



Serving Retirees Since 1956
Membership Statewide

May 2018

The Reporter

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**Delaware Retired
School Personnel
Association
Members:**

U R needed.

**This is a call for
ACTION!**

For the past several years DRSPA has focused on three retiree concerns:

- Maintain health benefits
- Seek a pension adjustment
- Increase the death benefit

Our lobbying and presence at the State Employee Benefits Committee, Joint Finance Committee, the Governor's Prayer Breakfast and other strategic events have been effective! DRSPA's advocacy for two of your concerns is making progress. Our health benefits, copays and premiums will be maintained at the same level for at least until January 2019. Senate Bill 6, cosponsored by Senator Harris McDowell, III, Representative Helene Keeley and 12 other legislators would raise the Death Benefit from \$7,000 to \$10,000! We are continuing to monitor the progress of this proposal.

Our goal of achieving a pension increase is facing stronger headwinds. A \$101 million windfall has allowed Governor John Carney to propose a 2% salary increase proposal for education employees. But the Governor has not included a pension increase in his budget. DRSPA is seeking a \$1,000 pension increase. With over 1,100 Delaware pensioners, living below the poverty level such an increase is badly needed.

What can YOU do? Each pensioner needs to reach out to one or more legislators. In order to be successful, our communications need to be as personalized as possible. It is time for a much needed pension adjustment. It is time for YOU to take action NOW.

- Read the next few pages
- Learn about the issue
- Contact one or more legislators and the governor

In addition, I'm suggesting that you invite your senator and representative to meet you on June 14, 2018, at the Senate Hearing Room in Legislative Hall from 9:45 am to 12:45 pm for the Delaware Retired School Personnel Association Legislative Reception.

We've provided a wealth of information on the following pages. First Vice President Ted George has an accurate, amazing report explaining why DRSPA is seeking a pension increase. Special KUDOS to our Executive Director Wayne Emsley for his research and step-by-step action plan.

We hope to see you on Thursday, June 14th. Wear your DRSPA Button!

Blessings, Love, Music,

Jacqueline B. Faulcon

***Special Legislative
Action Issue***

Legislative Report

by Ted George, 1st Vice President and Legislative Chairperson

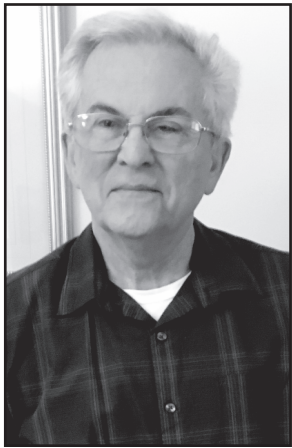
I want to answer three questions:

- Why is DRSPA seeking a \$1,000 pension increase?
- Why should we get a pension increase since many private sector pensions are fixed for life?
- What has DRSPA done so far to support this effort?

Why is DRSPA seeking a \$1,000 pension increase?

Governor Carney has proposed a 2% wage increase for public education personnel and a \$1,000 increase for other state employees. Pensioners face the same (if not more severe) economic pressures as employees. We also need an increase in our income.

Second, we believe that a pension increase is long overdue. The last pension increase was three years ago. Last year, active state employees received a 1% increase, while pensioners received nothing. Over the past ten years retirees have received three pension adjustments, but the cost of living has dramatically out-paced these increases. As a result pensioners have lost 15% of their value over the ten-year period.



Third, the erosion of pension values has hit older state retirees especially hard. Many of these older retirees labored for pitifully low wages. Years of inflation have eroded these low pensions to below poverty levels. There are 1,188 state retirees who are over the age of 89 (the oldest is 109). These folks receive an average pension of \$947 per month.

The Federal government has set the monthly poverty level at \$1,012, so the state is providing a pension that is \$65 below the poverty line. DRSPA is seeking a fixed \$1,000 pension increase rather than a percentage increase to provide extra help to those who have the greatest need.

Why should we get a pension increase, since many private sector pensions are fixed for life? We believe



the answer lies in the historically lower wages that the public sector was, and is, able to provide. Since pension amounts are based on the pensioners' wages, lower wages result in lower pensions. We are seeking a pension increase to help offset this inherent difference.

