

Dear House Finance Committee Chair Abney, Vice  
Chairs Slater and Marszalkowski and Committee  
Members,

I had written another letter yesterday but I think it  
failed to go through the internet.

I am giving my Written testimony in support of House  
bills H-8193 and H-8194 as I am not able to attend  
May 7, 2024 hearing on these bills.

I am a retired state employee with almost 33 years of  
service to The State of Rhode Island and its  
people.

I worked for the Dept. Of Behavioral Health  
Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals/Rhode  
Island Community Living and Supports.

I retired in August 2008 due to the changes that  
were being discussed and occurred that year. I felt it  
was financially in my and my family's best interest to  
do so.

I met with a representative from ERSRI and  
discussed the amount I would receive including the  
3% Compounded Cola with the supplement. I  
received written documentation to this effect. And  
signed. There wasn't anything written in the  
documents that stated that the COLA could be taken  
away or reduced.

In 2011, being retired for 3 years more changes to my  
pension happened. My pension decreased because  
of the COLA changes.

When I turned 62 I lost the Social security  
supplement from the state. I knew that when I  
reached 62 years the supplement would be dropped.

I figured the COLA would help due the loss of the  
supplement. \_\_\_\_\_

I do receive social security, that with my pension isn't even considered middle income anymore. .  
I do not live beyond my means. I just get by.

I use to be able to donate to meaningful organizations like The Tomorrow Fund, Hasbro, Ronald McDonald house and others but I can't do that anymore.

Food prices have increased anywhere from 30-100 percent.

As well as increases for Utilities, property taxes and valuations and Home maintenance, Vehicle maintenance. Co-pays for medications, etc. I could go on but I'm sure you get my point.

Last year, I became the primary caregiver for my 86 year old mother, so I can not get another job to boost my income. I travel to her house in Jamestown.

I am a homeowner with a mortgage yet to be paid off. I was fortunate to purchase through an affordable housing program 21 years ago. But I have a ground lease and therefore don't own the land but pay the taxes on total value. I do not want to lose my home.

I have lived in Rhode Island for most of my life. I went to school, was married and raised my family here.

And here I am , retired, but how long will I be able to afford to stay here? I'm sure many of the retirees that are in the pension system would love to stay here but can't afford to.

Let's not forget the retirees that don't get social security.

We are Rhode Island's 30K plus retirees/ senior citizens. I think you would not want to lose your senior citizens/retirees to another state or country.

We can stay here and support our state if we can afford it!

This is the day and time for this situation to be rectified!

Rep. Serpa's House Bill H-8193 and H-8194 is the solution. Your support and approval for these bills is needed and will be appreciated.

There is money for this, and it's the 11 BILLION DOLLARS plus in the pension fund. We belong to this pension system and it is our money too!

I thank you for your attention to my letter and I hope you do the right and just thing today and approve the House Bills H-8193 and H-8194.

Respectfully,

...

Teresa Botelho  
Portsmouth