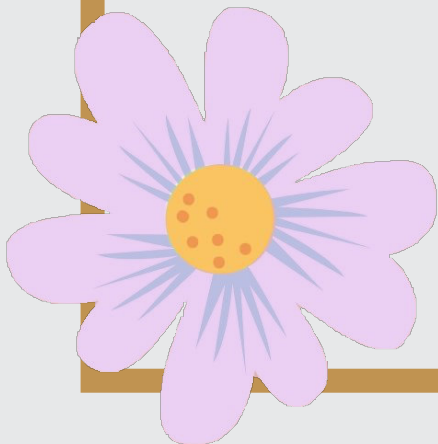


2021 *Virtual* Spring Meeting Packets: District VIII



**LOUISIANA RETIRED
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Some of the resources in this packet are time-sensitive. For the most up-to-date information, please visit the LRTA website at www.lrta.net. Resources, like survey results and impending legislation, are updated regularly on the LRTA website.

The resources in this packet will be vital throughout the 2021 Regular Legislative Session. Please keep this packet and encourage fellow retirees to learn more about LRTA at www.lrta.net.

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Pre-filed Bills

The deadline to pre-file retirement bills was 5 p.m., Friday, February 26. Provided below is a list of bills LRTA will monitor and/or track during the 2021 Regular Session. The listing provides the position LRTA will recommend taking on each of the bills. It is anticipated that other bills, and perhaps some resolutions, will be added to this list of legislation to be monitored by LRTA once the session begins. For an up-to-date list of bills LRTA is tracking, visit <http://bit.ly/2021bills>.

Tracking:

House Bill 22 by Rep. Jeremy Lacombe

Provides for the transfer of certain employees of the La. School Boards Assoc. from the Parochial Employees' Retirement System of La. (PERS) to the Teachers' Retirement System of La. (TRSL).

LRTA will recommend a neutral position on this legislation

Senate Bill 22 by Senator Barrow Peacock

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:

1. five years of service at the greater of age 67 or "age of retirement set by the Social Security Administration";
2. 40 years of service at age 62; or
3. 20 years of service at any age but actuarially reduced from age 62

LRTA will recommend a neutral position on this legislation

Senate Bill 24 by Senator Ed Price

Provides a minimum benefit increase for certain retirees, beneficiaries, and survivors of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana, Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System, Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System, and State Police Retirement System. This includes:

Any retiree who on 6/30/21, meets the following criteria:

- He has 30 or more years of service credit.
- He has been retired for 15 years or more.
- He receives a monthly retirement benefit of less than \$1,450 dollars.
- He is at least 60 years of age.
- He has neither participated in the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) nor chosen the Initial Benefit Option (IBO).

LRTA will recommend **supporting** this legislation

Monitoring:

House Bill 35 by Rep. Charles Owen

Provides for cost-of-living adjustments for members of the Municipal Police Employees' Retirement System and authorizes the board of trustees of the system to modify required employer contributions.

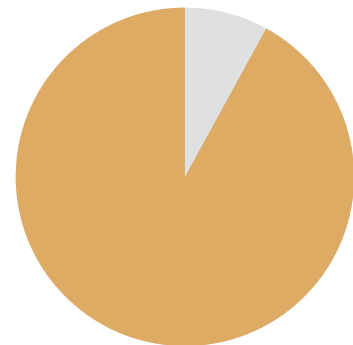
LRTA will monitor this legislation as it could impact future COLAs for state retirement systems

Join the LRTA Email Club for regular updates through the 2021 Regular Legislative Session:
<https://bit.ly/LRTAEmailClub>

Topics to Watch: Tax Reform

With the Regular Session just weeks away, we are already seeing trends in what could be “hot topic” issues for legislation. One topic that has emerged is legislators’ desire to centralize the current tax system and change the tax rates. Currently, retired teachers are exempt from state income tax on their retirement benefits. In 2017, legislators toyed with the idea of removing the state income tax exemption on retired teachers and LRTA successfully lobbied against this proposal. LRTA will monitor any tax legislation that would affect this exemption, as well as any legislation on constitutional conventions/amendments that could affect retirement benefits. See links to the articles and research on page 12.

Louisiana lost nearly
13k residents
between 2019
and 2020.



The National Institute for Retirement Security (NIRS) indicates

\$3.2 billion

in direct economic impacts for the state of Louisiana were supported by retirees’ initial expenditures.