What has DRSPA done so far to seek a pension increase?

- As Legislative Chairperson, I testified before the Joint Finance Committee and explained the unique needs of school pensioners to the committee members.
- We requested a meeting with Governor Carney to explain the need for a pension increase. His office directed us to meet instead with Michael Jackson, Director of the Office of Budget and Management. We have met twice. While the meetings were cordial, the Governor's office has not, as of this writing, indicated support for a pension increase of any kind.
- Our Executive Director Wayne Emsley wrote a letter to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and each senator and representative requesting their support for a pension increase.
- As our President Jacqueline Faulcon noted on page 1, DRSPA's Legislative Reception has been planned for June 14. We have held receptions in the past, but are trying a new format this year. This year's reception will be a brunch held in a conference room at Legislative Hall in Dover. You are encouraged to invite your legislator(s) and also attend.

DRSPA has started the effort to achieve a pension increase. There is only so much that a few individuals can do. We're hoping that YOU will actively join in the effort to help all former Delaware public school employees.

Executive Director's Report

Wayne Emsley



When I was a teenager, one of the groups we listened to was the Beach Boys. One of their songs started with the phrase "Wouldn't it be nice?" I find myself asking that question again this year. ***Wouldn't it be nice*** if our governor and legislators valued our past

service to the children of Delaware by approving a pension increase equal to the increase that has been proposed for active employees? ***Wouldn't it be nice*** if the governor and legislators didn't need to be reminded of the years of service - at low pay - that retirees provided to our youngest citizens? ***Wouldn't it be nice*** if the governor and legislators recognized that our oldest retirees pensions are, on average, nearly \$800 below the poverty level? ***Wouldn't it be nice*** if the governor and legislators recognized that because of inflation, our pensions continue to lose value, more than 15% over the last ten years alone?

The reality is that while it may be nice, the Governor and legislature have, up to now, taken no action to adjust or increase our pensions. So what can be done?

It is time for school retirees to act. If YOU feel it is time for a pension increase then YOU must become involved in the advocacy effort. This is not something that I can do alone. This is not something that the 21 members of the DRSPA Board can do themselves. It will take the efforts of hundreds of state pensioners to convince the governor and legislators that a pension increase is the right thing to do.

What are the eight steps that you should take as a part of this effort?

1. Contact any school retiree that you know and inform them of DRSPA's effort to seek a pension increase. Show them this newsletter and encourage them to join in our effort
2. Contact other non-school state retirees. We are all in the same pension plan, so we need to work together.
3. If you personally know a legislator, let them know that it is time for a pension increase.

4. If you taught or coached a legislator (or his/her children), contact him or her and remind them of the service you provided and the need for a pension increase, especially for older retirees.
5. If your legislator(s) holds informal meetings (many hold weekly or monthly coffees) attend and ask him/her to support a pension increase.
6. If you don't know who your senator and representative names, there are three ways to find out:
 - Go to www.legis.delaware.gov/. Enter your street address and city in the "Who is My Legislator" box. (Note that you must enter the city)
 - Email your name, street address and city to me at email@drspa.org. I'll look it up for you.
 - Call me at 302 674-8252 and I'll be happy to look it up. If I don't answer, leave a message.
7. If you live out of state, you can email (or mail) the legislators that represent your former school district.
8. Contact the Governor and legislators by email or written letter. Legislator emails are on page 5 of this newsletter. Note that all legislators use the same mailing address - 411 Legislative Avenue, Dover DE 19901.

What should you write?

