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The VOICE

THE OFFICIAL NEWS BULLETIN OF THE TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

TRS–CARE IN TROUBLE: Retirees Prepared to Do Their Part, But Can't Do it All

By Tim Lee
Executive Director

The 85th Legislative Session began on January 10, 2017, and movement on issues impacting public education retirees is happening quickly! The Senate Finance Committee has met multiple times to discuss the TRS–Care health insurance program, and has appointed a special workgroup of Senators to focus solely on state-vested health care plans.

TRTA is championing TRS–Care at every possible opportunity, as this program is needed by more than 260,000 retirees and dependents. It has dominated discussions with legislators due to the magnitude of funding misery the program has experienced in the last two biennia and faces now: a \$1.1 billion shortfall!

TRS–Care is teetering on insolvency and collapse. Shared pain – the idea that everyone connected to the plan pays a little more – has solved funding problems in the past. But the state suffers from a slowed economy, schools fight to keep their finances intact, and active employees see their wage growth eaten away by the increased costs of their own health care.

So far, the Legislature has received one study that shows several possible solutions (see TRTA's review in the 2016 4th quarter issue of *The VOICE*); but the bottom line is that retirees will pay more, have fewer

benefits, and should expect more of the same in the years to come! Still, thousands of TRTA members, other retirees and many active employees either do not think this will impact them or have not even heard about this problem!

TRTA is sounding the alarm: anyone who is in this plan or will retire soon and plans to enroll may see drastic changes to their health care options! We need your help! Now is the time to take action to protect TRS–Care and your retirement security!

Is there hope for TRS–Care? YES! Read inside to see how you can help TRTA succeed this session. Get started today!

How You Can Help During Legislative Session

As our members know, the 85th Session of the Texas Legislature began on January 10, 2017. Convening in Austin, our State Senators and State Representatives are hard at work on a multitude of issues, including funding the TRS–Care retiree health insurance program and the pension trust fund. Many members ask us, what can I do to help advance our issues and protect my retirement security?

“What can I do to help advance our issues and protect my retirement security?”

Below are some simple, yet very effective activities you can do to help TRTA be the best VOICE for all public education retirees in Texas!

1. Call your legislators! You can reach your State Senator and your State Representative in Austin by using this toll-free Legislator Hotline: 1.888.674.3788. Not sure what to say? Check out our TRTA Sample Phone Script on page 5 of *The VOICE*, and review our fact pages about the pension fund and TRS–Care on pages 3 and 4.
2. If you once taught a current Texas state legislator during your career, please contact the TRTA office in Austin at 1.800.880.1650, or email us at info@trta.org. We could use your help this session!
3. Email your legislators! If you already know your legislators' names, emailing them is easy! *Texas Senators*: firstname.lastname@senate.texas.gov. *Texas Representatives*: firstname.lastname@house.texas.gov. Not sure who your state legislators are? Just visit www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us and enter your address. Look for your State Senator and State Representative.
4. Sign up for TRTA's free e-newsletter service the *Inside Line* so that you can receive up-to-the-minute updates about what's happening at the Capitol! Subscribe online here: www.trta.org/features/insideline.
5. Check your email regularly, and when you receive an *Inside Line* from Tim Lee that includes an Action Alert, click on the alert link to send your legislators an urgent message! TRTA will often use these special alerts when action is needed right away, such as when a bill affecting your retirement benefits is up for a vote.
6. Follow TRTA on Facebook and share our posts about TRS–Care. Find us at this link: www.facebook.com/TexasRetiredTeachers.
7. Find and friend your legislators on Facebook! Just type their title, first and last name into the Search tool on Facebook to find them. Be sure to click “Like” once you find their page. Not all legislators have Facebook pages, but many do. Facebook is a great way to stay in touch with legislators and share urgent messages from TRTA with them.
8. Create a post on your Facebook wall, sharing a simple message such as “My name is (first name) (last name). I am a retired teacher, and I need the Texas Legislature's help! I taught in Texas public schools for (number) years, and I use TRS–Care for my health insurance. Without TRS–Care, I would not be able to afford (example: medical treatments for my diabetes).” Insert your own personal story about what TRS–Care means to you and how important it is to your health and retirement security!
9. Write an editorial and send it to your local newspaper! You can find a sample editorial on the TRTA website at the following link: www.trta.org/trs-care.

Attend TRTA Day at the Capitol on March 29! Learn more on page 9, or call TRTA at 1.800.880.1650.

TRS Pension Fund Facts

1 out of every 20 Texans
is a member of TRS!

TRS has more than 375,000



Retirees with an average annuity of \$2035 per month, while 105,000 retirees (30%) receive \$1000 or LESS per month.

\$9.3 billion in benefits

In 2016, TRS paid over \$9.3 billion in retirement benefits to more than 360,000 retirees.



Nearly 95% of these benefit payments, approximately \$8.8 billion, went directly to members who live and spend these dollars in Texas.

\$892 million, \$342 million

Over \$892 million in state revenues and \$342 million in local government revenues were generated by TRS benefit payments in 2014.

