

**From:** [warren warfield](#)  
**To:** [Office State Actuary, WA](#)  
**Cc:** [laurie.weidner@rpecwa.org](#); [Clair Olivers](#)  
**Subject:** Attached Letter and Chart for Upcoming SCPP Meeting: ATTN: OSA Staff  
**Date:** Monday, September 1, 2025 2:18:16 PM  
**Attachments:** [COLA, CPI comparison 08 2025-2.pdf](#)  
[Letter to SCPP 09012025 #1 1.pdf](#)  
[Letter to SCPP 09012025 #1 1 1.pdf](#)

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**CAUTION:** External email.

I'd greatly appreciate including the attached letter and accompanying document provided to members of the SCPP, noted for the public record and placed in the materials folder for its upcoming meeting on September 16th.  
Thank you for this consideration. If there's a need to contact me, I can be reached through the email address below noted.

Sincerely,  
Warren Warfield  
wdw330@comcast.net  
cc: Laurie Weidner, Executive Director, RPEC  
Clair Olivers, President, RPEC

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## Retired Public Employees Council of Washington

Representative Travis Couture

Chair: Select Committee on Pension Policy

P.O. Box 40914

Olympia, WA 98594-0914

Dear Chair Couture:

As chair of the Pension Policy Workgroup of the Retired Public Employees Council of Washington(RPEC) and as a PERS 1 retiree since 1996, I'm writing to request the Select Committee on Pension Policy(SCPP) adopt legislation providing a one-time cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to PERS/TRS 1 retirees in 2026 and give serious consideration to supporting SSB 5085 and/or HB 2034 either which could fund both a recurring and one-time COLA at no additional cost to the state.

I understand that the Legislature had no choice in the last legislative session but to address the projected \$12-15 billion operating budget deficit through the approval of additional taxes and mandated state agency budget reductions. Adding to these painful choices is the projected withholding of federal funds utilized for vital state-managed programs such as Medicaid. To further address this budget dilemma, the Legislature approved ESSB 5357 which eliminates employer contributions to the Plan 1 UAAL and previously approved benefit improvements for the next two bienniums. This legislation does not support the Committee's goal of maintaining equity among the pension plans.

As has been sufficiently detailed in SSB 5085, there is no impact on the benefits LEOFF 1 annuitants and beneficiaries are receiving and will continue to receive. And, there is also no impact on employers who face serious budget constraints over the next four years. Therefore, please give this bill serious consideration during your current analysis.

If the Committee likewise supports HB 2034, I suggest a portion of the LEOFF 1 surplus funds be transferred to the "pension funding stabilization account" to be utilized to fully fund the Plan 1 UAAL and provide for both an ad hoc and recurring COLA.

Either legislation, assuming such a proposal meets IRS rules addressing state pension plans, would finally provide relief for many Plan 1 annuitants and beneficiaries who have lost serious purchasing power even with the five ad hoc COLAs provided since 2010. The attached chart exemplifies the discrepancies amongst the COLAs illustrated for the various state pension plans when compared to Social Security COLAs and the CPI-W index utilized to calculate said COLAs. RPEC members often express to me the

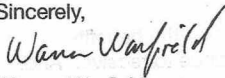
challenges they face in addressing ongoing, ever increasing financial requirements such as:

- house insurance premiums increasing 100% since 2017.
- property taxes increasing 60% over last eight years.
- health insurance premiums, such as for Medicare, increasing 40% since 2017 with another increase likely in 2026 in which a recent article projected an increase up to \$205 per month compared to \$185 in 2025 for Part B. Additionally, this increase will consume most of the Social Security COLA in 2026. While the monthly subsidy for annuitants enrolled in state health insurance is beneficial, it, too, has not kept up with annual premium increases thus further sinking Plan 1 annuitants into a financial quagmire in paying monthly bills for utilities, groceries, car, house insurance coverages and other needs.