According to TRSL, almost 90% of the retirement dollars TRSL pays out goes to individuals who live in Louisiana where they buy local goods and services.

Retirees are still subject to other taxes that contribute to local parishes and the state of Louisiana. Removing the state income exemption for retirees would cost retirees hundreds to thousands of dollars annually, further diminishing their purchasing power.

Topics to Watch: COLAs

For retirement, we continue to monitor for legislation that could impact the current defined benefit plan, as changes to the current plan would have a negative impact on retired teachers. There is some good news: Senator Ed Price has filed a bill that would provide for a “hardship” COLA for Louisiana’s retired teachers in the most need. This is SB 24.

We are pleased to see a bill that would provide for a hardship COLA for Louisiana’s retired teachers in the most need, and LRTA SUPPORTS SB 24.

It’s a step in the right direction, but we still have a ways to go. The last time retired teachers received a COLA was in 2016. We will have more information regarding the history of COLAs and how COLAs are granted in our Spring Newsletter. Here’s the gist:

In order for retirees to receive a COLA, the retirement system must meet certain criteria, or “hurdles.”

Since there are hurdles that must be met to grant a COLA, LRTA cannot approach legislators to author these bills. Our role is to review the legislation and recommendations from the TRSL Board of Trustees, THEN take a position on the bill.

Supporting COLAs

- The purpose of a COLA is to preserve the purchasing power of the retiree, which erodes over time due to rising living costs and inflation. In the case of SB 24, the COLA also serves to lift eligible retirees above the poverty level.
- Retirees contribute billions of dollars to their local and state economy, as many retirees are purchasing goods and services in their communities.
- For many retired teachers, their pension is their primary source of retirement income. While pensions provide a steady retirement income, a COLA would allow retirees to further contribute to the state’s economy. Plus, a COLA would provide some financial peace of mind, especially for retirees below the poverty level.

Topics to Watch: GPO/WEP

While the GPO and WEP are federal provisions (and must require federal action to change), the Louisiana legislature typically passes resolutions that urge Congress to repeal the GPO and WEP during each regular legislative session.

As a reminder, the GPO and WEP are federal provisions that reduce retired teacher's individual Social Security and/or survivor benefits. These provisions have unfairly penalized many retirees for years.

Ultimately, it will take action from Congress to repeal the GPO and WEP. Rep. Rodney Davis of Illinois has filed H.R. 82, or the Social Security Fairness Act of 2021. This bill is similar to H.R. 141, which was also filed by Rep. Davis. Although H.R. 141 dies in Congress, it received bipartisan support and over 260 cosponsors. All Louisiana's U.S. Representatives cosponsored H.R. 141.

All four of Louisiana's current members of Congress, Rep. Garret Graves, Rep. Clay Higgins, Rep. Mike Johnson and Rep. Steve Scalise, have cosponsored H.R. 82. We have set up VoterVoice on our website so members can thank their representatives for cosponsoring the bill.

LRTA is also surveying candidates running for Congressional Districts 2 and 5 for their views on the GPO and WEP. LRTA SUPPORTS the repeal of the GPO and WEP and will keep members updated on the progress of H.R. 82.

VoterVoice and Virtual Activism

Although we are on the road to recovery, the upcoming session will still look different from what we have experienced in the past. We anticipate there will be little physical activity from any outside visitors at the State Capitol, and, at this time, do not encourage attending in-person meetings. So, what can we do?

First, make sure you are subscribed to the LRTA Email Club for that latest news and updates on the legislative session. LRTA has invested in a new tool, VoterVoice, that will make it easier for you to contact your legislators and complete calls to action. We will include this tool in our email blasts so you can immediately contact your legislators when the time comes.

We will continue to provide resources, like our sample letters and talking points, in our email blasts. Make sure to catch up on our “Becoming a Virtual Activist” series on our website, www.lрта.net/becomingavirtualactivist. This series breaks down important topics every retired teacher needs to know, such as understanding the current defined benefit plan and how to write letters and call legislators. We even have instructional videos to show you how to write letters or use our VoterVoice tool.

We will make our voices heard, even if it's from more than six feet away!

