



LOUISIANA RETIRED
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

"STRIVING TO MAKE RETIREMENT YEARS GREAT!"

2020 Spring District Meeting

District V

March 18, 2020

Alert!

The resources in this packet will be vital throughout the 2020 Legislative Session. Please keep these resources and share them with fellow retirees who were unable to attend the District Meeting.

In this packet you will find:

- **Contact information for the House and Senate Retirement Committees and legislators:** LRTA may call upon you to contact your legislators during the 2020 Legislative Session. Please call, email and write letters to your legislators. Use the talking points provided in this packet to support your arguments and guide your conversations.
- **LRTA Legislative Tracking Chart**
- **Talking Points and Research:** Includes information about why LRTA supports Defined Benefit (DB) retirement plans, opposes hybrid/Defined Contribution (DC) retirement plans and Constitutional Amendments/Conventions and national research to support your conversations.
- **2 sample letters for HB 32 and HB 26:** Please take the time to hand-write letters to your respective legislators and ask them to oppose these bills. Do **NOT** just fill in the blanks. Make sure to include a little information about your personal experiences in the classroom. This will help to engage legislators. Also, while we have provided you a sample letter for HB 32, we encourage you to write letters of opposition for HB 33 and HB 34. Both bills introduce an optional hybrid plan for charter schools and higher ed professionals that pay into TRSL. This will ultimately affect teachers, as well.
- **Pre-addressed envelopes to the House and Senate Committee Retirement Chairs**
- **A copy of the LRTA Legislative Survey and how your legislators responded:** If you notice your representatives or senators have not responded to the LRTA Legislative Survey, reach out to them to gauge their stance on LRTA's Legislative Priorities.
- **2020 LRTA Spring Meeting Registration Form**

For information on when to contact legislators by email, phone or letters, please join our Email Club at www.lrta.net for timely updates.



LOUISIANA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

"STRIVING TO MAKE RETIREMENT YEARS GREAT!"

LRTA Legislative Priorities

LRTA supports legislation that will positively affect retired teachers and opposes legislation that will adversely affect retired teachers. LRTA also supports efforts to maintain adequate funding for top quality public education in Louisiana. Although these priorities are listed in numerical order, the items listed are all top priorities of LRTA.

1. LRTA supports a viable Employee Experience Account for accumulating a portion of the excess interest earnings of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana for future funding of cost-of-living increases for retirees.
2. LRTA supports dedicated allocation from state funds for cost-of-living increases.
3. LRTA supports a stable, automatic cost-of-living increase provision for retirees as part of the benefit structure offered by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
4. LRTA supports dedicated allocations from state funds to meet the state's obligation to reduce the Initial Unfunded Accrued Liabilities (IUALs) of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana without causing an adverse budget impact on public education agencies or retirees.
5. LRTA supports state revenue enhancements that provide a meaningful economic impact on retired educators in enhancing their dignity, independence and overall quality of life.
6. LRTA supports funding from state funds to offset increasing costs of health insurance premiums and other benefits for retired educators offered by the Office of Group Benefits and other health care insurers and providers.
7. LRTA opposes any action that would negatively impact the actuarial soundness of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
8. LRTA opposes the consolidation of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana with any other retirement system.
9. LRTA opposes the consolidation of assets of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana with any other retirement system, and opposes any other action that would dilute membership control of the investment of the assets of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
10. LRTA opposes any action that would alter the current defined benefit structure offered by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana to its members.
11. LRTA supports a viable, adequately funded public education program that requires educators to become members of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana, and opposes the provision of state funded scholarships/vouchers for public elementary and secondary school students to attend private and non-public schools.
12. LRTA supports repeal of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) of the Social Security Administration and opposes mandatory Social Security coverage of public employees in Louisiana.
13. LRTA supports the continuation of Louisiana state income tax exemption for retirement benefits issued by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
14. LRTA opposes any legislation or bill that would cut or diminish Medicare benefits.
15. LRTA opposes any legislation that calls for a state constitutional convention.



LOUISIANA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

"STRIVING TO MAKE RETIREMENT YEARS GREAT!"

House Retirement Committee Members

Rep. Lance Harris (Chairman)

P.O. Box 13555
Alexandria, LA 71315-3555
(318) 767-6095
harrisl@legis.la.gov

Rep. Beau Beaulieu (Vice-Chairman)

800 S. Lewis St., Ste 206
New Iberia, LA 70560
(337) 373-4051
hse048@legis.la.gov

Rep. Roy Daryl Adams

P.O. Box 217
Jackson, LA 70748
(225) 634-7470
hse062@legis.la.gov

Rep. Tony Bacala

15482 Airline Hwy., Suite A
Prairieville, LA 70769
(225) 677-8020
bacalat@legis.la.gov

Rep. Julie Emerson

306 North Church St.
Carencro, LA 70520
(337) 886-4687
emersonj@legis.la.gov

Rep. Gabe Firment

181 Barron Road
Pollock, LA 71467-3643
(318) 765-9606
hse022@legis.la.gov

Rep. Aimee Freeman

8600 Oak Street
New Orleans, LA 70118-1222
(504) 861-1614
hse098@legis.la.gov

House Retirement Committee Members (cont.)

Rep. Paul Hollis

600 N. Highway 190, Suite 202A
Covington, LA 70433
(985) 871-4680
hollisp@legis.la.gov

Rep. John Illg, Jr.