7.3 %: TRS return for 2016



That figure is 7.48% over the last 20 years, and 8.78% since 1989.

2016 is the first year that changes from the 2013

session made through SB 1458 were fully implemented, which has an impact on the fund's liabilities, funded ratio and funding period. TRS is on a long-term path to actuarial soundness thanks to SB 1458.

95%

of public school employees do not pay into Social Security and the vast majority of retirees do not receive ANY Social Security benefits due to the GPO and WEP. TRS is their sole form of retirement security!

\$134 billion

The approximate amount the TRS fund is valued at today.



112,939 Texas jobs

TRS benefit payments generate 112,939 permanent Texas jobs annually.

\$1 paid generates \$2.34



Retirees spending their benefits provide a notable economic stimulus to communities throughout the state. Every \$1 in benefits paid by TRS generates \$2.34 in economic activity!

79.7%: Funded Ratio

As of August 2016, the funded ratio of the pension fund is 79.7% and its funding period is 34 years.

Investments account for 64% of the value of the TRS pension fund, while member contributions from active teachers account for 18%, and state and employer contributions account for 18%.

TRS-Care Facts

TRS-Care has 262,000 participants enrolled in the program!



Retirees pay more in premiums and out-of-pocket costs for TRS-Care than the state contributes toward their health care coverage, about \$1.4 billion of the \$3.8 billion (35%) total cost of the program (the state's portion is \$321 million).

\$1.088 billion shortfall

The shortfall amount TRS-Care is projected for the next biennium (as of December 2016).

\$40 million per year

The TRS Board adopted changes to TRS-Care in 2016 that resulted in retirees paying an additional \$40 million per year towards the cost of the program, including increases in co-pays.

While those changes may seem incremental, they are huge to a retiree living on a fixed income.

TRTA supports a funding plan for TRS-Care

A plan with a focus on long-term sustainability for current and future retirees that provides quality health care at a reasonable cost for retired educators is needed! The bottom line is that TRS-Care will not survive if funding is not increased. Retirees will do their part to make TRS-Care sustainable, but cannot assume the entire burden.

\$321 million annually

The approximate amount the Legislature contributes to TRS-Care, a statutory amount that equals 1% of active educator payroll but is NOT related to the actual cost of health care.

History of employer funding for TRS-Care

During almost half of the 30-year history of TRS-Care, the State funded only 0.5% of payroll instead of the current 1%.



\$540 million per year

If no new revenue is provided for TRS-Care, retirees would be forced to pay an extra \$540 million more per year in premiums or higher out-of-pocket expenses, or have their benefits reduced drastically.

150% or more increase



The amount retiree premiums could increase! A retiree currently paying \$300 per month could have to pay as much as \$750 per month.

The average retiree may have to spend almost 40% of their annuity for health care! Annuitants who earn less than the average will not be able to afford health care at all!

Additional funding above the 1% of payroll

TRTA believes base funding should be tripled (3% of payroll) to make TRS-Care solvent. Future increases will be needed.

Sample Phone Script to Call State Legislators

Establishing a positive relationship with your Texas legislators and their staff members is vital to the success of TRTA's advocacy. Please take the time to call your State Senator and State Representative at least once per month during legislative session. TRS–Care is a top priority for many of our members this session. The phone scripts below can guide you during your telephone conversations with legislative offices. For assistance with discussing the TRS pension fund, please see the fact sheet on page 3. Use the toll-free Legislator Hotline (1.888.674.3788) to help you reach your State Senator and State Representative at the Capitol from now through May. Always be courteous! If asked a question you cannot answer, please refer the legislator or staffer to TRTA at 1.800.880.1650.

Are you a retiree who is younger than 65?

Here is your messaging to Senators and Representatives:

I am a Texas public education retiree and your constituent. I am deeply concerned about TRS–Care. I know that the program is in need of \$1.1 billion in additional funding due to the rising cost of health care.

I cannot afford a plan with a deductible as high as \$7,150 per year. Going on the federal exchange to buy health care is not a reasonable or affordable option for me. These were the options suggested in the interim report on TRS–Care. The report suggests the \$1.1 billion TRS–Care shortfall be carried by retirees, and we cannot afford it! Cost-shifting the entire deficit to retirees is not a long-term answer to TRS–Care's funding problems.

I know changes and hard sacrifices are ahead. But there is a better solution, and I am willing to do my part!

Senator/Representative, I ask that you please work with TRTA to find that solution. Retirees cannot bear the entire cost on their own. TRTA and Texas' public education retirees will support your efforts to find a balanced solution.

Are you a retiree who is 65 or over?

Here is your messaging to Senators and Representatives:

I am a Texas public education retiree and your constituent. I am deeply concerned about TRS–Care.

As you know, I live on a fixed income. The Legislature has helped me maintain my quality of life by not increasing my TRS–Care premiums. In the past 15 years, there has been one cost-of-living increase approved for TRS retirees, and not every retiree received it.

