

William Babb
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LD 206

While I appreciate a token, one time payment the following is still true and I would still like to have meaningful corrections. This was originally sent to the Appropriations and Finance Committee on February 28, 2022.

My name is William Babb.

I was a teacher in the Lincoln County Towns of South Bristol, Bristol, Bremen and Wiscasset for 30 years starting in 1970. Included in my tenure I was a teacher, principal, coach and Waldoboro School Board Member. Also through those years, I worked numerous jobs during school vacations, evenings and after retiring to make ends meet. I payed into Social Security while performing all of those jobs.

Over the course that time, with both political parties being in control, many changes happened to the Maine State Retirement system. Some affected my retirement and others affected new hires. The purpose was to keep the retirement system solvent due to unfunded liabilities created by the Maine State Government legislative bodies and governors over those years. Each time changes were made it effected loss of income to me and other retired teachers and members of the system. More recently Governor Lepage took drastic steps to cap the COLA and reduce the amount upon which the COLA was based. I understand his reason to keep the system solvent but rather than address the unfunded liabilities from the income side he reduced the benefits for all retirees.

In addition to these actions, the State of Maine stopped helping the college students with tuition in the area of education to keep an adequate pool of teachers hoping to work in our wonderful schools. When I attended Farmington State Teachers College from 1966 through 1970 tuition was \$50 per semester. In that period FSTC became part of the University of Maine System and the tuition help ceased. The current tuition is over \$9000. It scares me to think of what the cost is for today's 4 year education students wanting to help guide our current and future children.

State workers receive full health coverage while those of us who worked in the schools in which all diseases of the community passed receive 40%.

To add insult to injury, my Social Security income has been reduced to approximately 1/3, one third, of what I should have received based on my payments into the system. Is this really a 'windfall' that needs to be 'eliminated'? This SS reduction combined with losses due to the retirement system's changes created a huge loss of income for me and all other retirees who worked more jobs than our service to the communities in which we were employed. Our income decreased in purchasing power while inflation raged.

So much for being appreciated for my service to the State and its children who passed through my classes and under my supervision.....

It is now time for you to rectify the breeches of contract and restrictions that we have suffered for the actions of previous elected officials who did not adequately fund the system for decades.

Sincerely, from a frustrated retired educator,

William E. Babb
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