Virtual Spring State Meeting

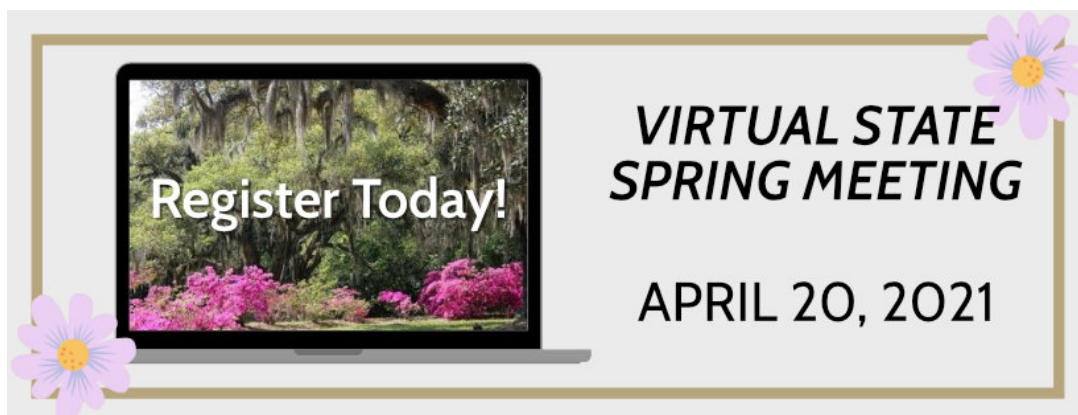
On April 20, LRTA will hold the Virtual Spring State Meeting. This meeting will be a virtual version of our traditional Spring State Meeting. The Virtual Spring Meeting will begin with the Executive Board meeting, which will take place virtually with Zoom Webinar. Members must register to observe the meeting. Due to limited space, the first 100 members who register for the Executive Board meeting will receive information to observe the meeting.

Following the Board meeting, registered members will receive email blasts from LRTA with links view pre-recorded general sessions from:

- Katherine Whitney, Director of TRSL
- Rodney Watson, LRTA Executive Director and Clyde Hamner, LRTA State Legislative Chair
- Association Member Benefits Advisors

Registration is also required for the general sessions. Registration for the Virtual Spring Meeting will open on the LRTA website March 29, 2021. Members may register to watch presentations ad hoc or watch all presentations. All presentations will be available for viewing after the Virtual Spring Meeting.

Members who register for the meeting and presentations will receive an email with LRTA with information on joining the meetings or viewing the general sessions throughout the day on April 20. If you have any questions, please contact the state office at info@lrta.net.



Encourage Others to Join LRTA Today!

Your membership with LRTA supports our services to you, such as providing resources, producing newsletters, etc. We are able to do what we do thanks to members like you. LRTA is the only organization in the state that is solely devoted to advocating for Louisiana's retired teachers.

There's strength in our numbers! Encourage friends, colleagues and recent retired teachers to join LRTA today. Make sure to encourage them to join the LRTA Email Club as well. Members of the Email Club receive the most up-to-date and timely information (extremely vital during legislative sessions).

To join LRTA online, visit <https://lrta.net/membershipforms/>.

To join the LRTA Email Club, visit <https://bit.ly/LRTAEmailClub>.

LRTA Membership Levels

Associate Membership (active teachers or individuals interested in supporting LRTA) - \$12 annually

Active Membership - \$30 annually

*Auto-Deduct Membership - \$30 automatically deducted from your retirement check once a year on April 1

Life Membership - \$600 one-time payment; 79 years of age and under

Life Membership - \$300 one-time payment; 80 years of age and over

*Auto-deduction requires signature authorization, which cannot be done online. Dues-deduction forms are available for download on the LRTA website.

Resources

After this page, you will find the following resources:

- Links to Research
- 2021 LRTA Legislative Priorities
- Contact Information for House and Senate Retirement Committees
- Contact Info for Legislators in Your LRTA District
- Survey Results from the 2019/2020 Election Cycle
- Survey Results for the 2021 March Election Cycle

Research and Talking Points

Article from TheAdvocate describing legislators' desire for tax reform: https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/politics/legislature/article_3bccadbe-6679-11eb-8dd6-1758740be37e.html

Article from TheAdvocate evaluating the drop in Louisiana's population between 2019 and 2020: https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/business/article_3833634c-5cdc-11eb-951d-b39a30651d28.html

National report evaluating the economic impact public pensions have locally and nationally: <https://www.nirsonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Pensionomics-2021-Report-Final-V6.pdf>

