



Update

Dear Friends,

February 14, 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 Claude)

FINAL UPDATE REGARDING KPERS DAY AT THE CAPITOL FEBRUARY 8, 2023

I wanted to give a quick report on last Wednesday's "KPERS Day at the Capitol". We had a nice turnout! KARSP, KCPR, and KNEA retired were well represented. We also had visits from state employees who are nearing retirement and the retired firefighters were well represented. We had visitors representing retired Kansas State Employees. We have recorded 53 actual visits to Senators and Representatives. We are positive that there were many more that went unreported.

People came from the Kansas City area, as well as Brown County, Smith County, Chanute, Wichita, and as far away as Hays!

The KCPR Steering Committee and KARSP Officers were well represented.

It also worked out that we were well represented in the House Financial Institutions and Pensions Committee where three of us testified against HB2025 which we refer to as the "COLA Bill that is really not a COLA Bill." Those who attended this committee were able to witness Ed Klumpp, Tim Graham and I testifying against this preposterous bill. Those who are not familiar with this bill should be concerned with its very name, "self-funded COLA."

We want to thank all who attended. We have evidence that a number who could not attend submitted emails and contacts from their homes. We will work on ways to facilitate this approach next year.

I want to remind everyone of the following:

To pass favorable KPERS legislation we need votes. In order to gain the votes, we will have to elect folks who will vote for the KPERS improvements or convince those in office to vote for positive changes.

We who lobby cannot do this alone!! This is why I am so thankful for all of you who made the trip to Topeka!!

Present 2023 Bills of Interest:

HB2025 – Self-Funded COLA for those not yet retired.

A better name would be a "benefit rationing" bill rather than a COLA.

I testified against this one. Sadly, a lot of the 'still working' contacted their legislator to favor this bill, not knowing what it was about. They just saw "COLA" and jumped on it.

HB2252 & SB198 propose a 5,4,3,2,1% COLA -- Bills are similar if not identical. This approach was chosen because of potential cost and because it provides for benefit levels, and more for those who have retired for a long time.

HB2365 -- Moving Tier III back to Tier II -- This has an initiation cost and an annual cost but is the right to enact. Tier III is not good!

SB230 -- Enacting the Kansas Thrift Plan. This would replace Tier III. We oppose it for many reasons. This is a reissue of last year's SB553. You can research it, and the testimony against it from last year, if you like.

SB172 -- Increasing KPERS Death Benefit from \$4K TO \$6K.

Have a concern about this proposal because it does nothing to enhance the income of the living. It has an initial cost for the retired and living plus a considerable annual cost. HB2252 and SB198 will likely cost out. The cost of this bill would pay for approximately 1/3 of the cost of the COLA and be a one-time cost.

HB2166 -- Expanding Drop Program to all KP&F. Presently offered to KBI & KS Highway Patrol. Our friends, especially the Fire Fighters, want this expansion. *Personally, I always struggle to see the advantage.*

WAR BILLS (WORKING AFTER BILLS)

HB2272 Exempting WAR (Working After Retirement) Exemption/NOT EDUCATION

HB2195 WAR (Working After Retirement) Bill Threshold to \$35K and suspending employer contribution until December 31, 2024.

KPERS PROPOSED BILL

HB2103 & SB23 -- Increase 15% Cap on Private Investment.

This was a request by the KPERS Board. The board deems this essential to be able to maintain maximum investment potential.

HB2193 -- Unclaimed property funds to KPERS

BACK STORY:

HB2008 -- Adding Corrections Officers to KP&F

HB2085 -- Adding Juvenile Corrections Officers to KP&F

HB2198 -- Moving 'Sworn' Fish and Game to KP&F

There are many corrections that need to be corrected regarding KPERS in general. All three above groups are 'sworn' officers, i.e., have jobs requiring them to be armed. The above proposes to move these officers to KP&F. Additionally, there are about a third of the police officers in Kansas are not in KP&F because 'back in the day' there was a local option and regular KPERS was cheaper for the employer than KP&F. Likely won't testify on behalf of these, but certainly are in support of the need.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to call. I would prefer that form of communication.

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