
It Requires Everyone's Participation

The following is from William I Winegarner's Administrator's report to the 2008 PERI Annual Meeting

During this last session of the Ohio General Assembly, we put forth arguments, and communicated effectively enough with members of the Ohio House that the eminent passage of HB 151* was put on hold, and a more tolerable, yet still costly to retirees, agreement was worked out between the executive directors of Ohio's retirement systems and the Speaker of the House. Even though our arguments and legislative points against the divestiture legislation were picked up and utilized in other states where similar legislation was introduced, they were not able to stop it from passing, like we did in Ohio.

The one thing that allowed us to stop this roller coaster was the involvement of our Ohio retirees. Men and women who made local calls, sent emails, and wrote individual letters to their legislators were clearly the ones that made the difference.

**HB 151 was a bill introduced by Representative Josh Mandel, which would have established a precedent of allowing state legislative bodies to determine where Ohio's pension funds could invest their money. The ploy was to require divestment in businesses that did business with Iran and Iraq. Of course, not as determined by the US State Department, but rather by contributors to Representative Mandel's political campaigns.*