



Update

Dear Friends,

February 1, 2023

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)

NEWS FLASH

We just learned that a COLA Bill has been introduced. It is HB 2252! It is an updated version of last year's 5,4,3,2,1% COLA Bill. Further: This bill will be heard at 9:00 AM, Wednesday, February 8th.

Please email the members of the attached list of members of the House Committee on Financial Institutions and Pensions and urge passage ASAP.

REPORT ON THE February MEETING

This Update will again be brief:

1. KCPR will return to our regularly scheduled 2nd Wednesday ZOOM Meeting, on March 8, 2023.
2. The 'KPERS Day at the Capitol' is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8th. Further explanation is available in the attached information or on the Website. Website directions are offered below. KCPR/KARSP representatives will be available on the second floor rotunda beginning at 8:00 am.
3. **We have much more planning to do, SO please look for additional UPDATES between now and February 8th!**
4. I have made sure that all the information regarding 'KPERS Day at the Capitol' is clearly displayed on our website, www.ksretirees.org. These items are all printable. I have attached the related doc to this 'Update', but if you wish to share with a friend, you can direct them to the website. This information is all printable.
 - A. The Brochure is prominently in the middle of the page with the KCPR & KARSP Logo's proximately displayed. If you are in charge of a vehicle bringing folks to Topeka, it would be helpful if you have a color printer to print the brochure for your group. We will have handouts and backups on the brochures.
 - B. The four documents we will have available at the Capitol on February 8th are located under KPERS Day at the Capitol Feb 8, 2023, appears on the top right of the home page.
 - C. The list of committees you MAY get an opportunity to visit on the 8th are found under Special Notes below the above noted location, the first two entries: 2023 House Financial Institutions and Pensions and 2023 Senate Financial Institutions.
 - D. **We were attempting to set a roll call type of roster. Situations beyond our control intervened. The problem is that we do not know how many copies to make. If you are coming as part of a group, please tell the group that you reported to me that they were coming and send me an email as to how many you are bringing. Even if you are coming alone, let me know! eclaudel1@comcast.net**
5. Now for a LONG Story very SHORT. You are going to have to take my word on this one as I don't want to write a dissertation and you do not want to read one.
 - A. Your 'cards & letters' have done a lot of good, just not enough.

- B. Our best information is that we are being blocked by leadership both in the Kansas House and Senate.
- C. What we need is more votes.
- D. Short version to this point.
 - a. ***We just learned that a COLA Bill has been introduced. It is HB 2252! It is an updated version of last year's 5,4,3,2,1% COLA Bill.***
 - b. In the House there seems to be more support among the majority for a COLA, but as mentioned previously not with leadership.
 - c. On this subject, the majority leadership is not as excited.
 - d. A positive is there is a lot of thought that Tier III needs to be improved. This is on both sides of the aisle and both the Kansas House and Senate. Again, not with the leadership. Still no bill. I have inquired about that but no response yet.
 - e. There is a COLA Bill HB2025 which KCPR DOES NOT SUPPORT!
 - 1. The problem is apparent in the name "AN ACT concerning retirement and pensions; relating to the Kansas public employee's retirement system; retirement benefits; authorizing a self-funded cost-of-living adjustment option" for those in Tier I and II who have not yet retired.
 - 2. Same options as with your retirement, plus this one. The result is you are waiting longer to get the money you were owed anyway. All options would receive less money as their benefit. This provides no contribution from the 25 years of underfunding. (No Added Value)
 - 3. Proof in that fact can be found in the final line of the KPERS summary. "This is not an employer-funded COLA."
 - 4. This bill was recommended by the Joint Committee on Pensions, Investments, & Benefits which met this fall.
 - 5. Some of you will be interested to know that there has been a bill introduced to expand the 'DROP' program to all KP&F personnel.
 - 6. Also, one wants to move the 'sworn' members of Kansas Wildlife and Parks to KP&F. (Previously known as Kansas Fish and Game)
 - f. There is a House and Senate Committees meeting scheduled you might find interesting, but we will not know if they are meeting until Monday, and if so what the agenda looks like for Wednesday.
 - g. The emphasis will be on meeting with your legislators as well as dropping off a card in the Governor's Office, much like last year. We will also ask you to drop a post card off at the office of the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate.
 - h. Further information for the day:
 - 1. Most of the legislators arrive early at the Capitol, many as early as 7:30.
 - 2. The House will likely go into session at 11:00.
 - 3. The Senate will likely go into session at 2:00.
 - 4. It is too early to know if there are any committee meetings you would like to attend.
 - 5. There is a very nice eatery in the Capitol, best described as a deli. (In some years past this was not the case.)
 - 6. We believe that we will be able to set the day up in such a way that it will be very interesting and educational.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

I. SEE NEWS FLASH ABOVE!!!

- II. If you have been communicating with your legislators, continue to do so and if you have not been communicating with your legislator, please begin to do so. It has been noted that there are 32 new Representatives. I know of only one who has been thoroughly briefed on KPERS. So.....you need to talk to your legislator and fill them in the best you can to help us out. Just remember, whatever you know, particularly if you have been reading these Updates, about KPERS, *exceeds* what most, especially the new ones, know about the subject.
- III. Using the suggestions below, email or otherwise communicate to your representative YOUR need for a COLA. I have also attached the previous released brochure. The facts contained within are still accurate except for the present rate of inflation which still exceeds 7%. We will insert the latest figures prior to the 'KPERS Day' in February.
- A. If your legislator indicates that she/he favors a COLA, please email or text me and let me know the extent of their commitment. We have stated before that it would *not* be inappropriate to ask for that commitment in writing.
- B. We have once again included a copy of our latest brochure which contains important rationale for the need for a benefit increase. Read it carefully before you hand it out or send it. If you have any questions, give me a call at the number below, and I will be happy to answer them for you!!
- C. *Please note that I have attached a list of all the members and their contact information who serve on the House and Senate Committees which are most likely to deal with any COLA issues at this stage. These committees will also be permanently displayed on our website. www.ksretirees.org under the heading, SPECIAL NOTES.*

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 believe 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 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!!**

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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. 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!!

Stay safe and warm,

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ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED as Well as available on the KCPR Website, www.ksretirees.org
Updated Brochure
House and Senate Pensions Committees
KPERs DAY PLANS
Parking and Other Logistics
Report KPERs COLA Day at the Capitol
THE CRUX OF THE MATTER