

RPA LEGISLATIVE CORNER REPORT:

Alliance of Public Retiree Organizations of New York

Reports on the December 20, 2016 and January 17, 2017 meetings

GUEST SPEAKER: December 20, 2016 none due to Legislative Holiday Recess

January 17, 2017 - Assemblywoman Pamela Hunter (D)

GUEST SPEAKER: Assemblywoman Pamela Hunter (D)

Assemblywoman Hunter's district is from the central New York area around eastern and southern portion of Syracuse, NY. I had the pleasure of meeting her at the NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli's Invitational Breakfast, at the NYS Fair this past August. Assemblywoman Hunter was the MC for the breakfast, she is a US Army Veteran and on the NYS Assembly Veterans Committee. I was privileged to share a very productive and lengthy conversation with her about our Veteran's Supplementation Bill, which she fully supports. Assemblywoman Hunter was surprised to hear that Gov. Cuomo did not support our bill and even though it was included in the Active Veterans Bill which he signed into law in late December 2016. The Governor somehow deleted our Supplementation portion of the bill and subsequently we are back at square one fighting once again for the rest of the forgotten Veterans ! Another slap in the face, by Gov. Cuomo, to numerous Honorably Discharged Veterans from World War Two forward, inclusive of all wars such as Vietnam, Korea, Granada and many more too many to list, all the way to the middle east conflicts. Assemblywoman Hunter promised to look into this situation and report back to me on her findings. Additionally during her presentation she assured our membership that she is supportive of our Health Care protection Bill and our COLA Bills as well. At the closure of her presentation, Assemblywoman Hunter swore in the recently re-elected Alliance Executive Board. She will be a strong ally for the Alliance !

- **Legislative Report:**
- **With regards to our COLA Bill to raise the base calculation amount from the first \$ 18,000.00 to the first \$ 25,000.00:**

I engaged in a very realistic conversation last week with Senator Golden's Chief of Staff. The summary of our conversation is that with the negative outlook on any legislation that has a large cost factor involved, is the "**REALITY**" that Gov. Cuomo and NYS Assembly will do nothing to move the bill. Subsequently, Senator Golden's office is going to let Senator Ritchie again submit our old COLA Bill requesting the Base Salary Calculation be raised from the present first \$ 18,000 to \$ 25,000 of your pension. Senator Golden's office feels that due to the high cost of this bill approaching \$ 2.6 Billion dollars or more that this bill will never go anywhere period. That being said, the Senator is going to redraft and submit one of OUR older COLA Bills in the 2017 Legislative Session, as we had always submitted in years prior to make adjustments to the COLA calculations base on the actual cost of living for everyone. The feeling is that this bill will have a greater chance to get passed and maybe set up the stage for other follow-up COLA bills later. The **REALITY** is that in essence we must crawl before we

walk, to get any retiree bill passed and signed into law, due to the present legislative environment, along with this sitting Governor being anti labor and anti retirees as long as he is in office !

- **With regards to our Health Insurance Protection Bill**

I confirmed with Senator Lanza's Chief Legal Advisor that the Senator had submitted our Health Protection Bill to the Bill Drafting department, along with the requested language corrections, which our membership worked very diligently on fine tuning every part of this bill to make this bill applicable to all NYS public service retirees. In the old bill version many retirees would have been left out, had the previous version of the bill passed and was signed into law. We are awaiting a new Bill number which should be available by the end of January, 2017. I will advise everyone of the bill number ASAP.

- **With regards to our Veteran's Supplementation Bill**

After the recent passage of the Active Veteran's Bill (S-5065-A-2015 7 A-7534-2015) ***it was discovered that during the late night passage and signing of this bill, that Gov. Cuomo reneged on his promise to include already Retired Veterans who were never afforded the opportunity to buy up to 36 months of Honorable Active Military Service time into the Active Veterans Bill.*** Just before he signed the Active Veterans Bill, Gov. Cuomo deleted those Retired Veterans from the Active Veteran Bill which he then signed into law. **ONCE AGAIN THIS SHOWS GOV. CUOMO'S COMPLETE DISRESPECT AND DISREGARD FOR ALL VETERANS SERVING FROM WORLD WAR TWO, VIETNAM, KOREA AND ALL OTHER CONFLICTS BY NOT GIVING THESE DESERVING VETERANS ANY TYPE OF PENSION SUPPLEMENTATION FOR THEIR HONORABLE SERVICE AND SACRIFICES THEY MADE FOR THIS COUNTRY AND NEW YORK STATE IN PARTICULAR !** I spoke to Senator Larkin's Chief of Staff who has advised me that they will need to rewrite **A COMPLETELY NEW Bill** to specifically fill in where the gap exists now for already Retired Veteran's who were unable to buy their time back. The new bill will then be submitted this January 2017 for a new bill number. I will advise everyone of the bill number ASAP.

