



# Update

Dear Friends,

April 10, 2024

*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)*

**The next meeting of KCPR will be held on Wednesday, May 8, 2024, via Zoom.**

## KCPR April 10, 2024, UPDATE

Some of our discussions and actions at today's meeting were as follows:

### Legislative Update:

According to KPERS: Prior to adjournment they did pass HB 2711, which included several changes to law impacting KPERS. The changes include:

Increase the working after retirement threshold for the employer contribution of 30% from the current \$25,000 to \$40,000.

Increase the Kansas Police and Fire Retirement System (KP&F) working after retirement income level for returning to the same employer from \$25,000 to \$40,000.

Add a retirement exemption for licensed nurses and direct support staff at Community Developmental Disabilities Organizations (CDDOs).

Increase in the lump-sum death benefit for beneficiaries of KPERS retirees from \$4,000 to \$6,000.

1. There is no indication that the Governor will veto any of the above.
2. All of the other direct KPERS employees proposals and/or bills are dead except for the decisions on what to do with Tier III. [Remember, 2025 is not a bill carry over year.] Surprisingly, this may have some life in the Senate. We are not aware of what form this would take. I have testified in both the House and Senate on how unfair it would be to move just the Teachers in Tier III to Tier II. The numbers are as follows:  
You will recall that the bills that originated in both the House and Senate included moving just the 'Teachers in KPERS School' to Tier II.  
**Presently**, here are the Numbers: (I hope I have avoided confusion by asking you to do the math by dividing all the numbers by 2. I was afraid if I did it for you it would be toooo confusing if you had any knowledge of the total numbers in KPERS. As stated below, about 1/2 of the active KPERS members in KPERS and KPERS School are in Tier III.)
  - A. **PLEASE NOTE: Approximately 50% of the employees in KPERS and KPERS School are involved in Tier III at this time. Therefore, all of the following numbers need to be divided by 2. Obviously that calculation still leaves a very large number!! [Because the numbers of employees can obviously change daily, the following numbers are estimates.]**

- B. There are two large groups of employees involved in KPERS and KPERS School.
  - a. State and Local KPERS employees number 56,642. [None of these in Tier III would be included in the present proposal.]
  - b. KPERS School employees number 87,207. Of these 43,954 are not certified. [Yes, the licensed numbers are close.]
  - c. Regarding KPERS School there are presently a total of 43,253 Licensed (Certified employees.) Because of the way the original bills terminology the proposal to move them to Tier II DOES NOT INCLUDE 5157 licensed staff without 'teacher' in their title as well as 3264 of those with administrator or supervisor titles. [None of these in Tier III would be included in the present proposal.]
  - d. Only 34,821 would meet the criteria to be moved to Tier II.
  - e. Therefore, under the present proposal, only 34,820 of the total of 143,849 employees KPERS and KPERS School employees would be moved to Tier II.  
Remember you need to divide each of these numbers by 2 in order to calculate the approximate actual number.
- 3. The information for the next section was shared.
- 4. The remainder of the meeting was taken up with discussions around what benefit increase to consider next year and how to 'pack' the Capitol next year for "Lobby Day?"
  - A. We are beginning to work on this already for next year.
  - B. We will ask, *but all we can do is request*, that the date be during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of February 2025. (Please save the date.)
  - C. Since the early days of the KCPR/KARSP Rally's, we have never had the turnout we thought it necessary to impact the legislature. Please put the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of February on your Calendar.
  - D. *Please note that we are crowding 30 years without a permanent benefit increase, 28 years to be exact.* The legislature is getting one after only 16 years. (Last one in 2009.) The last permanent KPERS retirement benefit raise was in 1997.) Depending on the final figures, their pay raise appears to be somewhere between 90 and 100%.

**Information some of you will be interested in.**

*I don't know how many of you are interested in the following but will share it with you:*

1. *On our website, [www.ksretirees.org](http://www.ksretirees.org) there is an article entitled "HOW THE LEGISLATURE REALLY WORKS AKA – HOW BILLS BECOME LAWS." This article explains all the steps necessary for a bill to become law. Even after having assembled that article, I have discovered another 'wrinkle' if you will. When the legislature returns for the veto session at the end of the month, the Senate is going to take a 'special' vote as to whether to bring the Medicaid expansion up for debate. If the vote is yes, the proposal will be debated. If it should pass, the House (as I understand it) will need to discuss this once again. If you have interest in this subject, you may want to communicate your feelings to your KS Representative and Senator.*

2. *Regarding the present tax bill: If the Governor determines that there are not enough votes to override her veto, she will likely veto the present bill. She would apparently prefer her recommended proposal rather than the compromise which is on her desk.*

### **Our Discoveries**

1. Another disappointment is that our writers (communicators) are not receiving replies to their email, especially from leadership. Sadly, I am informed by many that the 'no reply' position is WAY too common for most all the legislators. *Please do not use this as an excuse to stop communicating.*
2. The thought of the KCPR Steering Committee is that we all need to regularly and repeatedly make a request to the legislative leadership for a benefit increase.
3. Their contact information is as follows:
  - a. Speaker of the House: Topeka Phone 785-296-2302, [dan.hawkins@house.ks.gov](mailto:dan.hawkins@house.ks.gov)  
His home address is 9406 Harvest Ln., Wichita, Ks 67212, phone 316-722-7307.
  - b. President of the Senate: 785-296-2419, [Ty.Masterson@senate.ks.gov](mailto:Ty.Masterson@senate.ks.gov)  
Home: PO Box 324, Andover, Ks 67002, phone 855-255-2446
4. You might, if you live in their area and can vote for them, tell them that you are not planning to vote for anyone who does not support a KPERS Retiree Benefit Increase.

Have a wonderful Week!!!!

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