

Retirement in Maine ? ! ?



Yes



No



Maybe

Good Afternoon, All,

You may remember me, I am John Whitten, a retired public School teacher who just recently spoke to you regarding LD 70 and the reduced C.O.L.A. paid to retirees as well as the capped amount of our pension that it may be applied.

I am glad that you are exploring LD 1096 and the CPU's C.O.L.A. as a direct reflection of the inflation percentage, for our pension system.

(I feel that you folks and our state legislature, can not in good conscience, 'kick this can down the road' any longer.)

I wish you to realize (and I did not mention this in my previous 'testimony' to you on LD70), that most of our retirees are on the short side of life, and that we all have fewer years to 'recover' from these limitations on our finances that we worked a career building. It would be indeed sorrowful, if anyone should die waiting while our state government failed to correct this financial 'stressor' in our lives. THIS ISSUE, in this way, IS A TIME SENSITIVE MATTER. and everyone's clock is ticking.

I am pleased (and I thank you) for entertaining this issue at this level of governance. I would ask you to convince everyone concerned (Gov. Mills, other Commission chairs and our entire legislature) that before funding anything 'new' in our state's budget, that prior commitments need to be corrected (and paid for), FIRST! And, unless something is pending that's 'older' than 12 years, than 'this' issue must take priority.

Also,

Our legislators and Governor, need to realize, that Maine is creating a history of treating their retirees poorly, concerning pension restrictions. And quite possibly, this item and this 'reputation' could very well limit new teachers from choosing education as a 'career' - thus stressing, more, the teacher shortage going on across Maine right now. (I personally would not advise my grand children to consider working for the state of Maine for their careers, based upon the current retirement situation(s).) So, I am pleased and hopeful that today's testimony(s) can give you ideas and the energy to eliminate this negative 'reputation' legislative members. Maine currently has the money, but does it have the 'will' to make it right.

Thank you for listening to my thoughts on this. I hope you agree with me.

Most Sincerely,

John B. Whitten



P.S. Just so you know... Teachers (the successful ones) are long range 'thinkers' !
They know where they are (in the classroom lessons) and where they are going (their future) as well as how they will move forward with each. And they also know when they have 'arrived'.

With this in mind, our state government needs to realize that by curtailing an educator's retirement plan (already in place) they are affecting the teacher's morale, thus, their classroom performance and probably pupil accomplishment and very possibly the number of teachers in our Maine schools. ☹

[Diminished numbers of teachers in schools currently, could very well be the result of these past 12 years of retirement curtailments catching up with the present situation(s) and our legislators need to realize the consequences of their "changing the rules in the middle of the game". UGH.]

P.P.S. Additionally, I have heard that the state's Unfunded Liability is set to be completed in five more years (2028); If this is true, What happens then (?). Can/Will Maine lift these 'caps' and retirement curtailments without such current worries of affordability? Should this be a strong 'suggestion' to each and every legislator - that any short-comings created by Maine correcting the present C.O.L.A /benefit 'cap' now, will not be 'postponed' for too long (?) but, no matter what they do now, that the reasoning for 'these' restrictions ends shortly . Please think on this !

JBLW