9523 Jefferson Hwy. Suite A
River Ridge, LA 70123
(504) 736-7030
hse078@legis.la.gov

Rep. Barry Ivey

P.O. Box 78286
Baton Rouge, LA 70837
(225) 261-5739
iveyb@legis.la.gov

Rep. Patrick O. Jefferson

504 N. Main St.
Homer, LA 71040
(318) 927-2519
jeffersonpo@legis.la.gov

Rep. Richard Nelson

2001 Lakeshore Drive
Mandeville, LA 70448
(985) 222-2638
hse089@legis.la.gov

Rep. Phillip Eric Tarver

132 Jamestown
Lake Charles, LA 70605
(337) 472-8186
hse036@legis.la.gov

Rep. Tanner Magee (Ex Officio)

7833 W. Main St.
Houma, LA 70360
(985) 858-2970
mageet@legis.la.gov

Rep. Clay Schexnayder (Ex Officio)

6473 Highway 44, Suite 205
Gonzales, LA 70737
(225) 473-6016
schexnayderc@legis.la.gov



LOUISIANA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

"STRIVING TO MAKE RETIREMENT YEARS GREAT!"

Senate Retirement Committee Members

Senator Edward J. Price (Chairman)

2109 S. Burnside Ave., Suite C

Gonzales, LA 70737

(225) 644-6738

(855) 844-1430

pricee@legis.la.gov

Senator Robert Mills (Vice-Chairman)

105 Harvey's Way

Minden, LA 71055

(225) 644-6738

sen36@legis.la.gov

Senator Cleo Fields

2147 Government Street

Baton Rouge, LA

(225) 644-6738

fieldsc@legis.la.gov

Senator Bob Hensgens

122 N. State Street; Suite 100

Abbeville, LA 70510

(337) 740-6425

(800) 259-5035

sen26@legis.la.gov

Senator Beth Mizell

1051 Main Street

Franklinton, LA 70438

(985) 839-3936

mizellb@legis.la.gov

Senator Barrow Peacock

1619 Jimmie Davis Highway

Bossier City, LA 71112

(318) 741-7180

peacockb@legis.la.gov

Senator Kirk Talbot

9523 Jefferson Hwy., Suite B

River Ridge, LA 70123

(504) 736-7299

talbotk@legis.la.gov



LOUISIANA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

LRTA DISTRICT V LEGISLATORS CONTACT INFORMATION

Please use this information if LRTA calls upon you to contact your legislators regarding a Constitutional Amendment or Constitutional Convention.

Evangeline Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Email
28	Senator	Heather Cloud - R	13988 Veteran Memorial Highway	Turkey Creek	70585	(337) 461-2595	sen28@legis.la.gov
38	Representative	Rhonda Butler - R	5592 Vidrine Road	Ville Platte	70586	(337) 363-3900	hse038@legis.la.gov
41	Representative	Phillip DeVillier - R	P.O. Box 986	Eunice	70535	(337) 457-0194	devillierp@legis.la.gov

Iberia Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Phone Number 2	Email
21	Senator	R.L. "Bret" Allain II - R	600 Main Street	Franklin	70538	(337) 828-9107	(985) 850-2738	allainb@legis.la.gov
22	Senator	Fred H. Mills Jr. - R	1019 Periou Street	Parks	70582	(337) 845-4240		millsf@legis.la.gov
22	Senator	Fred H. Mills Jr. - R	800 S. Lewis Street Suite 203	New Iberia	70560	(337) 365-8484		millsf@legis.la.gov
46	Representative	Mike Huval - R	110 N. Main Street	Breaux Bridge	70517	(337) 332-3331		huvalm@legis.la.gov
48	Representative	Beau Beaulieu - R	800 S. Lewis St. Ste 206	New Iberia	70560	(337) 373-4051		hse048@legis.la.gov
49	Representative	Blake Miguez - R	410 N. Broadway St.	Erath	70533	(337) 937-8827		miguezbl@legis.la.gov
96	Representative	Marcus Bryant - D	800 South Lewis Street Suite 201-B	New Iberia	70560	(337) 373-9380		hse096@legis.la.gov

Lafayette Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Phone Number 2	Email
22	Senator	Fred H. Mills Jr. - R	1019 Periou Street	Parks	70582	(337) 845-4240		millsf@legis.la.gov
22	Senator	Fred H. Mills Jr. - R	800 S. Lews Street Suite 203	New Iberia	70560	(337) 365-8484		millsf@legis.la.gov
23	Senator	Patrick "Page" Cortez - R	101 W. Farrel Road Bldg. 5, Suite 100	Lafayette	70508	(337) 993-7430		cortezp@legis.la.gov
24	Senator	Gerald Boudreaux - D	P.O. Box 91245	Lafayette	70509	(337) 267-7520	(844) 885-6578	boudreauxg@legis.la.gov
26	Senator	Bob Hensgens - R	122 N. State Street Suite 100	Abbeville	70510	(337) 740-6425	(800) 259-5035	sen26@legis.la.gov
31	Representative	Johnathon Goudeau - R	3639 Ambassador Caffery Pkwy. Suite 214	Lafayette	70503	(337) 347-7077		hse031@legis.la.gov
39	Representative	Julie Emerson - R	306 North Church St.	Carencro	70520	(337) 886-4687		emersonj@legis.la.gov
42	Representative	John Stefanski - R	P.O. Box 2720	Crowley	70527	(337) 384-8999		stefanskij@legis.la.gov
43	Representative	Stuart Bishop - R	P.O. Box 80993	Lafayette	70508	(337) 981-7409		bishops@legis.la.gov
44	Representative	Vincent J. Pierre - D	800 W. Congress St. Suite A	Lafayette	70501	(337) 262-2330		pierrev@legis.la.gov
45	Representative	Jean-Paul Coussan - R	2508 -A Johnston St.	Lafayette	70503	(337) 262-2400		coussanjp@legis.la.gov
48	Representative	Beau Beaulieu -R	800 S. Lews St. Ste 206	New Iberia	70560	(337) 373-4051		hse048@legis.la.gov
96	Representative	Marcus Bryant - D	800 South Lewis Street Suite 201-B	New Iberia	70560	(337) 373-9380		hse096@legis.la.gov