- **MISCELLANEOUS FYI:**

- **FOIL request will be made to the New York State and Local Retirement System on March 31, 2017 for the 2016 Pension Contribution Stabilization amounts. FYI...See 2015 amounts below:**

New York State & Local Retirement System "Contribution Stabilization Programs"

County, Cities, Towns and Village amounts amortized under Law of 2010 for the P & F and ERS as of FYE 3/31/2016. This is the total amounts for all municipalities for the last 6 years:

TOTAL = \$ 617,390,910.00 AMORTIZED PLUS INTEREST IS PAID EACH YEAR !

County, Cities, Towns and Villages amounts amortized under Law of 2013 for the P & F and ERS as of FYE 3/31/2016. This is the total amounts for all municipalities for the last 3 years:

TOTAL = \$ 519,373,964.00 AMORTIZED PLUS INTEREST IS PAID EACH YEAR !

TOTAL AMORTIZED AMOUNTS for Law of 2010 & Law of 2013 on behalf of all participating Counties, Cities, Towns & Villages for P & F and ERS =

\$ 1,136,764,874.00 + TAXPAYER INTEREST UNTIL PAID IN FULL !

Gov. Cuomo's six years of deferments, under the Law of 2010, on behalf of all New York State workers in ERS Judiciary, ERS Non-Judiciary and PFRS amounts to a massive

\$ 3,154,875,516.00 + \$ 193,277,601.65

of "Taxpayer Interest paid thus far"

as of FYE 3/31/2016 & interest is due until balances are paid in full

Total amounts deferred (owed to the NYS Retirement System) as of FYE 3/31/2016 for all deferred payments for all "Pension Contribution Stabilization Programs" is a staggering total statewide balance due in the amount of:

\$ 4,909,031,300.00

Plus TAXPAYER INTEREST until paid in full in 10 years !

(Report calculated based upon 10/18/2016 FOIL Response--- Obtained by Alliance FOIL Request dated March 31, 2016)

- ***LOBBY DAY 2017 is scheduled for April 18, 2017 on the 3rd floor Terrace at the elevators.***
- ***REQUEST FOR ALL RETIREES TO HELP US IN OUR QUEST TO GET OUR LEGISLATIVE AGENDA MOVED FORWARD IN 2017 AND HOPEFULLY GET SOME OF OUR BILLS SIGNED INTO LAW. WE NEED ALL RETIREES TO HELP US WITH THIS TASK. IF EACH RETIREE WERE TO MAKE JUST TWO (2) TELEPHONE CALLS, ONE TO THEIR ASSEMBLYMAN AND ONE TO THEIR SENATOR, STRESSING HOW IMPORTANT THE RETIREE BILLS ARE TO ALL RETIREES ACROSS NEW YORK STATE, YOU WILL MOVE MOUNTAINS, SO TO SPEAK ! RETIREES EARNED AND WORKED HARD FOR THESE PROTECTIONS AND ASSURANCES, BY FAITHFUL SERVICE TO NEW YORK STATE AND ALWAYS BELIEVED THESE BENEFITS WOULD BE THERE FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES TO MAKE THEIR RETIREMENT COMFORTABLE AS IT SHOULD BE !***
- ***RETIREEES CAN AND WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE AT THE POLLS THIS ELECTION DAY NOVEMBER, 2017 ! REMIND YOUR LEGISLATORS ABOUT THIS RECENT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND DUE TO VOTER DISSATISFACTION WITH PRIOR ELECTED OFFICIALS, WE NOW HAVE A REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT, REPUBLICAN CONGRESS AND A REPUBLICAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. NYS CAN BE CHANGED !***
- ***RETIREE VOTER TURNOUT IN THIS YEARS ELECTION FOR GOVERNOR, CAN BE THE CATALYST TO RETIREEES FINALLY BEING TREATED FAIRLY BY TAKING BACK CONTROL OF OUR DYSFUNCTIONAL NEW YORK STATE GOVERNMENT ! GOV. CUOMO SHOULD TAKE NOTICE OF THE RECENT ELECTIONS AS HE RUNS AGAIN IN 2017.....RETIREEES CAN AND SHOULD VOTE GOV. CUOMO OUT OF OFFICE !***

" UNITED WE WILL PREVAIL --- DIVIDED WE WILL FAIL "

Legislative Report respectfully submitted by,

Bryant Kolner, RPA Legislative Representative & President of the Alliance of Public Retiree Organizations of New York