



Washington State School Retirees' Association

PO Box 5127 • Lacey, WA 98509 • (360) 413-5496 • www.wssra.org

May 4, 2023

The Honorable Steve Conway
Chair, Select Committee on Pension Policy
241 John A. Cherberg Building
P.O. Box 40429
Olympia, WA 98504

Chair Conway,

As the SCPP meets to determine its focus during the interim, the Washington State School Retirees' Association would ask that you consider the following:

First, under the recently passed SB 5350, SCPP has a specific directive. The bill reads: " NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. During the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium, the select committee on pension policy will study and recommend an ongoing cost-of-living adjustment for beneficiaries of the public employees' retirement system plan 1 and the teachers' retirement system plan 1. Any recommendation must consider employer contribution rate stability and coordinate the effective date of an ongoing cost-of-living adjustment with the reduction or elimination of the unfunded accrued actuarial liability."

Clearly, this task should be an area of committee focus during the interim.

A second, but related matter is to consider recommending a 2024 ad hoc Plan 1 COLA to the legislature. During House and Senate debate on the 2023 COLA bill, support for adding a COLA during the second half of the biennium was apparent. Although budget concerns made that impractical for the just-concluded session, legislators overwhelmingly are interested in assuring that Plan 1 retirees do not have the purchasing power of their pensions further eroded. As you know, with 6% to 8% inflation and 3% COLAs Plan 1 retirees are falling further and further behind. The support and recommendation of the SCPP is a critical first step in advancing this legislation.

This matter is of the highest priority to school retirees. Please give serious consideration to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Alan Burke".

Alan Burke, Executive Director
Washington State School Retirees' Association