St. Landry Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Phone Number 2	Email
22	Senator	Fred H. Mills Jr. - R	1019 Periou Street	Parks	70582	(337) 845-4240		millsf@legis.la.gov
22	Senator	Fred H. Mills Jr. - R	800 S. Lews Street Suite 203	New Iberia	70560	(337) 365-8484		millsf@legis.la.gov

24	Senator	Gerald Boudreaux - D	P.O. Box 91245	Lafayette	70509	(337) 267-7520	(844) 885-6578	boudreauxg@legis.la.gov
26	Senator	Bob Hensgens - R	122 N. State Street Suite 100	Abbeville	70510	(337) 740-6425	(800) 259-5035	sen26@legis.la.gov
28	Senator	Heather Cloud - R	13988 Veteran Memorial Highway	Turkey Creek	70585	(337) 461-2595		sen28@legis.la.gov
38	Representative	Rhonda Butler - R	5592 Vidrine Road	Ville Platte	70586	(337) 363-3900		hse038@legis.la.gov
39	Representative	Julie Emerson - R	306 North Church St.	Carencro	70520	(337) 886-4687		emersonj@legis.la.gov
40	Representative	Dustin Miller - D	Representative Dustin Miller 1310 South Union Street Suite 2	Opelousas	70570	(337) 943-2900		millerd@legis.la.gov
41	Representative	Phillip DeVillier - R	P.O. Box 986	Eunice	70535	(337) 457-0194		devillierp@legis.la.gov
46	Representative	Mike Huval - R	110 N. Main Street	Breaux Bridge	70517	(337) 332-3331		huvalm@legis.la.gov

St. Martin Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Phone Number 2	Email
17	Senator	Rick Ward III - R	3741 Highway 1	Port Allen	70767	(225) 246-8838		wardr@legis.la.gov
22	Senator	Fred H. Mills Jr. - R	1019 Periou Street	Parks	70582	(337) 845-4240		millsf@legis.la.gov
22	Senator	Fred H. Mills Jr. - R	800 S. Lews Street Suite 203	New Iberia	70560	(337) 365-8484		millsf@legis.la.gov
24	Senator	Gerald Boudreaux - D	P.O. Box 91245	Lafayette	70509	(337) 267-7520	(844) 885-6578	boudreauxg@legis.la.gov
46	Representative	Mike Huval - R	110 N. Main Street	Breaux Bridge	70517	(337) 332-3331		huvalm@legis.la.gov
48	Representative	Beau Beaulieu - R	800 S. Lews St. Ste 206	New Iberia	70560	(337) 373-4051		hse048@legis.la.gov
50	Representative	Vincent J. St. Blanc III - R	733 Main Street	Franklin	70538	(337) 828-7778		hse050@legis.la.gov
96	Representative	Marcus Bryant - D	800 South Lewis Street Suite 201-B	New Iberia	70560	(337) 373-9380		hse096@legis.la.gov

St. Mary Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Phone Number 2	Email
21	Senator	R.L. "Bret" Allain II - R	600 Main Street	Franklin	70538	(337) 828-9107	(985) 850-2738	allainb@legis.la.gov
50	Representative	Vincent J. St. Blanc III - R	733 Main Street	Franklin	70538	(337) 828-7778		hse050@legis.la.gov
51	Representative	Beryl Adams Amedee - R	302 School St.	Houma	70360	(985) 858-2967		amedeeb@legis.la.gov

Vermilion Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Phone Number 2	Email
26	Senator	Bob Hensgens - R	122 N. State Street Suite 100	Abbeville	70510	(337) 740-6425	(800) 259-5035	sen26@legis.la.gov
31	Representative	Johnathon Goudeau - R	3639 Ambassador Caffery Pkwy. Suite 214	Lafayette	70503	(337) 347-7077		hse031@legis.la.gov
47	Representative	Ryan Bourriaque - R	122 N. State Street Suite 100	Abbeville	70510	(337) 893-5035		hse047@legis.la.gov
49	Representative	Blake Miguez - R	410 N. Broadway St.	Erath	70533	(337) 937-8827		miguez@legis.la.gov



Chamber (Legislator)	Bill No.	Description	Status	Position
		Hybrid Retirement Plans		
HOUSE (Ivey)	HB 32	Establishes an optional hybrid retirement plan for TRSL members whose first employment makes them eligible for TRSL membership on or after July 1, 2021.	Pending House Retirement	LRTA Opposes
HOUSE (Ivey)	HB 33	Establishes an optional hybrid retirement plan for persons employed by a public postsecondary education management board whose first employment makes them eligible for TRSL membership on or after July 1, 2021.	Pending House Retirement	LRTA Opposes
HOUSE (Ivey)	HB 34	Establishes an optional hybrid retirement plan for employees of charter schools whose first employment makes them eligible for TRSL membership in a state system on or after July 1, 2021.	Pending House Retirement	LRTA Opposes
		Constitutional Amendment		
HOUSE (Ivey)	HB 26	<i>[Constitutional Amendment]</i> Eliminates certain protections for benefits of state retirement system members if such benefits are paid by a third-party provider and not by a state retirement system. <i>(Provides that such benefits are guaranteed only if they have been annuitized by a state retirement system.)</i>	Pending House Retirement	LRTA Opposes
		Retire/Rehire		
HOUSE (Bourriaque)	HB 8	Allows TRSL members to return to work as a substitute classroom teacher in a parish with a population of 10,000 or less without a reduction in benefits. (Also - allows substitute classroom teachers in parishes with a population of 10,000 or less to return to work within the 12-month period immediately following the effective date of such retirement without suspension of benefits.)	Pending House Retirement	LRTA Neutral
HOUSE (Ivey)	HB 24	Excludes from the definition of "teacher" a person employed by a private company to provide tutoring or standardized test preparation services, regardless of any contractual relationship that may exist between the company and an employer.	Pending House Retirement	LRTA Opposes

