

From: [Gery Gerst](#)
To: [Office State Actuary, WA](#)
Subject: For SCPP meeting in Nov, regarding COLA for Plan 1
Date: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 4:31:10 PM

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Dear SCPP members,

First, I do thank you for your service. My wife worked for both House and Senate members so I know the job you do. We're both retired public employees.

We must balance our revenue against my expenses. This is especially challenging because we're members of a pension plan that was designed nearly 100 years ago. Plan 1 was designed for retirees to die young. Because of this we've seen only a few minor cost of living adjustments since 2011, (unlike the other twelve state plans).

Personally, my pension was calculated on a late 1990s salary which is close to today's starting salary for teachers. The net effect is that I've LOST purchasing power since retiring while fuel, appliances, food and medical have all gone up immensely.

That is why a permanent, real COLA is so important to me/us. Please support passage of bills which would establish a permanent COLA that reflects the true cost of living.

That way, I and so many Plan 1 folks don't have to bug you each session for help. Another way of saying this is that a cost of living has been promised, over and over, to TRS 1. You know that. Repeatedly it's denied, delayed, defunded, or capped. We served the public no less than LEOFF and other plans. We contributed to the pension fund no less than they did. And the money IS there this session.

I taught 45 years and have lost so much in buying power due to no Colas, or Diet-Colas that we sometimes get. I DO thank you for what you HAVE done. Please do a permanent fix now.

Gery Gerst, life long TRS 1 educator.

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