



Update

Dear Friends,

January 11, 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)

REPORT ON THE January MEETING

This Update will again be brief:

1. *Because of the 'KPERS Day at the Capitol' our next KCPR ZOOM meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 1st. The 'KPERS Day at the Capitol' is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8th.*
2. *We have much more planning to do, SO please look for additional UPDATES between now and February 8th!*
3. There were three major areas of discussion at today's meeting:
 - A. As indicated in #1, 'KPERS Day at the Capitol,' has been confirmed for February 8th. Because of the legislative year, we are almost forced to schedule this event in February. The gathering place will be the second-floor Rotunda.
 - a. We will have the space to formally meet from 8:00 until 12:00. It is unlikely that we will be held to the ending time because we are guessing the setup of the area will remain unlike the 'tear down' necessary with the previous format.
 - b. The focus of that day will be on some type of benefits increase. I have explained briefly below (B) the strategy we plan to use this year.
 - c. We will meet with you prior to your tour of the building. This 'training' will be more personal and individualized. There may also be Committee Meetings you would like to attend, but many of these are scheduled 'on the call of the chair,' so we may not know about these until the Friday before. There are always committee meetings of some sort going on which you can sit in on. We will also have a list of scheduled events that you may wish to take in. We will also have guides to help you find where you need/want to be in the building.
 - d. 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.
 - e. It is too early to begin scheduling a meeting with your Rep. and Senator but here are some things to consider. We suggest that you begin the scheduling no later than February 1st.
 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.
 - B. We have received some of the information regarding committee organization/assignments for the 2023 session, but it is still too early to be able to get a complete 'lay of the land' so to speak. We do know that Treasurer Steven Johnson will now be joining the KPERS Board due to his newly elected position. We

are concerned because prior to the general election, we became aware that a number of the majority were concerned about being re-elected and we had some 'positive overtures' regarding a benefit increase. Sadly, those 'overtures' have seemed to have 'dried up.' The KCPR Steering Committee voted to pursue a CPI-governed COLA. The plan we are working on is to put together a bipartisan group of legislators from both the Kansas House and Senate and see what they might feel comfortable supporting. The first preference will be CPI related, but we fully understand that if this plan will not be supported, we must try something else! The present inflation rate is listed at 6.5%. In previous years, a high inflation rate was used as the rationale for a benefit increase.

- C. Therefore, if you have been communicating with your legislator, 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.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

4. Using the suggestions below, email or otherwise communicate to your representative YOUR need for a COLA. I have also attached the previously 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 an 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*

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 the problem, solution, and 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 are, 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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