Chamber (Legislator)	Bill No.	Description	Status	Position
		Board Composition		
SENATE (Peacock)	SB 19	Clarifies that the member of the House retirement committee appointed by the Speaker to serve on a state/statewide retirement system board can authorize legislative staff to attend executive sessions of a board of which the legislator is a member (for the duration of the legislator's appointed time on the board).	Pending Senate Retirement	LRTA Neutral
		Calculation of Retiree Compensation		
HOUSE (Edmonds)	HB 10	Changes the computation of average compensation for TRSL retirees when such calculation is affected by a gap in service that spans more than 10 years, by eliminating compensation limits for months 1 through 12.	Pending House Retirement	LRTA Neutral
		System Actuarial Valuations		
SENATE (Peacock)	SB 21	Provides that the actuarial valuations of state/statewide/local retirement systems shall be submitted to the House/Senate retirement committee chairs within 10 days of board approval instead of 30 days prior to the regular legislative session.	Pending Senate Retirement	LRTA Neutral
		Eligibility for TRSL Membership		
SENATE (Mills)	SB 2	Waives mandatory TRSL membership for teachers who are at least age 60 at time of employment or at least age 55 with credit for at least 40 quarters in Social Security.	Pending Senate Retirement	LRTA Neutral
SENATE (Peacock)	SB 17	Adds employees of the Louisiana School Boards Association (LSBA) in the definition of "teacher;" allows LSBA employees hired on/before June 30, 2020, who were members of the Parochial Employees' Retirement System (PERS), to make a one-time irrevocable election to transfer service credit to TRSL through written notice to PERS and TRSL by Dec. 31, 2020.	Pending Senate Retirement	LRTA Neutral

Chamber (Legislator)	Bill No.	Description	Status	Position
SENATE (Peacock)	SB 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current law for TRSL members, LASERS rank-and-file members, and LSERS members provides for retirement eligibility for those members whose first employment makes them eligible for membership in a state retirement system on or after July 1, 2015, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retirement with five years of service at age 62, or Retirement with 20 years of service at any age (actuarially reduced). Proposes to raise retirement eligibility age for certain members whose first employment makes them eligible for membership in a state retirement system on or after July 1, 2020, as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> five years of service at the greater of age 67 or "age of retirement set by the Social Security Administration"; 40 years of service at age 62; or 20 years of service at any age but actuarially reduced from the age provided in (1) above. "Age of retirement set by the Social Security Administration" is defined as the highest normal retirement age in whole years necessary to receive an unreduced benefit from the Social Security Administration on January 2 immediately preceding employment (if first employed from January 1 to June 30) or January 2 of the year of employment (if first employed from July 1 to December 31). As is the case under current law, disability retirees in this new tier would be required to submit to disability re-exams until regular retirement age provided in (1) or (2) above. Effective June 30, 2020. 	Pending Senate Retirement	LRTA No Position

Talking Points: Pension Reforms

Supporting Defined Benefit (DB) plans; pension reforms are WORKING

What about the Unfunded Accrued Liability (UAL) or debt?

- Since it was created in 1936, TRSL has had an unfunded accrued liability (UAL or debt). Over the years, benefits promised were not fully funded mainly because there was no requirement that the employer contributions needed to properly fund these benefits had to be paid.
- In 1987, Louisiana voters passed a constitutional amendment requiring the System to be properly funded and pay off the debt accrued as of 1988.
- Since the 1987 constitutional amendment, more than a dozen pension reforms have been passed - all designed to maintain the financial health of the system and ensure its sustainability over the long-term. These reforms are projected to have a long-term savings of \$5 billion for the state.
- Due to our current pension reforms, the new debt is eliminated annually through the investment returns.
 - The IUAL of the retirement system will be paid off by 2027.
- In 2019, TRSL sent \$200 million toward paying off the UAL.

Our Current Pension Reforms

- Since 2009, the state has enacted significant pension reform, including:
 - Restructuring the UAL payment plan to make payments more level and steer more of the retirement system's excess investment earnings toward reducing the UAL. Almost \$1 billion in excess earnings have been directed to the UAL.
 - Dedicating additional excess investment returns to the UAL.
 - Raising the retirement eligibility age to 62 for individuals hired on or after July 1, 2015.
 - Adopting a method to project long-term funding needs that allows for greater budget stability.
- Due to our current reforms, the UAL debt of the retirement system will be paid off by 2027.
- The expected long-term reduction in costs from these and other legislative reforms is \$5 billion.

Bottom Line

- The UAL is decreasing.
- The state is making its required contributions to the System.
- TRSL is on track to meet UAL payoff deadlines.
- TRSL's funded ratio is increasing.
- TRSL maintains a highly diverse investment portfolio.
- In FY 2019, TRSL paid \$2.2 billion in retirement benefits; almost 90% went to Louisiana residents.
- TRSL is a sustainable retirement plan.

Start talking to your state Representatives and Senators NOW. They need to know about the issues that affect their constituents. To find your Representatives' and Senators' contact information, see the attachment or go to <http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/FindMyLegislators.aspx>.

Talking Points: Hybrid Plans

Opposing Hybrid Plans

What are hybrid plans?

- Hybrid plans are a combination of Defined Benefit (DB) retirement plans and Defined Contribution (DC) retirement plans.
- Teachers in Louisiana pay into a DB retirement plan. The payout from a DB retirement plan is guaranteed based on a payment formula. In other words, you receive a guaranteed amount using a formula that is based on your years of service and salary.
- A DC retirement plan is similar to a 401(k) plan. While both DB and DC plans are affected by the market, the payout for a DC plan is based on how well investments performed before withdrawal. The amount paid out by a DC plan is not guaranteed.

Why do we **OPPOSE** DC and/or Hybrid Plans?

