Kansas Coalition
KCPR
of Public Retirees
Update

Dear Friends, July 8, 2026

Our NEXT Regular Scheduled KCPR Steering Committee ZOOM meeting will be held on August 12th, 2026.
The June and July meetings were postponed because of nothing new to report. There will be an August meeting. Primary election results will be in and some of the behind the scenes work we have been doing should be ready for discussion.

Information and observations as of today:

1. Death Numbers
   A. 30 years with no permanent benefit increase: 1997 through May 1, 2026
   B. Death numbers – In thirty years – 73,960 retirees have passed without a permanent benefit.
      a. 3,391 in 2025
      b. 1,150 through May 1, 2026
   C. Approximately 92.2% of KPERS retirees have never received a permanent benefit increase.
2. We have new revised postcards that are now available. At the KARSP Convention, the "death" numbers were provided. There was a lot of interest in sending them to their legislators. We had 250 of the KCPR postcards picked up by attendees.
3. Additional information:
   A. KPERS Membership
      a. Total 346,393 members which includes retirees, beneficiaries, active members, inactive members, KP&F and judges.
      b. Representing 12% of the Kansas population. **So, we have Clout** Totals by Gender
      a. Female 67.2
      b. Male 32.8
4. KPERS underfunding
   A. 25 years of statutory Underfunding
   B. KPERS School underfunding
      a. KTRS (Kansas Teacher Retirement System) set up to fully fund the conversion amount.
      b. This occurred over 13 years and cost $1.25 million. From 1972-1984
      c. They realized the annual conversion amount needed to be funded for 27 additional years. In 1985, the remainder was rolled into the UAL.(Unfunded Actuarial Liability)
      d. The present UAL is approximately $9,686 billion.
      e. Recent returns of the KPERS Trust Fund was a record of $32 billion.

5. Legislative Raises
   A. In 2025 the legislature received a 93% raise.
   B. In 2026 the legislature will receive an additional 4.4% raise.
   C. This amounts to a 128.1% raise since 1998.
   D. These increases will continue until the legislature chooses to stop it. The raise in 2027 is projected to be 3.9%.
   E. BTW, the 2026 legislature granted the state employees a raise of only 1%.

6. Governor Candidate questions. List as one
   A. If elected governor of Kansas, will you support a Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERS) cost of living adjustment (COLA)?

B. If elected governor, will you include funding for a KPERS COLA in your annual budget recommendations?
C. If elected governor, will you publicly support KPERS COLA?

7. Make sure your friends and colleagues are registered to vote!

8. Legislative Raises
   A. Legislation 2023 provided the following base raises for Kansas Legislators.
   B. Please note that one of the rationale the Salary Commission used for the pay increase was that it had been 13 years since a raise. In our case it has been 29 years since a permanent rate increase.
   C. Kansas Legislators' Salary
      a. 2024 --- Base Salary $22,000, Average Salary $30,000 (Last year before the raise became effective.)
      b. 2025 --- Base Salary $43,000, Average Salary $58,000 (Increase of 93%)
      c. 2026 --- Base Salary $44,900, Average Salary $60,500 (Increase COLA of 4.4%)
      d. Estimated COLA for 2027 is 3.9%

9. We have an undated FB Page as well as a new website (www.ksretiree.org). Some interesting questions and comments have been shared on FB.
   A. Who voted against a COLA the last time it was on the floor?
      a. We would remind everyone that the last time a COLA was voted on in the house. Only 3 Republicans voted for it: John Resman (RIP), Tim Johnson, and Lance Neely.
      b. You will recall that we theorize that there are two reasons that leadership would not let COLA related bills get to the floor of the House:
         1. It might pass, which leadership did not want.
         2. If it did not pass, we would know who voted against it presently. [This all came to mind after a question that was submitted on Facebook.

10. **Keep those Cards and Letters coming!** – Referral to John Carson's famous line.
   A. Please keep those postcards and letters, and emails going!
   B. Here is why: We must keep the pressure up so if they do not do anything this session, we can use the pressure in the upcoming 2026 elections.
      a. If you have been doing this, DON'T STOP. I would suggest it once a week.
      b. If you have not, we beg you to START.
      c. It is known that there is a lot of support out there from many legislators. WE CAN NOT LET THIS OPPORTUNITY SLIP AWAY!!

THANKS FOR READING AND BE SURE YOU VOTE for those who support public education!

Ernie Claudel
KARSP Lobbyist and Legislative Chair
KCPR Lobbyist and Co-Chair
1109 W. Wabash St.
Olathe, KS 66061
eclaudel1@comcast.net
913-481-6923