



Texas Retired Teachers Association

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The Voice For All Public Education Retirees

www.trta.org

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RETIRED TEACHERS TO MEET IN SAN ANTONIO FOR ANNUAL CONVENTION

San Antonio, TX – More than 1,000 retired educators will meet in San Antonio next week at the Texas Retired Teachers Association's (TRTA) 65th Annual Convention at the La Cantera Resort and Spa. Attendees from all over Texas will participate in this year's convention April 8-10. These public education retirees will discuss the future of their health care and pension, among other issues.

"We have spent several years working on resolving a health care funding crisis," says TRTA President Nancy Byler. "Despite sweeping changes made during the 85th Legislative Session and Special Session, the TRS-Care retiree health insurance program is expected to have a shortfall again by the next biennium. Our public education retirees live on stagnant incomes and are struggling with high premium increases that went into effect this January. We worked with our legislators to craft a temporary solution for TRS-Care in 2015 and 2017. Now, we must be diligent in finding a long-term solution that protects our retirees."

The convention, entitled "Preserving the Past, Securing the Future," focuses on retirees, as well as active educators, working together to protect their retirement benefits. Members are not only concerned about sky-rocketing health care costs, but also how a pending decision about the rate of return assumption for the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) pension trust fund may affect their traditional defined benefit plan. TRTA does not support changing the plan to a defined contribution or 401k-style plan for current or future retirees and supports the Texas Legislature adding money to secure the stability of the pension fund.

"TRS is a strong system that provides retirement security for 1 out of every 20 Texans," said Tim Lee, TRTA Executive Director. "TRS is the sole form of retirement income for the vast majority of Texas educators, as 95 percent of school districts in the state do not pay into the federal Social Security program," Lee said. Retirees receive an average of \$2,000 per month in their monthly annuities, while 32 percent receive \$1,000 per month or less.

"Education retirees are very engaged politically and know how important it is that we work across the aisle with all legislators," said Bill Barnes, TRTA State Legislative Coordinator. "We are grateful for the efforts our Senators and Representatives have made and feel they genuinely care about us, and we hope to start working with them on potential solutions before session begins again in 2019."

About the Texas Retired Teachers Association: TRTA is the nation's largest organization of public education retirees. It advocates improved benefits for current and retired public education employees and seeks to advance their well-being through community involvement and legislative efforts. TRTA hosts an array of community engagement programs, including the Children's Book Project, which has delivered more than half a million books into the hands of young Texans.

TRTA staff or members are available to answer questions or for interviews. For more information on our organization's programs, legislative goals, or member initiatives, visit www.trta.org or call 1-800-880-1650.

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