- Changing to a hybrid plan does not eliminate debt.
 - States that switched to hybrid retirement plans before paying down the debt actually increased the debt (Bond and Doonan, 2019).
- Switching to a DC retirement plan from a DB retirement plan could cost nearly twice as much to maintain (Rhee and Joyner, 2019).
- Hybrid retirement plans offer benefits that are less than DB retirement plans.
 - The amount paid out by the DC portion of the plan is not guaranteed.
 - The accrual rate of the DB portion of the plan will be significantly lower than the accrual rate of a full DB plan. Therefore, the guaranteed payout from the DB portion is significantly lower.
 - No state has effectively implemented a hybrid plan that produces benefits equal to or greater than our current plan.
- We do not recommend a change until research indicates that hybrid plans are effective.
- Research shows DB plans attract and retain teachers, which is linked to improve student achievement (Rhee and Joyner, 2019).

Research

- Rhee, N. & Joyner, Jr., L.F. (2019). Teacher pensions vs. 401(k)s in six states: Connecticut, Colorado, Georgia, Kentucky, Missouri, and Texas. *National Institute on Retirement Security*.
- Bond, T. & Doonan, D. (2019) Examining the experiences of states that closed pension plans. *National Institute on Retirement Security*.

Start talking to your state Representatives and Senators NOW. They need to know about the issues that affect their constituents. To find your Representatives' and Senators' contact information, see the attachment or go to <http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/FindMyLegislators.aspx>.

Talking Points: Constitutional Amendment/Convention

Opposing Constitutional Amendments and Conventions

What is a constitutional amendment?

The purpose of a constitutional amendment is to amend a portion of an existing constitution. Constitutional amendments go before the voting public for approval.

What is a constitutional convention?

The purpose of a constitutional convention is to either write a new constitution or reform / revise an existing constitution. Delegates are appointed to review or rewrite the constitution.

Why do we **OPPOSE** a constitutional amendment/convention?

- Per Article X, Section 29 (A), the Louisiana Constitution guarantees lifetime retirement benefits to TRSL retirees. The state constitution has included this guarantee since 1973. A constitutional amendment or convention has the potential to remove this guarantee. Therefore, the state would no longer be required to pay retired teachers pensions (that they EARNED).
- A constitutional amendment or convention could also remove budgetary protections from other areas of the constitution, such as education funding. Inadequate or inconsistent funding would affect the school systems' ability to pay the employer's cost to the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL).
- As the voice for the retired education community, LRTA opposes any legislative action that would negatively affect retired teachers and/or their pensions.
- The state can amend the constitutional convention through legislation.

Bottom Line

- A constitutional amendment/convention **could** affect your retirement benefits. If the constitutional guarantee of lifetime benefits is removed, the state would not be required to pay public pensions.
- Removing budgetary protections from other areas of the constitution can affect our retirement system.

Start talking to your state Representatives and Senators NOW. They need to know about the issues that affect their constituents. To find your Representatives' and Senators' contact information, see the attachment or go to <http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/FindMyLegislators.aspx>.

85% OF MILLENNIALS WORKING IN STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLAN TO STICK WITH JOB BUT BENEFIT CHANGES COULD PUSH THEM OUT THE DOOR

NIRS asked Millennials what they thought about their jobs and pensions. Here's what they said:

80% of Millennials said their total compensation package (salary and benefits) is competitive.



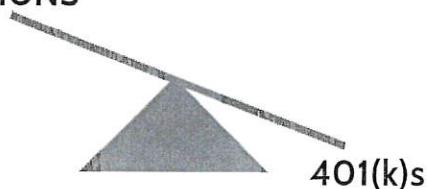
84% of Millennials said a pension benefit is the reason they stay in a state and local government job.

71% said **CUTTING** their pension benefits would make them more likely to leave.



77% of Millennials said they prefer pensions over 401(k) accounts.

PENSIONS

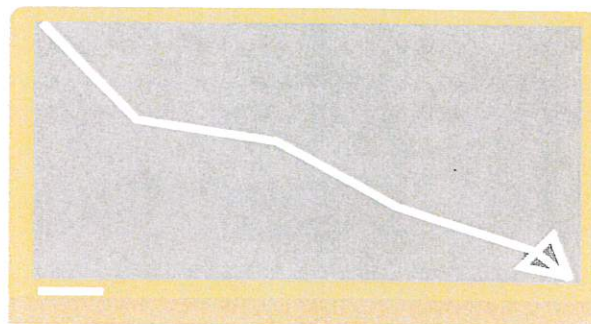


85%

said they are concerned about potential pension benefit cuts.

92% of Millennials said eliminating pensions will weaken the government's ability to recruit and retain workers.

86% said eliminating pensions will weaken public education.



What does this mean?



Millennials are staying in their jobs and are satisfied working in the public sector.



But, if their benefits are cut, Millennials would consider leaving.



Millennials are worried about their retirement and the impact changing their benefits could have on their future.

For more information, visit nirsonline.org/research

State and Local Employees Views on Their Jobs, Pay and Benefits

NIRS asked teachers what they thought about their jobs and pensions. Here's what they said.



94% of teachers have favorable views of defined benefit pensions.



57% of teachers say switching out of a pension would make them more likely to leave their job.

75%



Would be more likely to **leave** their job if their pension were cut.



94% of teachers agree the offering a pension is an effective way for an employer to recruit employees.

What does this mean?



Teachers highly favor their pensions.



Teachers feel DB retirement plans are good tools for recruitment and retainment.

