



# Update

Dear Friends,

October 12, 2022

*Since my election to the KPERS Board of Trustees, I have a new disclaimer that I must include in these updates from now on: "The views expressed in this update represent my views and/or the views of the Coalition. They do not in any way represent the views of KPERS Board of Trustees nor do I speak for them." (Ernie Claudel)*

## REPORT ON THE October MEETING

This Update will be brief:

1. You must forgive me for being the eternal optimist on the COLA issue. This attitude is necessary not only for me to keep my sanity, but because the 'tea leaves' tell us that there are possibilities. One of the steering committee commented to me during the 2022 legislative session that we were at least receiving no to our requests rather than the 'Hell No' comments of the past. This year members of KARSP have received some positive inquiries on the subject. In recent days this interest has cooled somewhat. This could be because legislative leadership has asked them to 'cool it' or it could be because the milo harvest is upon us! 😊
2. Please note that both KCPR and KARSP voted to continue to have me as their lobbyist.
3. There were three major areas of discussion at the meeting:
  - A. The prospects of a KPERS day at the Capitol. We will have a tentative date soon. Because of the legislative year, this will need to be held in February. This event would replace the Rallies of the past and be reformatted. The suggested ideas will require more planning, so it would be helpful if we had an idea of who would be interested in attending.
  - B. The second item is Tier III, which the new employees are enrolled in upon employment. As discussed earlier, the retirement level with this new plan is not as robust as the present Tier I & II plans. Concerns are being voiced by the legislature and noted by the new Chief Investment Officer at KPERS. Annually the KPERS Board is involved in a training session. During this meeting, no business is conducted. The purpose of this training is to do a complete evaluation of numerous topics. Because nearly 50% of the active KPERS members are now in Tier III, we will soon have updated data on Tier III. The reason for this concern by the legislature is the problems in hiring. As you know, many businesses are offering bonuses for employment and the government cannot do that. The studies show that the attraction for public service (in addition to good service) is benefits and pensions which offset the lower wages of public employment. This has obviously been recognized as an employment incentive.
  - C. The third item of discussion was the subject of a benefit increase or COLA. The steering committee voted to pursue a CPI-linked COLA. The reason for this choice is that we would no longer have to pursue a benefit increase annually. When you talk to your legislator, or the candidates, be sure that they commit to supporting a COLA. *One of our steering committee members has already made that demand and received the promise of support in writing!* If they commit to COLA support, we will also encourage you to inquire as to what level of benefits increase they would support. That information would be good for us to know.
  - D. **BE SURE YOU ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE and do so! Please be informed of all the issues that appear on the ballot.**

After living in Kansas most of my life, I provided the following advice: "Come October 31<sup>st</sup>, know where your winter coat is!!" 😊

Ernie Claudel  
[eclaude1@comcast.net](mailto:eclaude1@comcast.net)  
913-481-6923

### EMAIL IDEAS

Jerry Henn, KARSP Executive Director, and I attended an AARP/NRTA (National Retired Teacher Association) conference virtually. One of the presentations was on effective emails. I found it personally very helpful. I am sharing it with you because I believed it would be very helpful to you as well, but also because the emphasis on brevity may relieve some of your communication fear with your representative in Topeka. This information is very compatible with my comments, "Remember a dissertation is not necessary!" 😊

#### The Subject Line

- A. A subject line should be limited to about **30 characters**.
- B. Make it time sensitive/urgent if possible.
- C. "Will you please vote [or take some other action] for \_\_\_\_\_."

  - a. "Will you please voice your support for a COLA now!"
  - b. Hopefully, you will be able to use this suggestion later! "Please vote for Bill \_\_\_\_\_ which provides the KPERS retired with a COLA."

#### Email Body

- A. Make the first sentence and certainly the first paragraph a summary of the rest of the body of the email.**
- B.** Remainder of the email body:
  - a.** Second Level: In some more detail, **3 to 5** sentences explain in more detail (IF NECESSARY).  
If possible, communicate to the recipient what the problem is, the solution and the action needed.
  - b.** Third Level: An option might be to enclose a link to something you want them to look at in greater detail. One example might be: List our website, [www.ksretirees.org](http://www.ksretirees.org) and what you want them to read on the site.

#### Three Cautions:

- 1.** Do not try to prove your knowledge of the vocabulary of the English language. 😊
- 2.** Keep the statistics to a minimum!
- 3. Be brief and concise!!**

.....

Prepared by Ernie Claudel, KARSP Legislative Chair and KCPR and KARSP Lobbyist and members of the KARSP executive board and KCPR Steering Committee.

### Find Your Legislator

If you do not know, or are not sure, who your Kansas Senator and Representative is, go to [OpenStates.org](http://OpenStates.org). It will ask you what you are looking for and enter legislators. It will next ask for your address, and your Senator and Representative will pop up!!