



We Make Rhode Island Happen

AFSCME Rhode Island Council 94

American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

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MEMO TO: House Finance Committee Members
MEMO FROM: Jim Cenerini, Legislative Affairs/ Political Action Coordinator
SUBJECT: H-7341/S-2963 State Public Safety Professionals Retirement Equity
DATE: April 25, 2024

RI Council 94 AFSCME, AFL-CIO *strongly supports* H-7341/S-2963.

Council 94 represents over 380 state employee public safety professionals.

The classifications/positions Council 94 represents includes: Deputy Sheriffs, Capitol Police Officers, Environmental Police Officers, Juvenile Program Workers, Shift Coordinators, Airport Crash Rescue/Firefighters, and Campus Police Officers employed by the State of Rhode Island and/or Executive Military Staff.

- **Council 94's public safety professionals are subjected to rigorous training.**
- **Law enforcement officers have full arrest powers.**
- **Airport Firefighters are trained according to National Guard/Air Force/Federal standards.**
- **Council 94's public safety professionals work in demanding jobs that can lead to higher injury rates as members ages' progress towards the Social Security Normal Retirement Age of 67.**

During the 2011 pension changes and mediated/negotiated settlement, Council 94 consistently requested that the public safety professionals we represent be treated comparably to municipal firefighters and police officers.

H-7341/S-2963 would ensure that after July 1, 2024 all Council 94/state employee public safety job classifications would be granted the same benefits as MERS Firefighter /Police terms per the negotiated settlement. (RIGL 45-21.2-5, 45-21.2-6, 45-21.2-10, 45-21.2-12, 445-21.2-13)

H-7341/S-2963 changes:

- **State Employee public safety professionals moved to Defined Benefit only.**
- **Current Defined Contribution allocations frozen.**

- **Employee's contribution rate to 10% of salary, same as MERS with COLA Option.**
- **Retirement age-**
 - **50 years old and 25 years of service**
 - **27 years of service and any age**
- **Effective July 1, 2024, previous service credits frozen, subsequent service credit per year is 2.00% of salary.**
- **Effective July 1, 2024 state public safety employees who retire at age 57 with 30 years of service will accrue 2.25% per year for all years of service not already accrued at a higher rate.**
- **Include SRA, Options One, and Two, for beneficiary choices.**
- **Provided same Ordinary and & Accidental Death benefits for MERS Fire/Police.**
- **Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) calculation remains as in RIGL 36-10-35.**

Council 94 respectfully requests that you support H-7341/S-2963.

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