

From: [Emmett Mills](#)
To: [Office State Actuary, WA](#)
Cc: [Boehnke, Sen. Matt](#); [Fitzgibbon, Rep. Joe](#); [MacEwen, Sen. Drew](#); [Stokesbary, Rep. Drew](#); [Conway, Sen. Steve](#); [Macri, Rep. Nicole](#); [Robinson, Sen. June](#); [Volz, Rep. Mike](#); [pat.sullivan@ofm.wa.gov](#); [tracy.guerin@drs.wa.gov](#); [Thompson, J. Pat](#); [Watson, Wally \(CVSD\)](#); [Yestranski, Mike](#); [Zabelka, William \(SCPP\)](#); [Creekpaum, Annette](#); [Legard, Dan \(SCPP\)](#); [Anthony Murrietta](#); [Hermanson, Beverly](#); [Soper, Mark](#); [Peter Diedrick](#); [Jared Mason-Gere \[WA\]](#); [Laurie Weidner](#)
Subject: Plan 1 Coalition Letter to SCPP
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 9:37:10 AM
Attachments: [Plan 1 Coalition Letter 9-9-2024.pdf](#)

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Dear Chair Boehnke and members of the Select Committee on Pension Policy,

Please find attached a letter from Washington State School Retirees' Association, Retired Public Employees Council of Washington, and Washington Education Association – Retired, regarding the SCPP's work to restore an ongoing COLA for TRS 1 and PERS 1 retirees.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Emmett Mills
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Washington State School Retirees' Association
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September 9, 2024

The Honorable Senator Matt Boehnke
Chair, Select Committee on Pension Policy
LMB 117
P.O. Box 40408
Olympia, WA 98504

Chair Boehnke:

The retiree advocacy organizations – Retired Public Employees Council of Washington, Washington Education Association – Retired, and Washington State School Retirees’ Association – thank you for your strong leadership of the Select Committee on Pension Policy, and your efforts to ensure the Committee determines the benefit design and funding mechanism for a recurring cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for our state’s oldest public sector retirees, many of whom earn among the lowest pensions.

For the past thirteen years, our organizations have asked that retirees from the Teachers Retirement System Plan 1 (TRS 1) and Public Employees Retirement System Plan 1 (PERS 1) receive an annual COLA. This benefit was removed by the Legislature during the 2011 Legislative Session. Since that time, retirees have lost 40% of their purchasing power. TRS 1 and PERS 1 are the only state pension plans without an automatic COLA. The work the SCPP has done this interim – which we are grateful for – creates an opportunity to finally fix this inequity.

We respectfully request the SCPP sponsor a single bill that will:

- Create an automatic, CPI-based COLA for Plans 1 that mirrors the benefit design afforded to Plans 2/3. Finance the recurring COLA through a 15-year period.
- Refinance the past ad hoc COLAs over a 15-year time horizon.
- Create stable pension rates for the state and local governments for the next 15 years.

Thank you for your focused attention on the recurring Plan 1 COLA issue, and for the thorough research and presentations of the Office of the State Actuary.

We appreciate your thoughtful attention in ensuring equity across all of Washington’s pension systems.

Sincerely,

Clair Olivers, President
Retired Public Employees Council of Washington

Peter Diedrick, Executive Director
WA State School Retirees’ Association

Jared Mason-Gere, Lobbyist
Washington Education Association