

---

**From:** ledougl@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 16, 2022 8:25 PM  
**To:** Office State Actuary, WA  
**Subject:** PLAN 1 COLA

CAUTION: External email.

October 15, 2022

The Honorable Steve Conway, Chair  
Select Committee on Pension Policy  
P.O. Box 40429  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Chair Conway:

I am writing to thank you and the members of the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCC) for your consideration of both a legislative pathway to a permanent cost of living adjustment (COLA) for Plan 1 retirees, as well as a one-time three percent COLA effective in July 2023.

Your consideration of these priorities will resolve two immediate issues plaguing our oldest retired public servants. First, by inserting language in SPPP-sponsored legislation that will codify a trigger point by which the state will restore a permanent COLA for Plan 1 retirees will solve the long-standing inequity among the pension plans. Plan 1 retirees have waited nearly 12 years for a permanent COLA. Moreover, your consideration of another one-time three percent COLA for Plan 1 retirees will provide much-needed inflationary relief.

I deeply appreciate the one-time COLA you secured for Plan 1 retirees like me in the last legislative session. The COLA was helpful and provided temporary relief, as will the proposal you are currently considering. However, one-time COLAs, while deeply appreciated, are short-term fixes that never address the real problem: year-after-year the oldest retirees, who historically receive the lowest pensions, continue to lose purchasing power at a time when they need it most.

I began working as a Clerk Typist in 1962 for Seattle Public Schools. When Seattle Central Community College began in 1966, I transferred to the new community college. In 1970 I transferred to the Allied Health Division. I was a Secretary Supervisor for many years, and I did many different things for the Division, including assisting the Division Chairperson. I worked closely with faculty, students, and directed other staff, did budgeting, ordering of supplies/equipment, worked closely with faculty on tenure track, worked on national accreditation reports required of health care programs, took minutes at technical advisory committee meetings, and many other assignments. I enjoyed working with the faculty to help our students gain the education they needed to become licensed health care professionals. I retired in 2012 after 50 years of working for the State of Washington.

College staff received low pay much of the time according to surveys I saw. We did not receive merit raises, bonuses, promotions for great work, or even a turkey at Thanksgiving. The Legislature had control of the pay scale and yearly increases when they happened, not the College administration or our direct supervisors. For all those years, staff heard that the Plan 1 retirement system we paid into was the BEST, so I made the decision to stay as I was looking to future needs. While at this time I do not have the financial crisis that many of the Plan 1 retirees face, I do believe that promises made to employees need to be kept as they counted on being able to survive their retirement.

Only a permanent COLA will help to ensure financial, food, and housing security in retirement. I hope we can count on you to include, in the bill under development, language to codify a permanent Plan 1 COLA and a one-time three percent COLA for 2023.

Sincerely,

Leslie Douglas, Board Member, Chapter 6, RPEC  
11025 6th Ave. W.  
Everett, WA 98204

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Legislature. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.