When my health care premiums are stable, I can manage my living expenses on my fixed income. Now, I am hearing that my health care costs could increase a lot, based on an interim report about TRS–Care. I also hear that all Medicare retirees would switch to Medicare Advantage, which does not work for everyone.

Unfortunately, the report suggests shifting the entire \$1.1 billion TRS–Care shortfall to retirees, and we cannot afford it! Cost-shifting is not a long-term answer to TRS–Care's funding problems.

I know changes and hard sacrifices are ahead. But there is a better solution, and I am willing to do my part!

Senator/Representative, I ask that you please work with TRTA to find that solution. Retirees cannot bear the entire cost on their own. TRTA and Texas' public education retirees will support your efforts to find a balanced solution.

★ PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE



TRTA is alive and growing. The TRTA staff and the state, district, and local officers and committees are working hard to protect and improve TRS annuities and keep TRS health care affordable. You, the members, are contributing to your communities in countless ways through your volunteer work, book projects, and money you spend from your annuities at local businesses. Does your community know who TRTA is and what an impact you make locally? That's where public relations needs to go to work!

Use your local media outlets—newspapers, TV stations, radio—to publicize your activities. Use social media. Be sure your websites are current. On the state level, TRTA not only has a web page, but is on Facebook, Twitter, and other outlets. Local units also need to be using them. Technology is part of the daily lives of current and especially new retirees. TRTA has a very knowledgeable staff who are ready and willing to help you with any technical support you may need.

The 85th Legislative session began in January. TRS-Care, an annuity increase, school vouchers, and charter schools are issues TRTA will be watching closely. What can you do? Stay informed—read Tim Lee's *Inside Line*. Speak up, write letters, send emails! Let your legislators know where you stand on the issues and why. Thank them for their support in the past, and ask for their support in the future. Let them know many of their constituents are retirees who vote. Ask friends and members of your community to support TRTA in its efforts by pointing out the contributions retirees make locally.

Our state convention is right around the corner and will be in Austin this year. It is always an exciting time to see old friends and make new ones. The training sessions are outstanding. Remember, you do not have to be a delegate to attend. Everyone is welcome. TRTA Day at the Capitol is March 29. If you cannot come to convention, gather a carload or a busload full of members and join us! We want to fill the galleries of the Senate and House with TRTA members wearing a sea of red. What a sight! Meet with your local legislators that day and talk to them about our issues.

Local units continue to do outstanding work volunteering and collecting books for children. This year our goal is to put 150,000 books in the hands of Texas children. Come to the convention to find out if we will reach or exceed that number. Recognize outstanding local units at your Spring Leadership Conferences.

TRTA is a great organization made up of dedicated, hardworking people. With all of us working together, we can make our name well-known and accomplish our goals. It is my honor to work for you and with you in this endeavor.

Leroy DeHaven
2016-2018 TRTA Second Vice-President

2017 TRTA District Spring Conferences

District	Date	Time	Location	Address	District President
1	4/28/17	9:30 a.m.–2 p.m.	Galaxy Event Center	3451 Pablo Kisel Blvd. • Brownsville	Ofelia Estevis
2	5/18/17	8:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.	St. John Lutheran Church	3316 Hummingbird Lane • Robstown	Paula Stone
3	4/20/17	10 a.m.–2 p.m.	First Baptist Church	2321 Avenue F • Bay City	Dick Nance
4	5/3/17	9 a.m.–1:30 p.m.	Bethany United Methodist Church	3511 Linkwood • Houston	Ella Gauthier
5	5/5/17	9:30 a.m.–2 p.m.	First Baptist Church	1911 Nederland Avenue • Nederland	June White
6	5/11/17	8:30 a.m.–2 p.m.	Region 6 ESC	3332 Montgomery Rd. • Huntsville	Frank Middleton
7	5/4/17	8:30 a.m.–2 p.m.	Holiday Inn Select	5701 S. Broadway • Tyler	Linda Metteauer
8	5/18/17	9 a.m.–2 p.m.	First United Methodist Church	400 N. Fredonia St. • Longview	Racyne Mitchell
9	4/4/17	9 a.m.–2:30 p.m.	Region 9 ESC	301 Loop 11 • Wichita Falls	Joanna Delgado
10	4/24/17	9 a.m.–2 p.m.	Lovers Lane United Methodist Church	9200 Inwood Rd. • Dallas	Dr. Thalia Matherson
11	5/10/17	8:30 a.m.–2 p.m.	Region 11 ESC	1451 South Cherry Ln. • White Settlement	Janie Bramlett
12	5/9/17	9 a.m.–2p.m.	Region 12 ESC	2101 W. Loop 340 • Waco	Earl Wall
13	5/11/17	8:30 a.m.–1 p.m.	First Christian Church	3105 Ranch Rd. 12 • San Marcos	Dr. Carole Buchanan
14	5/16/17	8:30 a.m.–Noon	Region 14 ESC	1850 Hwy. 351 • Abilene	Bob Gillette
15	4/27/17	9:30 a.m.–2 p.m.	Church of the Good Shepherd	1800 Good Shepherd Dr. • Brownwood	Lynn Granzin
16	5/25/17	8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.	Region 16 ESC	5800 Bell St. • Amarillo	Carol Ledbetter
17	5/4/17	9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.	Region 17 ESC	1111 West Loop 289 • Lubbock	June Cooper
18	5/5/17	9 a.m.–2 p.m.	Region 18 ESC	2811 La Force Blvd. • Midland	Ricky Chandler
19	5/6/17	9 a.m.–1 p.m.	Region 19 ESC	6611 Boeing Dr. • El Paso	Ron Leiman
20	6/1/17	9:30 a.m.–2 p.m.	Floresville Event Center	600 Hwy. 97 West • Floresville	Barbara Soto