1. State that you are seeking his/her support for a \$1,000 pension increase.
2. Identify yourself as a former school employee. How long did you serve in schools? What district? What did you do? (e.g. 4th grade teacher, cafeteria worker, science aide) What other duties did you perform? (e.g. coach, club sponsor, class advisor)
3. If possible, provide one or two specific examples of your increased costs over the past few years (e.g. increased school/property taxes, drug costs, care of dependent parents or children).
4. Briefly identify your volunteer activities in church, community and service organizations.
5. Briefly describe any "free" care that you provide for children or adults.
6. Restate that you are seeking his/her support for a \$1,000 pension increase.
7. Thank him/her for their past legislative service and for considering your request.

continued on page 4

Executive Director's Report *continued from page 4*

Your letter or email should be sent by June 1. The legislative session ends on June 30, but to be effective your legislator - and Governor Carney - need to hear your concern well before the close of session. DRSPA's goal

is to seek a dignified retirement for all former public school employees. Your participation in this effort is urgently needed. I strongly encourage you to act NOW.

Legislative Districts and School Districts

School districts are spread over a number of senate and representative districts. Use the table below, along with the Legislative Contact Information found on page 5 to identify the legislators who represent your former school district.

<u>School District</u>	<u>Senate Districts</u>	<u>Representative Districts</u>
Appoquinimink	S10, S12, S14	R08, R09, R11, R27
Brandywine	S01, S02, S04, S05	R01, R02, R04, R06, R07, R10, R12
Caesar Rodney	S15, S16, S17	R11, R29, R30, R32, R33, R34
Cape Henlopen	S06, S18, S19	R14, R20, R36, R37
Capital	S14, S15, S16, S17	R11, R28, R29, R31, R32
Christina	S02, S03, S04, S07, S08, S09, S10, S12, S13	R02, R03, R05, R13, R15, R16, R18, R21, R22, R23, R24, R25, R26, R27
Colonial	S02, S09, S12, S13, S14	R02, R05, R09, R15, R16, R17, R18,
Delmar	S21	R40, R41
Indian River	S06, S19, S20, S21	R20, R35, R36, R37, R38, R40, R41
Lake Forest	S15, S16, S18	R30, R33, R34
Laurel	S21	R39, R40, R41
Milford	S16, S18, S19	R30, R33, R35, R36
NCC Vo Tech	S01 to S14	R01 to R13 and R15 to R27
Polytech	S14 to S18	R09, R11 and R28 to R34
Red Clay	S01, S02, S03, S04, S07, S08, S09	R01, R02, R03, R04, R12, R13, R17, R19, R21, R22
Seaford	S19, S21	R35, R39, R40
Smyrna	S14, S15	R09, R11, R28, R29,
Sussex Tech	S06 and S18 to S21	R14, R20, R30 and R35 to R41
Woodbridge	S18, S19	R30, R35, R39

Delaware Legislative Contact Information

Governor's Office: 150 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Dover, DE 19901

Gov. John C. Carney, Jr. John.Carney@state.de.us
Lt Gov Bethany A. Hall-Long Bethany.Hall-Long@state.de.us

Senators: 411 Legislative Avenue, Dover, DE 19901

District	Senator	Email	District	Senator	Email
S01	Harris B. McDowell, III	Harris.McDowell@state.de.us	S12	Nicole Poore	Nicole.Poore@state.de.us
S02	Margaret Rose Henry	MargaretRose.Henry@state.de.us	S13	David B. McBride	David.McBride@state.de.us
S03	Robert I. Marshall	Robert.Marshall@state.de.us	S14	Bruce C. Ennis	Bruce.Ennis@state.de.us
S04	Gregory F. Lavelle	Greg.Lavelle@state.de.us	S15	David G. Lawson	Dave.Lawson@state.de.us
S05	Catherine L. Cloutier	Catherine.Cloutier@state.de.us	S16	Colin R. J. Bonini	Colin.Bonini@state.de.us
S06	Ernesto B. Lopez	Ernesto.Lopez@state.de.us	S17	Brian J. Bushweller	brian.bushweller@state.de.us
S07	Anthony Delcollo	Anthony.Delcollo@state.de.us	S18	F. Gary Simpson	Gary.Simpson@state.de.us
S08	David P. Sokola	David.Sokola@state.de.us	S19	Brian Pettyjohn	Brian.Pettyjohn@state.de.us
S09	John Walsh	John.Walsh@state.de.us	S20	Gerald Hocker	Gerald.Hocker@state.de.us
S10	Stephanie Hansen	Stephanie.Hansen@state.de.us	S21	Bryant L. Richardson	Bryant.Richardson@state.de.us
S11	Bryan Townsend	Bryan.Townsend@state.de.us			

