

**Keep your promise to Oregon's Public Employees  
Vote No on SB 1049**

Senate Bill 1049 is a flawed approach to address the state's Wall-Street created pension debt. It will make PERS more complicated and reduce retirement security.

Public employees took a 30% retirement reduction in 2003. Today's OPSRP is a healthy and sustainable retirement plan.

Real solutions to the Wall-Street caused unfunded liability PERS focus on total compensation for public employees, protect retirement security, reduce the unfunded liability, avoid a lengthy and expensive lawsuit and manage the pension system for the long term.

PERS members have been sharing their stories of how these cuts will affect them. Please vote NO on SB 1049.

**Jon Bullock: Beaverton Firefighter:**

I am counting on my PERS for the lion's share of my retirement. If it were cut, I'm not sure what I would do. It really doesn't seem right and I'm not sure how they can do it. There have been two lawsuits already that went on a long time, cost the state a lot of money, and the result was the same both times. The Oregon Supreme Court said you can't cut the benefits that you've promised people. I'm not sure why some politicians in Salem don't understand how reducing benefits affects regular guys like me.

**Erika McCormick, Disability Analyst II, State of Oregon worker.**

"This is a tax on my retirement benefits to pay the state's obligation to retirees. These cuts are unfair and illegal and hurt working people like me."

**Justin Kuunifa, Multnomah County Nurse:**

"At our clinic, we take care of people who are underprivileged and have nowhere else to go. From babies to seniors, we care for them all. Like all public health nurses, I could earn more in the private sector. I could snap up a hiring bonus and have a higher salary. If my PERS benefits were to be cut further, I do not know if I could continue to work at the public clinic. I would have to leave behind the people I want to help. Cuts to PERS will hurt not only my family, but my patients as well."

**Amy Toengi, Multnomah County Nurse:**

"I am about twenty years off from retirement. I know that with my current retirement plan, I will have to work until well into my 70s to live securely on the money I am currently putting away. If my retirement is cut now, it will severely threaten my retirement security. It feels extremely unfair for state leaders to ask us to do this work for less pay than we would make in the private sector and then to reduce the retirement benefits we were promised. It's not only unfair, but I think it is just wrong that some people want to reduce the retirement benefits for people that have dedicated themselves to public service."

**Travis Overley, Bend Teacher**

"I became a teacher after going to grad school on the GI Bill. I knew it wouldn't be a high-paying job, compared to other things I could do with a graduate degree, but I was drawn to it because I had some great teachers when I was younger and I wanted to give back to my community. My wife is a teacher, too. It is a great job. In Bend, the housing market is so out of control, we know teachers who work here but can't afford to live here. We were lucky and were able to get a house and can make the mortgage, but we are waiting to have kids until we feel more financially secure. When my wife and I were hired, we were promised a secure retirement. That was the deal. I served my country and kept my end of the deal."

**Gaby Tanaka, Portland Public Health Employee**

"It is my job to visit clinics around the state to ensure they are following state and federal guidelines for the children's immunization program. I really love my job because I feel like I'm making a positive change in the world and there are so many people in public health who care deeply about our community. In a lot of places you work, especially in the private sector, people are just there for the paycheck. I would have an extremely difficult time making up for the PERS cuts that I've seen so far. As an OPSRP member, I would be deeply affected."

**Barbara Walsh, Phoenix Office Specialist, Child Welfare**

"If my PERS was to be cut even more than it is now, I think I'd just have to work until I died in my cubicle. My job pays less than the private sector, but I am in my 60s so job security and retirement benefits matter a lot to me. I think people have a false idea about how much public employees make. I don't make a whole lot. I am grateful for thrift stores and I count every penny. My salary isn't such I can put much away for myself. I manage to stash about \$100 a month. I think I am about 10 years away from retirement. Financially I will have to work until I am about 77."

**Chris Hart, Washington County Firefighter**

"I come from a family of firefighters. My dad and uncle worked for the Oregon City Fire Department. I enjoy serving my community. My wife and I are really counting on my PERS benefit for our retirement. This can be a tough job physically and it is sometimes dangerous. It would hurt my family a lot if the PERS retirement benefit were reduced out from under us. And 30% of PERS members are eligible to retire. Cutting benefits will mean a mass exodus and I don't know how we will replace people."

**Jeff Kronser, Eugene Firefighter**

"I have been a firefighter here for 26 years. I love my job. It might sound cliché, but I believe in the importance of helping people. It is one of the biggest reasons I chose a career in firefighting. I am lucky that I have not experienced a serious injury on the job. I can see retirement approaching and I had been hopeful it would be a time of peace and security.

Now, some people in Salem are threatening that security. When I was hired, I was offered a retirement benefit. That's the benefit I was planning for. My future is being thrown into the air just when I am close to retirement."

