



**SCASA DIVISIONS**

School Superintendents

Secondary Principals

Middle Level Principals

Elementary Principals

Career & Technology  
Education Administrators

Adult Education  
Directors

School Personnel  
Administrators

Allied School  
Administrators

Instructional  
Leaders

September 28, 2011

The Honorable Thomas Alexander, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Greg Ryberg, Co-Chair  
Senate Finance Special Retirement Subcommittee  
111 Gressette Building  
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Senators:

Thank you for allowing me, on behalf of the South Carolina Association of School Administrators (SCASA), to provide written comments to the Senate Finance Special Retirement Subcommittee. In the interest of our members and other current and future retirees, SCASA supports necessary action to preserve the system for future employees. However, we are concerned that in the effort to make possible needed changes, there is the potential to overcorrect a system that only needs tweaking. The retirement system remains a valuable asset in recruiting outstanding employees who may otherwise choose the private sector for higher salaries. Therefore, we must continue to keep the retirement system viable as a benefit and recruiting tool.

The discussions of the committee seem focused on several options in an effort to stabilize the system. We are still reviewing the material and gathering additional information concerning COLA's and the TERI program. The two possible changes receiving the most discussion are raising the number of service years and the employee/employer contributions. If the subcommittee proposes changing the service years from twenty-eight years to thirty years, we ask that it only apply to non-vested employees. We also understand that the state retirement employee contribution portion has not increased since 2006. If an increase is necessary, we ask that the subcommittee be mindful of the furloughs taken during the economic recession and also the lack of raises during this same time period when determining an increase.

We will be glad to work with the subcommittee to formulate changes that will preserve the health of the system and are fair to the recipients as well as the taxpayers of our state. We would be remiss if we didn't point out that while every taxpayer is not in the retirement system, every person in the retirement system is a taxpayer and concerned with this issue on multiple levels.

Working to sustain a viable state retirement system is important to our members and we thank you for your time and willingness to work with us.

Sincerely,

Molly M. Spearman  
Executive Director

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