Representatives: 411 Legislative Avenue, Dover, DE 19901

District	Representative	Email	District	Representative	Email
R01	Charles Potter, Jr.	Charles.Potter@state.de.us	R22	Joseph E. Miro	Joseph.Miro@state.de.us
R02	Stephanie Bolden	StephanieT.Bolden@state.de.us	R23	Paul S. Baumbach	Paul.Baumbach@state.de.us
R03	Helene M. Keeley	Helene.Keeley@state.de.us	R24	Edward S. Osienki	Edward.Osienki@state.de.us
R04	Gerald L. Brady	Gerald.Brady@state.de.us	R25	John A. Kowalko, Jr.	John.Kowalko@state.de.us
R05	Melanie George Smith	Melanie.G.Smith@state.de.us	R26	John J. Viola	John.Viola@state.de.us
R06	Debra Heffernan	Debra.Heffernan@state.de.us	R27	Earl G. Jaques, Jr.	Earl.Jaques@state.de.us
R07	Byron H. Short	Bryon.Short@state.de.us	R28	William J. Carson	William.Carson@state.de.us
R08	S. Quinton Johnson, IV	Quinton.Johnson@state.de.us	R29	Trey Charles Paradee	Trey.Paradee@state.de.us
R09	Kevin Hensley	Kevin.Hensley@state.de.us	R30	William R. Outten	Bobby.Outten@state.de.us
R10	Sean Matthews	Sean.Matthews@state.de.us	R31	Sean Lynn	Sean.Lynn@state.de.us
R11	Jeffrey N. Spiegelman	Jeff.Spiegelman@state.de.us	R32	Andria L. Bennett	Andria.Bennett@state.de.us
R12	Deborah D. Hudson	Deborah.Hudson@state.de.us	R33	Charles S. Postles, Jr.	Charles.Postles@state.de.us
R13	John L. Mitchell, Jr.	John.L.Mitchell@state.de.us	R34	Lyndon Yearick	Lyndon.Yearick@state.de.us
R14	Peter C. Schwartzkopf	Peter.Schwartzkopf@state.de.us	R35	David L. Wilson	David.L.Wilson@state.de.us
R15	Valerie Longhurst	Valerie.Longhurst@state.de.us	R36	Harvey R. Kenton	Harvey.Kenton@state.de.us
R16	James Johnson	JJ.Johnson@state.de.us	R37	Ruth Briggs King	Ruth.BriggsKing@state.de.us
R17	Michael P. Mulrooney	Michael.Mulrooney@state.de.us	R38	Ronald E. Gray	Ronald.Gray@state.de.us
R18	David Bentz	David.Bentz@state.de.us	R39	Daniel B. Short	Daniel.Short@state.de.us
R19	Kimberly Williams	Kimberly.Williams@state.de.us	R40	Timothy D. Dukes	Timothy.Dukes@state.de.us
R20	Stephen T. Smyk	Steve.Smyk@state.de.us	R41	Richard G. Collins	Richard.G.Collins@state.de.us
R21	Michael Ramone	Michael.Ramone@state.de.us			

Delaware Retired School
Personnel Association
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Wilmington, DE 19803

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*Special Legislative
Action Issue*

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Legislative Reception	June 14, 2018
Executive Board	August 9, 2018
Annual Meeting	October 24, 2018
Executive Board	January 15, 2019
Executive Board	April 9, 2019
New Castle Co Meeting	April 10, 2019
Kent/Sussex Meeting	May 9, 2019

HOW TO CONTACT US

**Mail: DRSPA, P. O. Box 7262,
Wilmington, DE 19803**

Our phone number is: 302-674-8252

You may also contact us via our website or email for upcoming events, pension office news, the link to our state legislators, and other DRSPA information.

Our email address is: email@drspa.org

Our web site address is: www.drspa.org



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