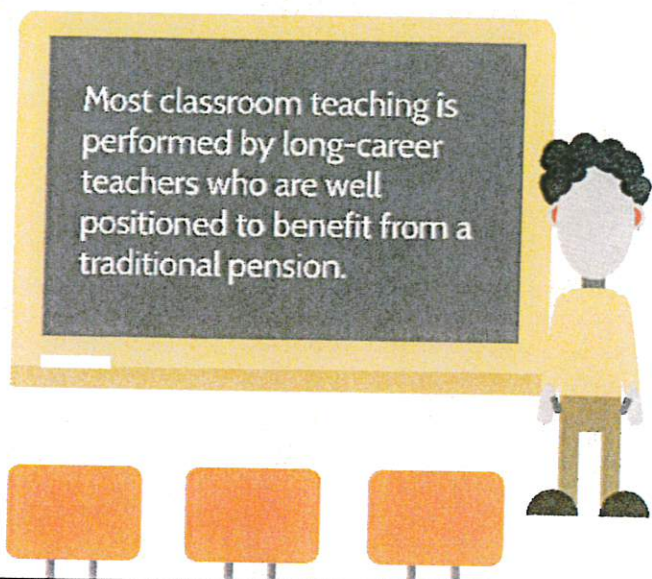


Changing or diminishing pensions would cause teachers to leave their jobs.

For more information, visit nirsonline.org/research

VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS FROM TEACHER PENSIONS VS. 401(K)S IN SIX STATES:
CONNECTICUT, COLORADO, GEORGIA, KENTUCKY, MISSOURI, AND TEXAS
Data: National Institute on Retirement Security

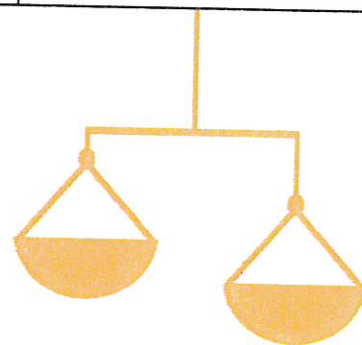
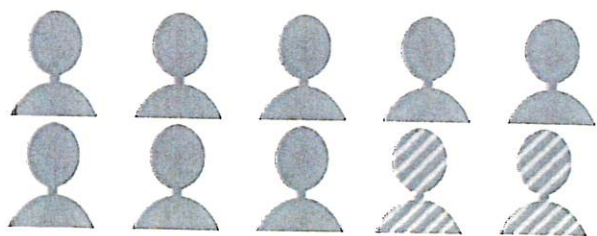
1



Attrition is **HIGH** during the first few years after hire, but attrition falls off and stays **LOW** until retirement

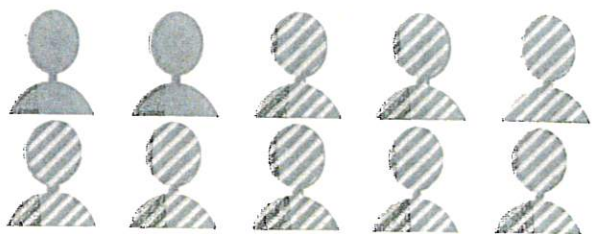
65% will teach for at least 20 years in the same state

2 For 8 out of 10 teachers in the six states analyzed in the study, existing pensions provided greater, more secure retirement income compared to an ideal 401(k) savings plan.



81% of teachers in six states received greater benefits through the lowest-tier pension compared to a realistic 401(k) style plan.

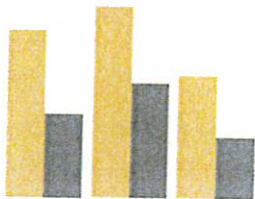
3 For 2 out of 10 teachers in the six states analyzed in the study, an idealized 401(k) style plan accrued more benefit than the lowest-tier pension.



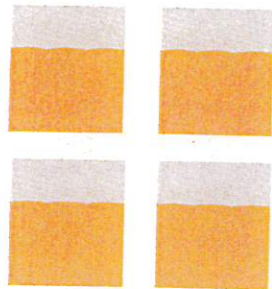
In the study, **23%** of teachers across the six states did not accumulate enough service to earn pension benefits that were greater than benefits from an ideal 401(k) style plan.

This includes the **10%** of teachers who will leave before vesting in the system.

- 4 It would cost significantly more to fund 401(k) benefits that match the value of the pension currently earned by the typical teacher in each of the six states.



Providing the same level of retirement income to a full-career teacher through a 401(k) account would cost roughly 50% more (sometimes even as much as 60% more) than a defined benefit pension.



A pooled pension is more efficient than individual investment accounts when it comes to financing a large retirement system.



- 5 For the most part, Colorado state employees and Colorado teachers benefit more from pensions than 401(k)s.

State

- Hired later in life
- Attrition rates are higher in late careers
- Higher turn-over



Teacher

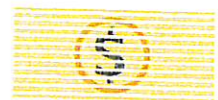
- Hired earlier in life
- Work longer than non-teacher school employees



81% are better off with a pension

- 6 Where do we go from here?

- Teacher shortage: pensions have a great retention effect on teachers, thus lowering teacher turnover.
- Be cautious of switching: Switching benefit structures could significantly reduce retirement income and affect long-term teachers (who conduct the most classroom teaching.)
- Short-Term < Long-Term: Although switching plans may seem beneficial now, the resulting decreased retirement income may have a negative effect on consumer spending down the road.



Interested in more info? Check out the full report at lrta.net or nirsonline.org.



**LOUISIANA RETIRED
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

"STRIVING TO MAKE RETIREMENT YEARS GREAT!"

Tips for Writing Letters to Your Legislators

1. Remember proper format including date and appropriate titles:

Today's date

Representative First Name Last Name
P.O. Box 94062 (900 North 3rd Street)
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

or

Senator First Name Last Name
P.O. Box 94183
Baton Rouge, La 70804

EXAMPLE: Dear Senator or Representative (Insert Last Name):

2. The first paragraph should be a short introduction of who you are. Take this opportunity to describe your experiences as a teacher and your service in the classroom (i.e. I worked for x years in the East Baton Rouge School System or I taught first grade for x years at John Smith Elementary School in Baton Rouge).
3. The second paragraph should be a brief explanation of the issue on which you are writing. Name the bill and the Rep./Senator who authored it. Provide a brief explanation of the bill and specifically ask your legislator to oppose/support it.
4. The third paragraph (or section, if needed) should describe why your legislator should oppose/support the bill. Make sure to describe the impact the bill would have on you, current educators and/or future educators. This is an opportunity to share research Rodney and LRTA has provided you at district meetings or through the LRTA website or email blasts. Use this research to support your argument.
5. The concluding paragraph should thank them for their time and consideration on this issue.
6. Remember to be factual and direct. Limit your letter to one page.



