

Esteemed Chair Abney and Members of the RI House Finance Committee,

I am writing in strong support of H7342, AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- TEACHERS' RETIREMENT. I am a long-time resident of Rhode Island and a retired teacher from the RI School for the Deaf. Since the RI School for the Deaf is a state school, I am both a retired teacher and a retired state employee. I am a member of AFSCME Chapter 94 Retirees, and I am appreciative of the efforts of my union to rectify the injustice that retirees incurred when the pension reform plan was instituted in 2011.

As it happened, I retired from my teaching position in September of 2011. Therefore, by the time I was to receive my first COLA three years later, there was no COLA. Fast forward to 2024--still no COLA. Many of my years of service were part-time years, because I was raising my two children and then had health issues. Therefore, after 35 years of service to the deaf and hard of hearing community of RI, my pension was and has continued to be less than half of the \$40,000 that this bill specifies as worthy of a 3% stipend "paid from the state's general fund, subject to appropriation by the general assembly."

Please make a good faith effort to redress the damage that the misguided pension reform plan of 2011 inflicted on hard working Rhode Island teachers and state employees. Thank you,

Sincerely,

Sheila Resseger, M.A.

Cranston, RI