Volunteer with Health and Human Services Center; Improve the Lives of Others

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission values volunteers and the services they provide. Volunteers' dedication enriches the agency's programs and improves the lives of thousands of aging Texans and those with disabilities.

According to the Corporation of National and Community Service, a federal agency that works to improve the lives of citizens through service, social engagement—and the lack of it—can affect cognitive functioning and happiness, which in turn can affect overall health.

“People need to feel a sense of purpose, and both recipients and volunteers can benefit,” said HHSC Aging Services Coordination Manager Holly Riley. “Caring and giving one's time can mean a lot to everyone involved.”

If you have a passion for helping others, a caring spirit and a willingness to learn, you are needed. Get involved by becoming a volunteer with one of the following HHSC programs:

Foster Grandparent Program

The Foster Grandparents Program connects volunteers age 55 and older with young people in their communities.

Foster grandparents serve from 15 to 40 hours per week in locations including schools, hospitals, juvenile correctional institutions, daycare facilities or Head Start centers. They are role models, mentors and friends to children with exceptional needs who have the ability to guide a child toward a successful future. To become a Foster Grandparent Program volunteer, call 512.438.4088 or visit www.dads.state.tx.us/fostergrandparents.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Long-term care ombudsmen serve as advocates for residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Volunteers regularly visit residents at an assigned nursing home or assisted living facility. They listen to residents' concerns and, with resident consent, investigate, problem-solve and help resolve concerns. Ombudsmen support residents' rights, privacy and confidentiality.

Volunteers must be 18 years old and complete a free certification course. No prior experience is required. The most important requirements are compassion, respect and common sense. To become an ombudsman and help improve the quality of life and care for residents in a facility near you, call 512-438-2545 or contact your local ombudsman program.

Texercise

The Texercise program provides free resources to encourage people to exercise more and eat better. While Texercise targets Texans 45 and older, everyone can benefit from participating.

Volunteers host Texercise Classic, a 12-week program, for groups of 25 or more. Groups meet once every week, engage in physical activity and learn about healthy eating. A coordinator kit containing resources and materials to host the program is provided. To become a Texercise leader, call 1.800.889.8595.

Benefits Counseling

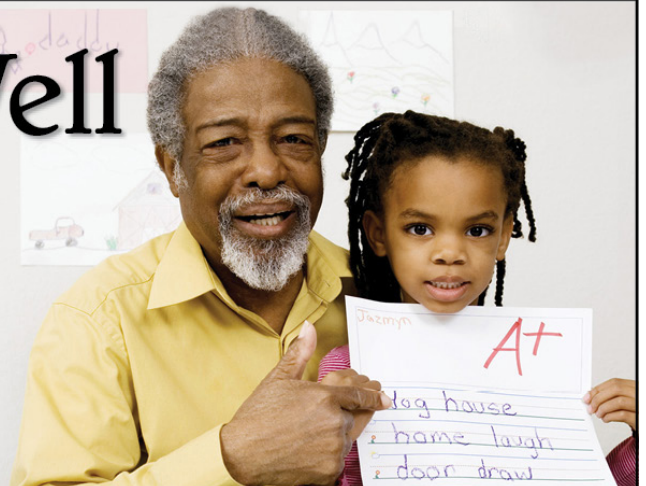
HHSC wants all Texans age 60 and older, as well as Medicare-eligible people with disabilities of any age, to have ready access to trained and certified benefits counselors. With the help of volunteer counselors, more eligible Texans can be helped to receive benefits and maintain their rights.

The Texas Benefits Counseling Program trains volunteers to help them provide information, counseling, assistance and advocacy to people who are older and others who are Medicare-eligible regarding their benefits, entitlements and legal rights. To volunteer as a benefits counselor, contact your local area agency on aging at 1.800.252.9240.

Age Well Live Well

BE CONNECTED.

“Volunteering keeps me connected and engaged with my community.”



Create new experiences by volunteering at www.AgeWellLiveWell.org

64th Annual TRTA Convention: **TEAMWORK IS KEY!**

Registration is now open for the 64th Annual TRTA Convention to be held in Austin, Texas March 27–28, 2017! This year’s theme is TRTA: Teamwork is Key, a perfect sentiment that matches TRTA’s drive to succeed as we head into another challenging legislative session in the Texas capital city!

