



RETIREEES

Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana

Vol 31 No 1

Success at the session

Long-awaited benefit increase bill signed into law

The 2022 Regular Legislative Session ended with passage of a permanent benefit increase (PBI) for eligible retirees, beneficiaries, and survivors. Eligible recipients began receiving this PBI on July 1.

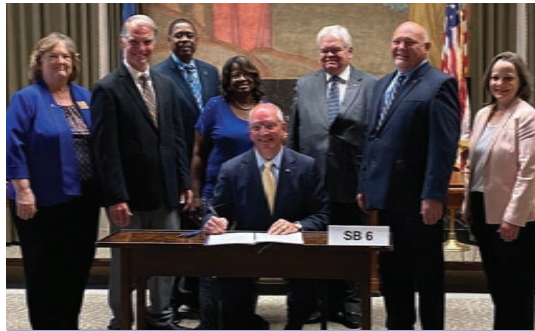
Act 657 of 2022

Sponsored by Sen. Edward "Ed" Price, Act 657 (formerly Senate Bill 6) granted a 2% PBI calculated on the first \$68,396 of the annual retirement benefit for eligible recipients.

"We are pleased by the efforts of Sen. Price, the governor, and the Legislature," said TRSL Director Katherine Whitney. "TRSL's PBI received unanimous support in both legislative chambers."

This was the first PBI for TRSL retirees since 2016. Last year, the legislature granted a special minimum benefit increase to a small number of retirees, beneficiaries, and survivors whose benefits were below the poverty level for a family of two.

"Along with our efforts to sustain a healthy retirement system, we continue to work with legislators on approaches to provide regular and meaningful benefit



Gov. John Bel Edwards signs PBI bill into law at the State Capitol.

From left: LRTA Immediate Past President Janis Hernandez, LRTA Executive Director Rodney Watson, Sen. Ed Price, LRTA President Lazette Watterson, Gov. John Bel Edwards, TRSL Board Members James Taylor, Sr., Ph.D., J.D., Clyde Hamner, and TRSL Director Katherine Whitney.

increases that will help retirees protect their purchasing power," Whitney said.

Acts 549 and 601 of 2022



In other legislative news, two identical bills which changed the state's return-to-work (RTW) laws passed in the 2022 Regular Session and became law. Acts 549 and 601 changed retiree eligibility criteria and updated advertising requirements for critical shortages, while also creating new ways for certain retirees to return to work without impacting their retirement benefit. In addition, an entirely new RTW law was created to address a shortage of adjunct professors for nursing programs.

See next page

"Drive" to TRSL online
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Visit Member Access:



- View and print 1099-R tax statements
- Change federal income tax withholding
- Request a SSA verification letter

New Mailing Address?



Is it time to update your mailing address?

Complete Form 2AC.

Submission instructions are included on the form.

Retirement Questions?



Submit your questions at www.TRSL.org/ASKtrsl for a reply via email.

We typically respond within two business days.

Return-to-work laws: New changes arrive

If you're thinking about returning to the classroom this fall, you need to be aware of recent changes to Louisiana's return-to-work (RTW) laws. You'll find the latest information on our RTW web pages, www.TRSL.org/RTW.



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The biggest question for most retirees is how their TRSL benefits will be impacted if they return to work. The answer depends on the RTW group to which a retiree belongs, and other factors like their qualifications and the position they are hired to fill. Here's a breakdown:

2010 RTW Group:

Includes individuals who retired before July 1, 2020.

NOTE: Some individuals who retired before July 1, 2020, are in the 2020 RTW Group because they returned to work for the first time after June 30, 2020, but before June 17, 2022. These individuals can now elect to transfer to the 2010 RTW Group. Visit www.TRSL.org/RTW2010 for more information.

SUMMARY OF OPTIONS: Retirees in this group can be reemployed in one of four categories (after waiting period, as applicable):

1. CORE SUBJECTS (NEW): The retiree can be reemployed without benefit suspension if certified in one of the subjects below, and employed to fill a position in the area of certification: (1) Math; (2) Science; (3) English Language Arts; or (4) Special Education (excluding gifted/talented).

2. SPECIAL LEAVE (NEW): The retiree can be reemployed without benefit suspension to fill a vacancy due to one of the following special leave scenarios: (1) maternity leave; (2) military leave; (3) sabbatical leave; or (4) extended sick leave. Retirees employed for this purpose must meet the following eligibility criteria: (1) the retiree is a certified teacher; (2) is at least age 62; and (3) has at least 30 years of creditable service.

3. "RETIRED TEACHER": The retiree can be reemployed without benefit

suspension if they are grandfathered (retired on/before 6/30/10); have an advanced degree in speech therapy, speech pathology or audiology; or are filling a critical shortage position. Critical shortage positions include full and part-time classroom teachers as well as other specific positions where a critical shortage has been declared. These retirees can also return to work in specific positions under a yearly earnings limit equal to 25% of their annual retirement benefit. The retiree's benefit is only suspended if they exceed this earnings limit in a fiscal year.