Costs such as these increase annually with or without a COLA. PERS 2 and 3 annuitants, with their annual, guaranteed COLA, can better meet these challenges. But, PERS and TRS 1 annuitants still have family financial obligations perhaps in caring for a spouse or other family member. Financial sacrifices have to be made; the result is the level of stabilized, predictable standard of living drops over the years. This, with every dollar acquired, by whatever means, is vital to retain that standard of living. The SCPP can perform a pivotal role in assisting these annuitants in maintaining a meaningful life style they've earned through their hard work and public service career for a legislator's constituents.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

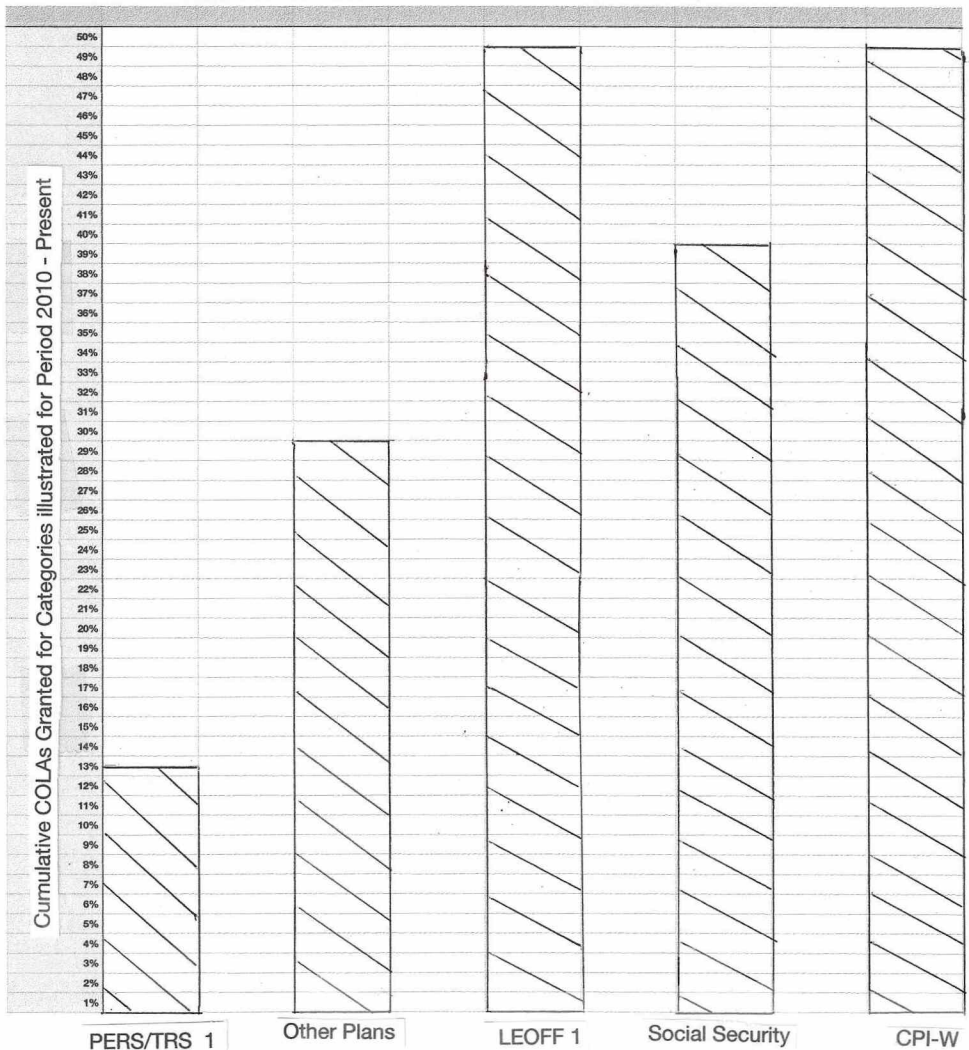
Sincerely,



Warren Warfield

Chair: Pension Policy Workgroup(RPEC)

Comparison of COLAs for WA State Pension Plans, Social Security with the Regional CPI-W Index; 2010 to Present



-CPI-W: WA pension plan COLAs are based on this CPI index applicable to urban consumers in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue area. Social Security, likewise, utilizes the same index to calculate its annual COLA effective January 1st each year.

-Other Plans: applicable to PERS 1(optional COLA); PERS 2,3; SERS 2,3; TRS 2,3; LEOFF 2; WSPRS 1,2; PSERS 2. A COLA, if applicable, is effective July 1st and cannot exceed 3%. If CPI-W index exceeds 3%, the excess is "banked" to be used when a subsequent COLA is less than 3%. Judges not included in this chart.

-LEOFF 1: there is no cap, nor banking, applicable to a COLA. Whatever the CPI-W index is for a given year, that will be the COLA effective April 1st.