

OFFICE OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

JILL WARNE
FIRST DISTRICT
KEVIN PINE
SECOND DISTRICT
VICKIE L. RAINES
THIRD DISTRICT
WENDY CHATHAM
CLERK OF THE BOARD



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STATE OF WASHINGTON

August 22nd, 2023

Select Committee on Pension Policy
P.O. Box 40914
Olympia, WA 98504-0914

Dear Members of the Select Committee on Pension Policy:

As the Board of County Commissioners in Grays Harbor County, we are writing to urge your support for a recurring cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for our community's retired public employees who are vested in Plan 1 of the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems.

During their years of service, these former employees worked hard and made important contributions to our communities. Employees working in the public sector forgo higher salaries and perks available in the private sector for the promise of a livable pension that will provide security in retirement. Without a recurring COLA, many of our community's public service retirees vested in Plan 1 are struggling to make ends meet. The one-time ad hoc COLAs that the Select Committee on Pension Policy has fought to secure in recent years have provided much-needed relief from rising inflation. But, these ad hoc COLAs are not the long-term solution needed to provide stability and predictability. With the average age of these retirees now at 78, Plan 1 retirees need the security that can only come from a recurring COLA.

The public service of these retirees is no less important than those vested in Plans 2 and 3. Yet, this is the only retiree group that does not have a guaranteed recurring COLA. Please demonstrate your support for their contributions to our communities by expediting your plan for the Legislature to immediately provide a recurring COLA.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jill Warne in blue ink.

Jill Warne, District 1, Chair

Handwritten signature of Kevin Pine in blue ink.

Kevin Pine (Aug 23, 2023 09:36 PDT)

Kevin Pine, District 2

Handwritten signature of Vickie L. Raines in blue ink.

Vickie Raines, District 3

ATTEST:

Handwritten signature of Wendy Chatham in blue ink.

Wendy Chatham, Clerk of the Board

GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2023- 068

A RESOLUTION of the Grays Harbor County Board of County Commissioners recognizing the service of retired employees.

WHEREAS, since it was incorporated on April 14, 1854, Grays Harbor County has grown into a strong and vibrant community due to the service of current and retired employees; and

WHEREAS, retired Grays Harbor County employees kept residents healthy by providing clean drinking water, safe sewage disposal, and ensuring public and private buildings were safely constructed; and

WHEREAS, retired Grays Harbor County employees enriched our community by caring for public parks and facilities, providing public transit, and promoting economic growth; and

WHEREAS, retired Grays Harbor County public sector employees saved residents' property and lives by fighting fires and protecting residents from crime; and

WHEREAS, retired Grays Harbor County public sector employees have earned the right to a secure retirement through their service to our community; and

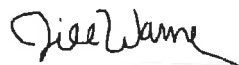
WHEREAS, in 2011, the Washington State Legislature eliminated annual cost-of-living adjustments for retired public employees in the Plan 1 retirement systems, revoking COLAs from the oldest retired Grays Harbor County employees; and

WHEREAS, the Plan 1 pensions of many retired Grays Harbor County employees have lost over 37% of their purchasing power since 2011, forcing some to leave the communities they dedicated their lives to serving.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the County of Grays Harbor recognizes the service of its retired public sector employees by urging the Washington State Legislature to restore an annual, ongoing cost-of-living adjustment for all retired public employees in the Plan 1 retirement systems.

ADOPTED this 25th day of July, 2023.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONIONERS
GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY**



Jill Warne, Chair, District 1

RESOLUTION NO. 2023- 068

Kevin Pine

Kevin Pine, Commissioner, District 2

Vickie L. Raines

Vickie L. Raines, Commissioner, District 3

ATTEST:

Wendy Chatham

Wendy Chatham
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Jon Beltran

Jon Beltran WSBA #45476
Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor

RESOLUTION NO. 2023- 068