The convention will be held at the Hilton on 500 E. 4th Street. The group rates for a single or double (\$199), triple (\$219) and quad (\$239) per night are good through March 1, 2017, but rooms are filling quickly! Please note the group rate is available only March 27–29.

Make reservations online at www.trta.org or call the Hilton at 1.844.291.8931 or 512.482.8000 and use reservation code “TRT.” The deadline to reserve a room is March 1, 2017. Please note that the reservation block does not include ADA as an option. If you require a handicap-accessible room, please reserve a regular room and then contact TRTA’s Event Planner Ashley Welch at 512.650.6484.

There is no better time to be in Austin! The Texas Legislature will be in regular session, discussing the TRS–Care health insurance program and ways to protect the longevity of benefits for our public education retirees and pre-retirees.

TRTA has released a schedule of events to help you plan your travel. Convention activities will begin later in the day on Monday, March 27, allowing members to travel in the morning and still arrive in time for registration. Enjoy a social hour, featuring a cash bar with entertainment provided by a local piano player, at 5:30 p.m.

Unlike years past, there will be no banquet, and instead members may attend a welcome and awards dinner on the first night. Enjoy a salad with dried cranberries, goat cheese and a champagne dressing, accompanied by an assortment of warm rolls, followed by southern braised beef, creamy mashed potatoes, buttered broccoli and baby carrots. Cheesecake with a raspberry coulis will be served for dessert. Beverages include coffee, decaf, and hot tea.

Seating for the dinner begins at 6:30 p.m., doors close at 6:55 p.m., and the event begins promptly at 7:00 p.m. Vegetarian options are available for all meals. Please put in your request to Ashley Welch at the TRTA state office no later than March 1.



Convention Schedule

MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2017

- 10:00 a.m.
TRTA Officers Meeting
- 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Registration/Delegate Certification Exhibits
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
Foundation Board of Trustees Meeting
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
Facilitators Meeting
- 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
TRTA Board of Directors Meeting
- 3:45 – 4:30 p.m.
District Presidents Meeting
- 4:45 – 5:45 p.m.
District Caucus Meetings
- 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Welcome and Awards Dinner

TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2017

- 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Registration/Delegate Certification Exhibits
- 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Exhibits
- 8:00 – 9:15 a.m.
Foundation Breakfast
- 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Training/Informational Sessions
- 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.
Breakout – Session I
- 10:45 – 11:45 a.m.
Breakout – Session II
- 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.
Legislative Luncheon
- 2:00 p.m. – TBD
House of Delegates
- TBD
Legislative Session
- TBD
TRTA Board of Directors Meeting

Day at the Capitol Schedule

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 2017

- 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.
Legislative Visits
- 9:30 a.m.
House Gallery
- 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Photo opportunities with legislators
- 10:30 a.m.
Senate Gallery
- 11:30 a.m.
Rally on the Capitol Steps or East Lawn (TBD)
- 12:00 p.m.
Additional Legislative Visits
- 12:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Ice Cream Social on the East Lawn

64th Annual TRTA Convention: TEAMWORK IS KEY!

Day two (March 28) begins with a Foundation Breakfast. See the scrumptious menu on page 15. Previously, TRTF held a luncheon. Though the format will be somewhat different, members will still be able to present gifts to the Foundation in honor or in memory of a loved one, friend or colleague.

Training sessions and the House of Delegates fill the second day. Sessions occur at 9:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. This year's informational sessions will be given by the Teacher Retirement System of Texas, the Department of Aging and Disability Services, Atria, and Texas Retired School Administrators. Don't miss our new Google Drive session, hosted by TRTA staff member Roy Varney.

A legislative luncheon will be held at 12:00 p.m. on day two, featuring grilled chicken Caesar salad, warm rolls with butter, coffee, decaf and hot tea. Dessert will be a delicious flourless chocolate cake with raspberry coulis and whipped cream.

The House of Delegates will then convene at 2:00 p.m.

At the conclusion of the House of Delegates, Legislative Committee Chairman Bill Barnes will host a legislative session for all who wish to attend. This is a great opportunity to get updates on the 85th Texas Legislature, progress on filed bills, and techniques to help members advocate during Day at the Capitol on March 29.

After the convention concludes, attendees may choose from a variety of restaurants within walking distance of the hotel in wonderfully diverse downtown Austin for dinner. Be sure to stop by the information booth to visit with a representative from the Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau for great local restaurant ideas.

TRTA will host a full day of legislative grassroots advocacy on Wednesday, March 29! Our "Day at the Capitol" event is open to all Convention attendees as well as any member who wishes to travel to Austin for this

purpose only.

The Day at the Capitol allows public education retirees to visit with their legislators, be honored by both the Texas Senate and House and enjoy a rousing speech by TRTA officers and elected officials on the Capitol grounds. All attendees are encouraged to wear red!

Please note, an RSVP is required for the Day at the Capitol event even if you do not plan to attend the Convention. Your RSVP ensures that enough advocacy materials and refreshments are available for all attendees. Please check the appropriate box on the registration form if you are attending on March 29.

