that have again made it possible for teachers who began their careers after 2007 to select between Plan 2 and Plan 3 for their retirement plans. TRS Plan 2 provides a 2% defined benefit for each year of service as a Washington state educator.

There is no denying that having the ability to choose between TRS Plan 2 and Plan 3 positively impacts newer teachers within Washington state. However, according to the Department of Retirement Systems, I am one of the 43,492 Washington state educators who did not receive the right to self-select my own retirement plan. I was never afforded the option to choose for myself at the start of my career, and I am now mandated to remain in a retirement plan while others are able to carefully consider and choose the appropriate plan that meets their needs. When I began my career 15 years ago, I was denied the choice to select the retirement plan that met my conservative investment style and personal financial needs. If I had been given the option at the start of my career, I would have most certainly chosen TRS Plan 2 for my own retirement.

Former legislators took away the opportunity for me to make a decision about what retirement plan would be right for myself and my family. As one of your constituents, I respectfully ask for your attention and support to address this inequitable situation and work to change the current law that was set by previous legislators so that teachers who were hired during the years of 2002-2007 can have the ability to retroactively select TRS 2 as their retirement plan of choice. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this matter further with you in the future. Thank you in advance for your time and support.

Respectfully,

Kelly Hathaway
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