Post from LRTA breaking down our current Defined Benefit (DB) plan and why we support it: <https://lrta.net/understanding-defending-current-defined-benefit/>

Talking points for why we support the current plan, oppose changing to a DC and/or Hybrid plans, and oppose constitutional conventions and amendments that target retirement and education: <https://bit.ly/TalkingPointsStack>

Our Advocacy Tools: <https://bit.ly/AdvocacyToolsStack>

Infographics breaking down research articles that show why DB plans are good recruitment and retention tools: <https://bit.ly/ResearchSummaries>



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** retirement benefit structure administered by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana that includes adequate and stable funding for regular cost-of-living increases to preserve the purchasing power of retirees.
2. 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.
3. LRTA **supports** state revenue enhancements that provide a meaningful economic impact on retired educators in enhancing their dignity, independence and overall quality of life.
4. 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.
5. LRTA **opposes** any action that would negatively impact the actuarial soundness of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
6. LRTA **opposes** the consolidation of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana with any other retirement system.
7. 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.
8. LRTA **opposes** any action that would alter the current defined benefit structure offered by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana to its members.
9. LRTA **supports** a viable, adequately funded public education program that requires educators to become members of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
10. LRTA **opposes** the provision of state funded scholarships/vouchers for public elementary and secondary school students to attend private and non-public schools.
11. 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.
12. LRTA **supports** the continuation of Louisiana state income tax exemption for retirement benefits issued by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
13. LRTA **opposes** any legislation or bill that would cut or diminish Medicare benefits.
14. LRTA **opposes** any legislation that calls for a state constitutional convention.

House Retirement Committee Members

Rep. Lance Harris (Chairman)
P.O. Box 13555
Alexandria, LA 71315
(318) 767-6095
harris@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
(318) 765-9606
hse022@legis.la.gov

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

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

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

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
cfields@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**

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

LRTA DISTRICT VIII LEGISLATORS CONTACT INFORMATION – Updated February 12, 2021

DeSoto Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Email
7	Representative	Larry Bagley - R	671 Hwy. 171 Suite E	Stonewall	71078	(318) 925-9588	bagleyl@legis.la.gov
23	Representative	Kenny Cox - D	781 Hwy. 494	Natchitoches	71457	(855) 844-8583	coxk@legis.la.gov
38	Senator	Barry Milligan - R	531 West 61st Street	Shreveport	71106		sen38@legis.la.gov

Natchitoches Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Email
22	Representative	Gabe Firment - R	181 Barron Road	Pollock	71467	(318) 765-9606	hse022@legis.la.gov
23	Representative	Kenny Cox - D	781 Hwy. 494	Natchitoches	71457	(855) 844-8583	coxk@legis.la.gov
24	Representative	Rodney Schamerhorn - R	1083 Hammond Street	Hornbeck	71439	(318) 565-4959	hse024@legis.la.gov
29	Senator	W. Jay Luneau - D	711 Washington Street	Alexandria	71301	(318) 484-2288	luneauj@legis.la.gov
31	Senator	Louie Bernard - R	431 Jefferson St.	Natchitoches	71457	(318) 357-3116	sen31@legis.la.gov

Red River Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Email
22	Representative	Gabe Firment - R	181 Barron Road	Pollock	71467	(318) 765-9606	hse022@legis.la.gov
23	Representative	Kenny Cox - D	781 Hwy. 494	Natchitoches	71457	(855) 844-8583	coxk@legis.la.gov
31	Senator	Louie Bernard - R	431 Jefferson St.	Natchitoches	71457	(318) 357-3116	sen31@legis.la.gov

Sabine Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Email
7	Representative	Larry Bagley - R	671 Hwy. 171 Suite E	Stonewall	71078	(318) 925-9588	bagleyl@legis.la.gov
24	Representative	Rodney Schamerhorn - R	1083 Hammond Street	Hornbeck	71439	(318) 565-4959	hse024@legis.la.gov
31	Senator	Louie Bernard - R	431 Jefferson St.	Natchitoches	71457	(318) 357-3116	sen31@legis.la.gov