LOUISIANA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

"STRIVING TO MAKE RETIREMENT YEARS GREAT!"

Letter Writing Guide

*Please do not just fill in the blanks. Customize your letter with your experiences and tone of voice.

Properly and respectfully
address the legislator



Dear Representative/Senator _____

Includes personal
information to make a
connection with the
legislator



My name is _____ and I am a retired educator
from _____. I retired with _____ years of experience. (Add
something personal about your educational experiences.)

Specifically asks the
legislator to take action



I am writing to ask that you oppose **House Bill 32** authored by
Representative Barry Ivey. This bill recommends adding an optional
hybrid retirement plan to the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
Research shows states that shifted to hybrid plans from defined benefit
plans failed to pay down the retirement debt and offered a lower
benefit to educators statewide.

Includes research to
show why the legislator
should take action



In August 2019, the National Institute on Retirement Security (NIRS)
release a study that evaluated four different state retirement systems
that switched to hybrid retirement plans or offered hybrid retirement
plans as an option. Kentucky established a new tier of benefits for new
hires that included a hybrid retirement plan, similar to what
Representative Ivey is proposing. Research showed that the hybrid plan
did nothing to address the funding for Kentucky's system. Therefore,
the unfunded accrued liability (UAL) or debt increased.

Add as much or as little
research as you'd like.
Try to include at least
two facts.

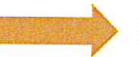


Finally, although this bill may help control for employer costs, there is
not enough information to indicate the retirement benefit is greater
than or even equal to our current defined benefit plan or Social
Security.

Louisiana has adopted retirement reform measures that are paying
down the retirement debt, and at the same time, providing a modest
benefit to its retirees.

Please oppose House Bill 32 Thank you for your consideration of this
important request.

Final reminder to take
action before closing
the letter



Regards (or closing of your choice),

Dear Representative/Senator _____

My name is _____ and I am an active/retired educator from _____. I have/retired with _____ years of experience. (Add something personal about your educational experiences.)

I am writing to ask that you oppose **House Bill 32** authored by Representative Barry Ivey. This bill recommends adding an optional hybrid retirement plan to the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana. Research shows states that shifted to hybrid plans from defined benefit plans failed to pay down the retirement debt and offered a lower benefit to educators statewide.

In August 2019, the National Institute on Retirement Security (NIRS) release a study that evaluated four different state retirement systems that switched to hybrid retirement plans or offered hybrid retirement plans as an option. Kentucky established a new tier of benefits for new hires that included a hybrid retirement plan, similar, to what Representative Ivey is proposing. Research showed that the hybrid plan did nothing to address the funding for Kentucky's system. Therefore, the unfunded accrued liability (UAL) or debt increased.

Finally, although this bill may help control for employer costs, there is not enough information to indicate the retirement benefit is greater than or even equal to our current defined benefit plan or Social Security.

Louisiana has adopted retirement reform measures that are paying down the retirement debt, and at the same time, providing a modest benefit to its retirees.

Please oppose House Bill 32 Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Regards (or closing of your choice),

Dear Representative/Senator _____

My name is _____ and I am a(n) active/retired educator from _____. I have/retired with _____ years of experience. (Add something personal about your educational experiences.)

I am writing to ask that you oppose **House Bill 26** authored by Representative Barry Ivey. This bill proposes amending the Constitution to limit the guarantee of retirement benefits for state employees [Art. X, Sec. 29 (A) and (B)] to certain types of benefits beginning 2020. However, if amendments are introduced to this bill in conference it could affect protections for both active and retired educators.

Research shows states that shifted to hybrid plans from defined benefit plans failed to pay down the retirement debt and offered a lower benefit to educators statewide. The passage of this legislation would further endanger future retirees' benefits by removing Constitutional protection to a portion of that lowered benefit.

Louisiana has adopted retirement reform measures that are paying down the retirement debt, and at the same time, providing a modest benefit to its retirees. Please do not put this modest benefit in peril by removing full constitutional protection.

This legislation could also create a serious adverse effect on teacher recruitment and retention in Louisiana.

Please oppose House Bill 26. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Regards (or closing of your choice),



LOUISIANA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

"STRIVING TO MAKE RETIREMENT YEARS GREAT!"

The Louisiana Retired Teachers Association (LRTA) adopts a list of legislative priorities each year. This list contains items that support the granting of permanent benefit increases (PBIs), maintaining the financial integrity of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL), and protecting the benefit structure offered by the retirement system. Although LRTA does not endorse candidates for public office, the association remains keenly interested in receiving support from elected officials on issues that are important to maintaining and improving the benefits needed to secure dignity and independence in retired life. LRTA would like to obtain your thoughts concerning its legislative priorities. Please take a moment to respond to the questions below.

Please return the signed survey **as soon as possible** to the LRTA office. Our mailing address is:
9412 Common St., Suite 5
Baton Rouge, LA 70809.

You may also return this survey by fax (225-927-8838) or email (info@lrta.net).

1. **LRTA opposes any legislation that would alter the defined benefit structure of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL).** During previous legislative sessions, several bills were created to switch the current defined benefit plan provided by TRSL to a hybrid plan. LRTA continues to oppose these bills, such as SB 14 (2018) and HB 28 (2019). If similar bills appeared in future legislative sessions, would you oppose or veto these bills?

_____ Yes _____ No If no, please explain why on the back of this page.
2. **LRTA supports Permanent Benefit Increases (PBIs) when the criteria to grant one is met.** TRSL benefit recipients have not received a PBI since 2016. Would you support legislation to grant a PBI should TRSL meet the criteria to grant one?