Look for the registration form and meal prices on page 10. Online registration for the convention is available at www.trta.org. Registration closes on March 1, 2017. We hope you will join us in Austin in for convention, Day at the Capitol, or both and be a part of the TRTA Team! ★

Protect Your Travel. Enjoy the Moment.

Traveling this Spring? Medical Air Services Association (MASA), is an international company dedicated to providing life-saving emergency assistance from home or while traveling anywhere in the world. MASA can save thousands of dollars in the event of an emergency while traveling or at home!

Coverage includes:

- Air and ground ambulance transportation
- Worldwide coverage
- Family member or companion transport
- Recuperation/Repatriation
- Vehicle return, and more!

**Visit myambabenefits.info/trta
or call 1-800-258-7041
to find out more about MASA
coverage and other travel benefits!**

Benefits provided by:


**ASSOCIATION MEMBER
BENEFITS ADVISORS**



CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MARCH 1, 2017



REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Last and First Name		TRTA ID	
Address			
City		State	Zip
Phone		Email for Confirmation	
In case of on-site emergency contact		Cell Phone	

CONVENTION INFORMATION

Every convention attendee must register online or by mail. One registrant per form. Please check all boxes that apply. Attendees must pay the \$40 registration fee or \$45 on-site registration (late) fee. Refund requests must be received by March 12, 2017. Refunds will be processed after Convention by April 10, 2017. A \$10 service charge will apply. Register online at www.trta.org or mail completed form and payment to TRTA, Attention: Convention, 313 E. 12th Street, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78701.

SPECIAL EVENTS





<input type="checkbox"/> Registration (Deadline March 1, 2017) \$40 per person	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Awards Dinner (Monday, March 27, 2017 • 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.) \$55 per person	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Foundation Breakfast (Tuesday, March 28, 2017 • 8:00 – 9:15 a.m.) \$35 per person	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislative Luncheon (Tuesday, March 28, 2017 • 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.) \$40 per person	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Day at the Capitol (Wednesday, March 29, 2017 • 8:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.) Complimentary	
<input type="checkbox"/> I will be attending the Day at the Capitol	

PAYMENT INFORMATION

A confirmation letter will be emailed/mailed prior to convention.	TOTAL REMITTANCE
<input type="checkbox"/> Check or money order enclosed payable to TRTA	
<input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my credit card	

▼ Credit Card Number ▼ Expiration

- -
 -


 
 
 
▼ Signature _____

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TRTA BYLAWS

If adopted, the indication of change for each amendment is deleting content by ~~striking through~~ and/or adding content by underlining.
Note: No fiscal impact on the organization will be incurred if these proposed amendments are adopted as currently presented.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT 1

If approved, the word “chairman” will be deleted and replaced with “chairperson” and the word “chairmen” will be deleted and replaced with “chairpersons.”

Article V: Divisions

Section 1–Districts

2. Conduct a Spring Leadership Training Conference to train elected Local Unit officers and appointed committee ~~chairmen~~ chairpersons;
3. Require all elected officers and committee ~~chairmen~~ chairpersons to be Active Members of a Local Unit within that District and of TRTA;

Article VI: House of Delegates

Sections 1

2. ~~Chairmen~~ Chairpersons of the TRTA Standing Committees;

Article VII: Officers of the Organization

Section 1

3. The ~~Chairman~~ Chairperson, Vice–Chairman, and Recorder of the District Presidents Council shall serve as TRTA officers representing that Council.

Article VIII: Nominations, Elections, and Installation

Section 1

The Nominating Committee shall consist of a ~~Chairman~~ Chairperson, who shall be the Immediate Past President of TRTA, and four (4) members. Each of the five (5) members shall be from a different TRTA District. Nominations to serve on this Committee shall come from the floor at the House of Delegates, and nominees shall be given the opportunity to decline or consent to this nomination. Secret ballot shall determine election for a term of two (2) years, with no subsequent consecutive term. If only four (4) members are nominated, a voice vote may be taken. If there are more than four (4) nominees, then the four nominees with the most number of votes shall be elected. If there is a tie in the fourth position, the tellers committee shall draw by lot to break the tie and determine the fourth position. The Board of Directors shall fill any vacancy on the Nominating Committee with a TRTA member from the same District as the member vacating the seat on the Committee.

Article IX: Board of Directors

Section 1

The Board of Directors of TRTA shall consist of the following voting members: the State President, First Vice–President, Second Vice–President, and Secretary/Treasurer; the Immediate Past President; the ~~Chairman~~ Chairperson, Vice–~~Chairman~~ Chairperson, and Recorder of the District Presidents Council; the Legislative Coordinator; the Organizational Affairs Coordinator; and the Historian.

Article X: Executive Committee

Section 1

The Executive Committee shall consist of the state President, First Vice–President, Second Vice–President, and Secretary/Treasurer, the Immediate Past President and the ~~Chairman~~ Chairperson of the District Presidents Council.

