

From: [Edith Ruby](#)
To: [Office State Actuary, WA](#)
Subject: Plan 1 COLA
Date: Thursday, September 12, 2024 12:44:37 PM

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Dear SCPP Committee member,

I never imagined when I retired in 2006 after 33 years teaching in the Seattle schools that 18 years later, at age 83, I would be beseeching state legislators to restore the yearly COLA that the Department of Retirement Systems at its workshops had told me would be part of my monthly pension checks. Financial planning is essential for a secure retirement, and I did my best to plan responsibly. But successful planning is impossible when your employer changes the rules at a time in your life when you no longer have options. With only 5 COLA's in the last 14 years the purchasing power of my pension, small to begin with, (my final year's salary of \$62,000 is about what at first year teacher makes in 2024) has shrunk painfully. An online inflation calculator tells me that goods and services purchased with my pension in 2006 now cost 69.28% more. But I don't need that inflation calculator. Weekly trips to the supermarket, bills for property taxes, utilities, other household expenses, medical insurance and medications all tell me that I have much less to live on today.

Most of us Plan 1 retirees are no longer at an age where returning to work is a viable option. Do you really want 83 year old substitutes teaching in your schools? It is past time to restore the COLA that was unexpectedly taken away from us in 2010. When we retired we counted on the state for whom we worked faithfully for many years for salaries often substantially lower than those in the private sector to ensure a decent living for us in retirement. The years without COLAs can never be made up for, but at this time we, your oldest retirees, urgently need the ability to plan responsibly for our final years and not come begging every year for another one time COLA.

I strongly urge you, as a member of the SCPP, to recommend to the 2025 legislature that Plan 1 retirees be given the same COLA rights as our Plan 2 colleagues, a yearly COLA of up to 3% with banking allowed in years when inflation is less than 3%.

Thank you for your work as a member of the SCPP.

Sincerely,
Edith Ruby
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Seattle 98103

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