Winn Parish

Leg. District #	Senator or Representative	Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code	Phone Number	Phone Number 2	Email
13	Representative	Jack McFarland - R	P.O. Box 143	Jonesboro	71251	(318) 259-4275		mcfarlandj@legis.la.gov
22	Representative	Gabe Firment - R	181 Barron Road	Pollock	71467	(318) 765-9606		hse022@legis.la.gov
29	Senator	W. Jay Luneau - D	711 Washington Street	Alexandria	71301	(318) 484-2288		luneauj@legis.la.gov
31	Senator	Louie Bernard - R	431 Jefferson St.	Natchitoches	71457	(318) 357-3116		sen31@legis.la.gov
35	Senator	Jay Morris - R	1408 North 7th Street	West Monroe	71291	(318) 362-4270	(855) 594-4086	morrisjc@legis.la.gov

For the most up to date information, visit <https://legis.la.gov/legis/home.aspx>



LOUISIANA RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

LRTA DISTRICT VIII LEGISLATORS – Updated February 12, 2021

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
DeSoto	7	Representative	Larry Bagley - R					
DeSoto	23	Representative	Kenny Cox - D					
DeSoto	38	Senator	Barry Milligan - R					

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

Natchitoches	22	Representative	Gabe Firment - R					
Natchitoches	23	Representative	Kenny Cox - D					
Natchitoches	24	Representative	Rodney Schamerhorn - R	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Natchitoches	29	Senator	W. Jay Luneau - D					
Natchitoches	31	Senator	Louie' Bernard - R	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Red River	22	Representative	Gabe Firment - R					
Red River	23	Representative	Kenny Cox - D					
Red River	31	Senator	Louie' Bernard - R	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sabine	7	Representative	Larry Bagley - R					
Sabine	24	Representative	Rodney Schamerhorn - R	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sabine	31	Senator	Louie' Bernard - R	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Winn	13	Representative	Jack McFarland - R					
Winn	22	Representative	Gabe Firment - R					
Winn	29	Senator	W. Jay Luneau - D					
Winn	31	Senator	Louie' Bernard - R	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Winn	35	Senator	Jay Morris - R	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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 SB14 (Hybrid Plans)

*** - previously voted “No” to SB14 (Hybrid Plans)

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



LRTA 2021 March Survey Results



LRTA District VIII

DeSoto, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine and Winn
parishes

Election(s): Congressional District 5

BESE District 4

For updated results, visit: <https://lrta.net/2021-march-elections/>

LRTA Federal Survey

Candidates running for Congressional seats were asked the following question(s):

Q1: 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?

Applicable to Winn parish only.

Candidate Name	Party	Congressional District	LRTA District	Q1: Repeal GPO/WEP?
Sandra “Candy” Christophe^	Democrat	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	Yes
Allen Guillory	Republican	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	Yes
Robert Lansden	Republican	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	Yes
Chad Conerly	Republican	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	Yes
“Jim” Davis	No Party	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	
Jessica Honsinger Hollister	Democrat	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	
Julia Letlow	Republican	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	
Jaycee Magnuson	Republican	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	
Horace Melton, III	Republican	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	
M.V. “Vinny” Mendoza	Independent	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	Yes
Richard H. Pannell	Republican	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	
Sancha Smith	Republican	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	
Errol Victor, Sr.	Republican	5	3,4,5,7,8,9,10	

^Sandra “Candy” Christophe

Hello LRTA:

Please accept this letter as confirmation that I am committed to ensuring all retirement benefits are preserved and not manipulated away from those who have worked so hard for every penny of those benefits. I am willing to work to enhance benefits for educators to help attract future educators to the field: a much needed career field with multi-generational benefits.

Sincerely Yours,
Sandra “Candy” Christophe
Candidate U.S. Congress Louisiana District 5

LRTA Legislative Survey

Candidates running for BESE District 4 were asked the following:

Q1: 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?

Q2: 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?

Q3: 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?

Q4: 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?

Q5: 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?

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

Applicable to DeSoto, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine and Winn parishes only.

Candidate Name	Party	LRTA District	Q1: Hybrid Plans	Q2: COLAs	Q3: Constitutional Convention	Q4: GPO/WEP	Q5: Education
Shelly McFarland	Republican	7,8,11					
Michael Melerine	Republican	7,8,11					
John Milkovich^	Independent	7,8,11	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cody Whitaker	No Party	7,8,11					
"Cassie" Williams	Democrat	7,8,11	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

★ Additional Comments ★

^John Milkovich

Explanation to Answer #3:

Louisiana has one of the strongest Bill of Rights of any Constitution of any state of Nation. We place our constitutional rights at risk by convoking a convention.