Section 2

2. Confirm the President’s appointments of the Historian, the Legislative Coordinator, the Organizational Affairs Coordinator, and the ~~chairmen~~ chairpersons of all standing committees and special committees except the ~~chairmen~~ chairpersons of the following committees: Membership, Public Relations, Finance, and Nominating.

Article XI: Committees

Sections 3

Each ~~chairman~~ chairperson of a standing committee shall submit to the Board of Directors a plan of action for the ensuing year and to the House of Delegates at the annual TRTA Convention a written report of the committee’s work.

Section 4

With the exception of the Legislative Committee, all standing committees shall be composed of a minimum of five (5) members including the ~~chairman~~ chairperson ensure that at least 50 percent of the committee members are continuing committee members. Members may serve a maximum of four (4) years. The Legislative Committee shall be composed of a minimum of twenty (20) members and ensure that at least 75 percent of the committee members are continuing committee members. Members may serve a maximum term of eight (8) years.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TRTA BYLAWS

Maker: San Antonio Association of Retired Teachers

Contact Individual: Manuela M. Salaiz

Maker's Rationale: Since several of the individuals who hold position as chairman and chairmen are not man or men; the update of changing the word to chairperson would identify the position and not the gender of the individual.

OAC Recommends: Approval

OAC Rationale: The proposal more accurately reflects the membership of the organization and is a more inclusive depiction of modern day language.

Board of Directors Recommends: Approval

Board of Directors Rationale: The TRTA bylaws supersede Roberts Rules of Order.

Note: If adopted, the changes will need to be made in all other documents of TRTA.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT 2

If adopted, will change the name of the "Spring Leadership Training Conference" to "Spring Leadership Development Conference."

Article V: Divisions

Section 1—Districts

2. Conduct a ~~Spring Leadership Training Conference~~ Spring Leadership Development Conference to train elected Local Unit officers and appointed committee chairmen;

Maker: McCulloch County Retired Teachers Association

Contact Individual: Connie Easterwood, President

Maker's Rationale: The purpose of any educational training we do in TRTA should include the goal of developing new leaders for TRTA.

OAC Recommends: Approval

OAC Rationale: The purpose of any educational training done by TRTA should include the goal of identification and development of new leaders for the organization. Renaming the Spring Conference to incorporate the term "development" focuses the work of the District on identification, recruitment, and orientation of current leaders as well as future leaders.

Board of Directors Recommends: Approval

Board of Directors Rationale: BOD agrees with the rationale of the maker.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT 3

If adopted, will change the name of the "Fall Convention" to "District Fall Kick-Off Conference."

Article V: Divisions

Section 1

1. Conduct a ~~Fall Convention~~ District Fall Kick-Off Conference;

Maker: McCulloch County Retired Teachers Association

Contact Individual: Connie Easterwood, President

Maker's Rationale: Have one (1) state convention in the spring/delete confusion of when convention is held better describes what we are striving to achieve in the fall.

OAC Recommends: Approval

OAC Rationale: The proposal reserves the word "convention" as the sole role and responsibility of the state organization and thereby eliminates confusion which currently exists between state and district conventions. The new terminology elevates the status of the district meeting by emphasizing the importance of the district in organizing and conducting activities to involve the membership at the local level which is crucial to the success of TRTA goals.

Board of Directors Recommends: Approval

Board of Directors Rationale: BOD agrees with the rationale of the maker.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TRTA BYLAWS

PROPOSED AMENDMENT 4

If adopted, the minimum of eight (8) committees: Community Volunteer Service, Health Care, Informative and Protective Services, Legislative, Member Benefits, Membership, Public Relations, and Retirement Education will change to a minimum of four (4) committees: Community Volunteer Service, Legislative, Membership, and Public Relations while recognizing that the most effective local units are built on a comprehensive structure of eight (8) committees.

Article V: Divisions

Section 2-Local Units

5. ~~A minimum of eight (8) committees: Community Volunteer Service, Health Care, Informative and Protective Services, Legislative, Member Benefits, Membership, Public Relations, and Retirement Education.~~
5. A minimum of four (4) committees: Community Volunteer Service, Legislative, Membership, and Public Relations while recognizing that the most effective local units are built on a comprehensive structure of eight (8) committees: Community Volunteer Service, Health Care, Informative and Protective Services, Legislative, Member Benefits, Membership, Public Relations, and Retirement Education.

Maker: Yoakum County Retired School Personnel Association

Contact Individual: Brenda Massey

Maker's Rationale: Many local units are having difficulty filling all the officer and committee chairmen as set out by the TRTA bylaws. Some units are dissolving and others are contemplating dissolving due to their inability to fill so many positions. This amendment does not keep units from having all the committee chairmen but assists those who are having difficulty with the number of positions to be filled. The information these committees generate can be provided to the local units by the local unit presidents as easily as it can be by a local unit committee chairman.

