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TEXPERS member,

During Texas' previous legislative session, lawmakers filed several bills under the guise of pension reform, including one that would have opened up the possibility of dismantling defined-benefit retirements for state workers and public educators. Thankfully, the state-level efforts weren't successful. However, it is easy to imagine what could have happened if TEXPERS had not descended on the state Capitol to advocate on behalf of defined-benefit public pension plans statewide. The collapse of secure retirement benefits for state employees could have spread to public worker plans in cities across Texas. Although we managed to squash these efforts last legislative session, a few legislators are still focused on ending defined benefits for all public employees.

We need your help to stop them.

Some state legislators and big-money organizations like The Laura and John Arnold Foundation are touting false information and data claiming public pensions at the state and local levels of government are in crises. They wrongly point to a few struggling plans, seeking to enact blanket reforms that do not take into consideration that not all funds are in dire straits. They ignore successful self-regulation many plans have implemented. Unfortunately, with the next legislative session beginning soon, these attacks will not end.

We need your help to squash these challenges.

When you speak, your legislators listen, and minds change. As a leader of your fund, you are a forceful advocate for the promised benefits you or your active and retired fund members are earning and have worked hard to achieve.

This January, TEXPERS is hosting a two-day program to help you develop strategies to effectively communicate with legislators and then put you face-to-face to share personal stories of what your earned benefits mean to you or your fund's members. You will learn communication and messaging skills, be prepped by TEXPERS' legislative team on issues facing defined-benefit pensions in Texas, and have appointments at the Capitol with your representatives.

We need you to share your personal stories.

TEXPERS' advocacy days are the association's largest chance to descend upon the capital with one mission – stop the threat of dismantling secure retirements of dedicated public servants. Our program, set for Jan. 22 and 23 at the Doubletree Suites in Austin, brings together the most passionate and influential members of the state's public pension community.

Continued

Texas Association of Public Employee Retirement Systems

13111 Northwest Freeway, Suite 100 • Houston, Texas 77040 • 713-622-8018 • texpers@texpers.org • www.texpers.org



We need you to join your voice with others in advocacy.

Register for TEXPERS' "Strategies for the 86th Session: Communicate Effectively with Legislators," online at www.texpers.org. The registration fee is \$150, and you gain access to a special room rate at the Doubletree Suites, located at 303 West 15th St. For more information, visit TEXPERS' website or call 713-622-8018.

Join us in the preservation of secure retirements for law enforcement, firefighters, and municipal workers throughout Texas.

Sincerely,

Paul Brown, TEXPERS President & Chairman, Legislative Committee