**Tracy Hodson, History Professor, Chemeketa Community College, Salem**

"For the last 21 years have given 100% of my energy to educating students but SB 1049 proposes to give me less than 100% of my retirement in return. I will see 12.5% cut to my IAP, which is a tax on my benefit to pay the debt for someone else. About 30% of my colleagues are eligible to retire. If this passes, they will. It isn't clear how we will replace them."

**Mike McQueen, Brookings School Bus Driver**

"As a school bus driver for the Brookings-Harbor School District, I don't think most folks understand how difficult it is to get this job. Even though starting pay is only \$13/hour, candidates are required to have both a Class B Commercial driver's license as well as a driver's certificate from the Oregon Department of Education. At my pay level, it isn't easy to set anything aside for retirement. I was promised a retirement benefit where I wouldn't have to work until I dropped."

**Heather St. Louis, Elementary School Teacher, Springfield**

The discussions I'm hearing about possibly cutting our PERS retirement benefits have me very concerned. I'm satisfied with my compensation, but that's because PERS is an important component of the overall package. My husband and I do save for retirement, but raising a child is expensive and we can't afford to sock away as much as we would like. Therefore, PERS is vital for our family. I think that if retirement benefits were cut,

we would absolutely lose teachers and high turnover would become the norm. I grew up in Oregon and would like to stay in Oregon, but if another school was offering a better package, I would consider moving.

**Matt Brozovich, Salem Firefighter**

"I'm a Tier 2 member and I was promised a secure retirement that was already cut once in 2013. This would be the second retirement cut for me that significantly affects my family's security and future. It's time for lawmakers to stop playing political games with our retirements and protect our retirements."

**Cadi Brown, first grade teacher.**

"Thinking about my future, as well as my children, 8 and 5, a cut to my retirement benefits would not only hurt financially, but also feel like the promises made by our state was a punch in the gut."

**Ron Morgan, Tualatin Valley Firefighter:** "I've been a firefighter for 14 years. The changes made to the system in 2003 have already reduced my benefit to half of what my coworkers make. Asking public workers to shoulder the legislature's burden is unfair!"

**Sella Bemrose, North Santiam School District Classified Employees**

"No one from my local union is making enough money to afford losing any part of the retirement that we have bargained for. We're talking about folks working two and three jobs to make ends meet...the promise of a decent retirement makes the daily financial struggle more bearable."

**Greg Ivers, Oregon DHS worker**

"I show up to work every day and do my job. I honored my agreement with the state. I urge you to vote NO on SB 1049 and keep your promise to people like me and my husband."

**Nurse Teri Mills:**

"The impact nurse educators and public health nurses have on the healthcare system is immeasurable. And yet, across the board, nurses in these sectors get paid at least \$10,000 to \$25,000 less a year than our private sector colleagues. A main reason many of my public sector colleagues continue to stay at their workplace is because we were guaranteed a safe and secure retirement." T

**Shara Burris, OHP Eligibility Worker**

"I am here today to testify against Senate Bill 1049, because it harms my retirement security and that of my coworkers by making unaffordable cuts to my IAP benefit."

**Lindsay Jansen-Hostetler, Albany High School teacher.**

"I feel that lawmakers are pulling the rug out from under educators."

**Corp. Clouser, Two Rivers Institute, Umatilla.**

30% of PERS members are eligible to retire today. In Corrections we struggle to fill positions, we are working two to three mandatory overtime shifts a week. We have some staff whose wives have written our superintendent telling them that their husband needs to find a new job because he's not home with his family enough as it is. We cannot afford these new cuts to our benefits.

**Joel Miller. Police Officer. Hostage Negotiator**

"The deal that I made was that I would trade personal safety for security in retirement. I was going to miss family events in exchange for security in retirement. That was a good deal. I was offered that deal. I agreed to that deal. I would ask that you honor it."

**Alisha Goodwin, Salem, Oregon Department of Justice**

"I came of age during the Great Recession and like many of my generation, I have a great deal of economic anxiety. We know what it's like to struggle financially. If my retirement benefits were cut, it would hurt me and my family and possibly force me out of public service. This is true for many of the people of my generation who work in public service."

**The PERS Coalition:**

The Coalition is made up of the people who teach our children, protect our life and property, repair our roads and bridges, and keep our communities healthy and safe. Members include:

Oregon Education Association, SEIU Local 503, Oregon State Firefighters Council, Oregon Nurses Association, Oregon AFSCME, American Federation of Teachers, Oregon School Employees Association, Teamsters Local 223, District Council of Trade Unions, Association of Engineering Employees, American Association of University Professors, Oregon State Police Officers Association, Association of Oregon Corrections Employees, Portland Police Association, Oregon PERS Retirees, Inc., Professional and Technical Employees Local 17