_____ Yes _____ No If no, please explain why on the back of this page.
3. **LRTA opposes constitutional conventions that would remove budgetary protections for education and retirement.** If constitutional convention is proposed in a future legislative session, would you oppose or veto these bills?

_____ Yes _____ No If no, please explain why on the back of this page.
4. **LRTA supports the repeal of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP).** The GPO and the WEP are Social Security federal provisions that reduce retired public employee's individual Social Security and survivor benefits. Retired teachers in Louisiana are subject to the GPO and WEP. Given the opportunity, would you support the repeal of the GPO and WEP?

_____ Yes _____ No If no, please explain why on the back of this page.
5. **LRTA supports teacher and support staff pay raises and adequately funding education through the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP).** Do you support teacher pay raises and adequately funding education through the MFP?

_____ Yes _____ No If no, please explain why on the back of this page.

Signature _____

Date _____

Print name _____

House/Senate District No. _____



LOUISIANA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

LRTA DISTRICT V LEGISLATORS

The Louisiana Retired Teachers Association surveyed political candidates during the 2019 election cycles. The Association asked the candidates the following questions:

1. LRTA opposes any legislation that would alter the defined benefit structure of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL). During previous legislative sessions, several bills were created to switch the current defined benefit plan provided by TRSL to a hybrid plan. LRTA continues to oppose these bills, such as SB 14 (2018) and HB 28 (2019). If similar bills appeared in future legislative sessions, would you oppose or veto these bills?
2. LRTA supports Permanent Benefit Increases (PBIs) when the criteria to grant one is met. TRSL benefit recipients have not received a PBI since 2016. Would you support legislation to grant a PBI should TRSL meet the criteria to grant one?
3. LRTA opposes constitutional conventions that would remove budgetary protections for education and retirement. If constitutional convention is proposed in a future legislative session, would you oppose or veto these bills?
4. LRTA supports the repeal of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). The GPO and the WEP are Social Security federal provisions that reduce retired public employee's individual Social Security and survivor benefits. Retired teachers in Louisiana are subject to the GPO and WEP. Given the opportunity, would you support the repeal of the GPO and WEP?
5. LRTA supports teacher and support staff pay raises and adequately funding education through the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP). Do you support teacher pay raises and adequately funding education through the MFP?

The following are the responses LRTA received from legislators in your area. Lists are organized by parish then district number order.

Parish	District	Senator or Representative	Name	Q1: Oppose Hybrid Plans	Q2: Support PBIs	Q3: Oppose Constitutional Convention	Q4: Repeal GPO/WEP	Q5: Support Education
Evangeline	28	Senator	Heather Cloud - R					
Evangeline	38	Representative	Rhonda Butler - R					
Evangeline	41	Representative	Phillip DeVillier - R					

Note: LRTA's position on all survey questions is "Yes." Candidates who answer "No" are in opposition of that priority.

St. Martin	22	Senator	Fred H. Mills Jr. - R	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
St. Martin	24	Senator	Gerald Boudreaux - D					
St. Martin	46	Representative	Mike Huval - R					
St. Martin	48	Representative	Beau Beaulieu - R					
St. Martin	50	Representative	Vincent J. St. Blanc III - R					
St. Martin	96	Representative	Marcus Bryant - D	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
St. Mary	21	Senator	**R.L. "Bret" Allain II - R					
St. Mary	50	Representative	Vincent J. St. Blanc III - R					
St. Mary	51	Representative	Beryl Adams Amedee - R					
Vermilion	26	Senator	Bob Hensgens - R					
Vermilion	31	Representative	Johnathon Goudeau - R	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vermilion	47	Representative	Ryan Bourriague - R					
Vermilion	49	Representative	Blake Miguez - R					

Blank spaces indicate that LRTA has not received results from this candidate.

Purple – previously voted "No" to HB 500 (Constitutional Convention).

Orange – previously voted "Yes" to HB 500 (Constitutional Convention).

** - previously voted "Yes" to SB 14 (Hybrid Plans)

*** - previously voted "No" to SB 14 (Hybrid Plans)

Note: LRTA's position on all survey questions is "Yes." Candidates who answer "No" are in opposition of that priority.

2020 SPRING MEETING PRE-REGISTRATION / MEAL RESERVATION FORM

Please use this form to pre-register for the 2020 Spring Meeting in order to expedite registration in Natchitoches. To make a reservation for the pre-convention banquet on Tuesday, April 28, please indicate in the space provided and send a check for the appropriate amount. **Each person pre-registering and/or reserving a meal ticket should return a separate form** in order to receive a registration packet. Guests may use the form in order to receive a registration packet (photocopies accepted).

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ Email _____

____ Attendance only (free)

____ Number of tickets for Tuesday night Pre-Convention Dinner (\$35 per person) = \$ _____
(creole pork tenderloin)

Total Enclosed = \$ _____

Note: Pre-registration/meal reservations must be received in the LRTA office by **April 16**. Registration will be available at the meeting; however, meal function tickets are sold by pre-reservation only. **No meal reservations will be taken by phone. NO REFUNDS AFTER APRIL 21.** Mail forms and checks to LRTA, 9412 Common St., Suite 5, Baton Rouge, LA 70809.



751 2nd Street
Natchitoches, LA 71457

Make your hotel reservations today!

The Chateau St. Denis Hotel is offering a special room rate of \$109 plus tax per night, which includes breakfast and WiFi. The hotel is located across the street from the Natchitoches Event Center where the 2020 Spring Meeting will take place.

To make a hotel reservation:

1. Call Chateau St. Denis at (318) 951-4105
2. Select Option #2
3. Ask for the La Retired Teachers Association room block

The deadline to make a hotel reservation is **April 5, 2020**, or until the hotel room block sells out.

We hope to see you there!