

From: [Peter Diedrick](#)
To: [Office State Actuary, WA](#)
Cc: [Gutierrez, Aaron](#); [Aslakson, Melinda](#); [Alan Burke](#)
Subject: Official SCPP Correspondence
Date: Friday, October 6, 2023 9:33:10 PM
Attachments: [SCPP Plan 1 Coalition Letter 10.7.2023.docx](#)

CAUTION: External email.

Good Morning,

Official SCPP correspondence is attached.

Sincerely,

PETER DIEDRICK
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR
WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL RETIREES' ASSOCIATION
(360) 413-5496

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Washington State School Retirees' Association

PO Box 5127 • Lacey, WA 98509 • (360) 413-5496 • www.wssra.org

October 9, 2023

The Honorable Joe Fitzgibbon
Chair, Select Committee on Pension Policy
339A Legislative Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Chair Fitzgibbon,

First of all, thank you for assuming the chair of the SCPP. Your knowledge and skills will be of immense value as the committee works through its interim activities.

As you can imagine, retirees are interested in two key areas of pension policy that we are looking to have support from the full committee: (1) the need for an additional one-time COLA increase for Plans 1 members and (2) an adopted plan to restore a permanent COLA for those same members.

The Washington State School Retirees' Association, Retired Public Employees Council of Washington, and the Washington Education Association Retired would like to address the one-time proposal.

As you know, the two most recent 3% COLA's for TRS 1 and PERS 1 retirees have been capped at \$110.00 per month. That number was set to correlate with the Senior and Disabled Property Tax Exemption. The exemption allows seniors with household incomes of under \$44,000 to reduce their property taxes.

Unfortunately, two factors lessen the impact these increases have on the lives of retirees. One factor is the continuing loss of purchasing power since the COLA was eliminated in 2011. The other factor is inflation as the costs of food, medicine, utilities, insurance, taxes, etc. have continued to increase. That is why we are asking the Committee to consider changing the capped amount to reflect these factors.

Currently, the statewide average income for a senior to qualify for a property tax exemption is \$54,000. The highest income qualifier is King County at \$88,998; the lowest being \$45,450.

We would request that the Committee consider increasing the annual pension amount correlated with the Plan 1 COLA cap from its current \$44,000 to \$50,000. We are cognizant of the need to be fiscally restrained, yet the need is still critical. This change would increase the maximum pension increase to \$125 per month for those retirees.

Please give thoughtful consideration to this request. We have appreciated your and the committee's support in the past and are hopefully that sensitivity will continue.

Sincerely,

Alan Burke, Executive Director
WA State School Retirees' Association

Luire Weidner, Executive Director
Retired Public Employees Council of Washington

Jared Mason-Gere, Lobbyist
Washington Education Association Retired