OAC Recommends: Approval

OAC Rationale: Small local associations often experience difficulty finding volunteers to chair the committees currently required by the TRTA bylaws. At the same time, fulfilling TRTA's mission requires that certain core activities be conducted by all local associations. The suggested language identifies those core activities as required committees and identifies other activities that characterize the most effective local units.

Board of Directors Recommends: Approval

Board of Directors Rationale: The amendment, without eliminating any committee, names the minimum 4 committees to be: Membership, which is chaired by the First Vice-President, Public Relations which is chaired by the Second Vice-President, Legislative which is a top priority of the organization and Community Volunteer Services which is supportive of our community involvement and legislative efforts.

TRTA Remembers Anita Smith Palmer

TRTA mourns the passing of a very dear friend, avid public education advocate, and dedicated member, Mrs. Anita Smith Palmer Hackley. Anita was a retired educator and a great artist. She had served as President of the Olney Retired Teachers, Vice-President of District 9 Retired Teachers, and served on the Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS) Board of Directors as the retiree representative from September 2011 until her passing in January 2017.

Members who have visited the state office in Austin may have seen the beautiful paintings of horses she donated to TRTA. She will be missed by many, and her efforts to improve the lives and benefits of active and retired educators will be valued for years to come.



OUTLOOK



LEADING POSITIVE CHANGE FOR TEXAS EDUCATION

TRTA ANNUAL CONVENTION
TRTF to Host Breakfast and Session
15

2016 DONATIONS
TRTF Raises More Than \$90,000!
16

DONATE TODAY!
Donation card on the back of *The VOICE*
16

TRTF TO HOST BREAKFAST, TRAINING SESSION AT CONVENTION

The Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF) looks forward to the upcoming 64th Annual TRTA Convention in Austin, being held March 27–28, 2017.

We hope you will stop by the Foundation exhibit booth on Monday, March 27, where you can buy a one-of-a-kind handmade pen turned and engraved personally by TRTF Board President Jamie Larson. These gorgeous pens make excellent, lifelong gifts. Supplies will be limited! Pens may be purchased for a suggested donation of \$25.



TRTF will host a breakfast on Tuesday, March 28 at 8:00 a.m. The menu features orange juice, coffee, and hot tea to drink, as well as muffins and croissants, scrambled eggs, potatoes, and bacon. Tickets are \$35 per person and may be purchased when you submit your convention registration form (see page 10).

Our 15 Classroom Assistance Grant and 10 Beginning Teacher Scholarship recipients will be announced during the breakfast. The Foundation will also provide an update for members about our “A Helping Hand” program, the Legacy Campaign and the Lehr-Pritchard Endowment Fund.

It is common for individuals, districts and local units to present gifts to the Foundation in honor or in memory of someone at the end of the meal. If you are attending the breakfast and would like to make a donation, you may complete a form to include a personal message. Forms will be available on your table or in *The Ledger*, our monthly e-newsletter, and on the TRTF website (www.trtf.org).

TRTF will host a training session on March 28 at 9:30 a.m. It is recommended that Local Unit Foundation Representatives and District Foundation Liaisons make an effort to join the session. Understanding the roles of Foundation Liaisons and Representatives, fundraising, and program implementation will be discussed. We hope to see you there!

Scholarships and Grants: Apply Today!

TRTF Beginning Teacher Scholarship and Classroom Assistance Grant applications are now available! Please visit www.trtf.org or send an email to help@trtf.org to learn more. Applications are due March 16, 2017.



The VOICE

Send address changes to:
Texas Retired Teachers Association
313 E. 12th Street, Suite 200 | Austin, TX 78701-1957
800.880.1650 | www.trta.org

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US IMPACT PEOPLE'S LIVES EVERY DAY!

The Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF) believes that education and educators impact the future, every day! The Foundation is able to do just that, thanks to the overwhelming generosity of the members of the Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA).

Through the Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF), our members extend their generosity with donations to causes that have genuine, tangible impacts on the lives of retirees, current classroom teachers and beginning teachers just starting their careers in education.

TRTA members have donated more than \$90,000 to the Foundation's programs since November 1!

Our members change lives in measurable ways by supporting TRTF's programs: "A Helping Hand," Classroom Assistance Grants and Beginning Teacher Scholarships. Since 2008, the donations of our members have enabled TRTF to give over \$244,000 to impact the future for educators of the past, present and future!

November 2016 was Foundation Month, a time designated by the TRTA Board of Directors to honor the Foundation through local unit programs and an annual appeal. In the third quarter issue of *The VOICE*, TRTA generously allowed TRTF to use several pages to promote its annual request for donations. TRTA members have donated more than \$90,000 to the Foundation's programs since November 1!

If you want to donate to a valuable cause that has a direct impact on education in Texas, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Texas Retired Teachers Foundation.

You may donate using the card found on the back of *The VOICE*, or pay by phone using a credit card by calling 1.800.880.1650. Online donations can be made through the Foundation's website at www.trtf.org.

TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS FOUNDATION

OUTLOOK

LEADING POSITIVE CHANGE FOR TEXAS EDUCATION

TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS FOUNDATION

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