

Donald E. Thomsen
PO Box 35
Hansville, WA 98340

June 21, 2025

Select Committee on Pension Policy
PO Box 40914
Olympia, WA 98504-0914

Dear Committee Members,

RE: LEOFF 1 and LEOFF 2 Pensions for Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters

I am a retired Fire fighter under the LEOFF 2 pension plan. I am aware of the multiple House Bills recently regarding the LEOFF 1 plan and use of the funds to address the State budget shortfall. All these Bills failed, but I am extremely concerned that the State would even consider using LEOFF 1 funds to be used for the state budget shortfall.

I began my Fire Fighter career in 1984 and served for 33 years, unfortunately, I was a few years short of qualifying for the LEOFF 1 pension plan which had extremely generous benefits for Fire Fighters and Law Enforcement Officers compared to the LEOFF 2 plan. Those of us who put our lives on the line every day to protect WA citizens, and their property deserve better consideration for the risks we take than the State and our representatives demonstrate when they make proposals like HB 2034 and HB 5085. The very idea that funds from LEOFF 1 would be used for funding other than for law enforcement or fire fighters, is repugnant.

Funds in both LEOFF 1 and LEOFF 2 were contributed by fire and law enforcement employees, their employing municipalities, and the state for the benefit of fire and law enforcement. To even consider robbing our retirement plans for use in the state budget, says to us, the funds **we** paid in and the funds **our employers** paid into the plan for **our** long-term benefits don't matter. How can you, in good conscience, steal the money **WE** contributed?

I understand that many of the LOEFF 1 participants are now deceased and there are excess funds in that plan, therefore LOEFF 1 and LOEFF 2 plans should be **combined** and ALL the funds used to benefit LOEFF 2 participants and the remaining LOEFF 1 retirees. It is a given fact that as our state has grown and more fire and law enforcement officers are employed, they will all eventually draw from the LOEFF 2 program. LOEFF 2 will have more retirees living longer and needing funds for more years in retirement. In addition, we served our communities in dangerous conditions which have only gotten worse, causing lifelong injuries and disabilities.

Give us, the people that keep you and your property safe, the security of knowing our pension plans are safe and funded to meet our long-term needs. Do the right thing and keep your hands off the retirement funds in LOEFF 1, combine them with LOEFF 2 and **keep our funds for our benefit** not yours.

Sincerely,

Donald E. Thomsen
Fire Fighter SCFD #4, retired

Cc: Bob Ferguson, Governor
Drew Hanson, senator district 23
Greg Nance, representative district 23
Tara Simmons, representative district 23
LEOFF 2 Retirement Board
WA State Department of Retirement Systems
WA State Council of Fire Fighters