4. "RETIRED MEMBER": Reemployed retirees who do not meet the eligibility criteria for reemployment in the Core Subjects, Special Leave, or "Retired Teacher" categories are "Retired Members." This includes, but is not

Continued on next page

Legislators continue to urge Congress to resolve Social Security reduction

The Louisiana Legislature has consistently asked Congress to eliminate or change federal provisions that reduce the Social Security benefits of many TRSL retirees. As many of you know, if you receive a retirement benefit from TRSL and you are also eligible for Social Security benefits, your Social Security benefit may be reduced or eliminated because of federal law. Although this issue can only be addressed at the federal level, House Concurrent Resolution 11 by State Rep. Mike Johnson again urges Congress to support federal legislation that would reduce or eliminate the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and requests other state legislatures to do the same.

YOUR VOICE: SSA reduction is an issue we often hear about from TRSL members.



In March, representatives from Louisiana, including TRSL, met with several members of Congress in Washington, D.C., to discuss Social Security reductions. We shared the concerns we hear from members about the hardships these reductions create and the potential solutions required at the federal level. TRSL will continue to work with the state's congressional delegation as they try to address this issue.

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limited to, retirees returning to work as teachers in non-critical shortage areas, administrators, and secretaries. Benefits are suspended for the duration of reemployment.

2020 RTW Group:

Includes individuals who retired on or after July 1, 2020. Additionally, this group includes retirees who meet criteria for the 2010 RTW Group, but who make an irrevocable election to be in the 2020 RTW Group.

SUMMARY OF OPTIONS: Retirees in this group have two options when returning to work. Following a 12-month waiting period, one option allows a retiree to be reemployed in any TRSL position subject to yearly earnings limit equal to 25% of their final average compensation. The retiree's benefit is only suspended if they exceed this earnings limit in a fiscal year. A second option allows a retiree to suspend their retirement benefit during reemployment, and earn a supplemental benefit for their return-to-work service.

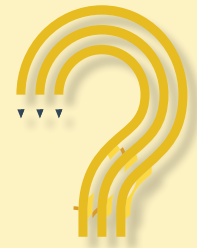
2022 RTW Group: HIGHER ED ONLY (NEW)

Includes individuals who retired before July 1, 2020; are at least age 62; have at least 30 years of service credit; and did not retire based on a disability.

SUMMARY OF OPTIONS: Retirees in this group can become reemployed without benefit suspension as adjunct professors in a nursing program at the higher education level where a critical shortage has been declared.

NOTE: This option only applies to retirees meeting the eligibility criteria outlined above. Otherwise, the retiree's reemployment would be subject to the 2010 RTW Group or 2020 RTW Group.

Do you receive a TRSL disability benefit?



Do you receive a TRSL disability benefit? The return-to-work laws outlined in this newsletter do not apply to retirees who receive a TRSL disability benefit, unless they have converted to a service retirement. It is important to note that a TRSL disability retiree cannot return to the field of public or private education without terminating their benefits unless they've converted to a service retirement. However, a TRSL disability retiree can have earnings outside the education field, but there is a limit on the amount that can be earned. For more information on disability retirement, see the **TRSL Disability Retirement** brochure online at www.TRSL.org.

2022 Board of Trustees ELECTION



RETIREE RUN-OFF ELECTION



Voting is underway in the run-off election for the member who will represent retirees on the TRSL Board of Trustees. The run-off is between the two candidates who received the most votes in the primary election: **James A. Taylor Sr., J.D., Ph.D.** and **Dr. Sheryl R. Abshire**.

You can vote by mail, phone, or online with the voting information you received in the mail from YesElections. If you didn't receive your voting packet, please let us know by calling 225-925-7798 or by emailing us at web.master@trsl.org.

The voting deadline is 4:30 p.m., Thur., August 25.

For more information visit
www.TRSL.org/elections

CHECK YOUR MAILBOX!



As a convenience to our members, we recently mailed income verification letters for the Social Security Administration (SSA) to those members who received income verification from TRSL in the last 12 months.

The letters are a confirmation that you receive a monthly gross benefit from TRSL. When you get a letter from the SSA requesting verification of your income, simply complete the form, attach our letter and return the information to the SSA.

Need an SSA income verification letter?

Requests can be made through Member Access or by calling TRSL at 225-925-6446 or toll free at 877-275-ASK-TRSL.

CONTACT US:

Physical address:

8401 United Plaza Blvd, Ste., 300
Baton Rouge, LA 70809-7017

Mailing address:

PO Box 94123
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9123

Telephone: 225-925-6446

Toll Free (outside the Baton Rouge area):


1-877-ASK-TRSL (1-877-275-8775)

TTY/TDD users: 1-800-846-5277

Fax: 225-925-4779

Email: web.master@trsl.org

Website: www.TRSL.org

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Protect your savings; Watch for cybercriminals

This little piggy went to the market.

This little piggy stayed home.

This little piggy was taken by a cybercriminal,
and now most of his savings are GONE.



Keep your savings SAFE.

TRSL will never contact you unsolicited to ask for your personal information (ex. Social Security number, bank account number, etc.).

If you receive an unsolicited email or phone call purporting to be from TRSL, contact us directly at 225-925-6446 or toll-free (outside of the Baton Rouge area) at 1-877-ASK-TRSL.

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