

## Chris O'Brien

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**From:** Kristine Monje <kristinemonje@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 5, 2024 11:41 AM  
**To:** House Finance Committee  
**Subject:** COLA restoration

Dear Members of the Finance Committee,

Please, support the bill put forth by Representative Sherpa that will give retirees relieve from the cuts made in 2011. Giving retirees a COLA is humane and fair for the years of dedicated service of this noble profession. Tying it to the CPI is a great compromise. Remember, if you can read this, you should thank a teacher, for teaching you to read! It is beyond my comprehension how this contractual agreement was broken in 2011. Please do the right thing and help this profession survive. We are at a critical stage in our history, as young people have more options to build careers away from teaching. As a 34 year teacher veteran, I know how hard our job is, and without a secure retirement, young teachers will not take the historic modest pay of an educator without the hope of a secure retirement plan. Also, let's not forget those poor souls without Social Security, who have had no COLA all these years. It is almost criminal! One of these elderly educators may have taught our legislatures, and now some are eligible for food stamps!

This is a watershed moment, Please do the right thing and help guarantee both the youngest and oldest in our state will thrive. When again do you get an opportunity to help the grandparents of today and the grandchildren of tomorrow with one piece of legislation?

Best,

Kristine Monje  
34 year veteran teacher of the Block Island School.