



OREGON STATE FIRE FIGHTERS COUNCIL

International Association of Fire Fighters
AFL-CIO CLC

Chair Chuck Riley

2/22/2021

Vice Chair Hansell and the Senate Committee on Business and Labor,

For the record, Karl Koenig President of the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council, here to testify in favor on the -4 amendments to Senate Bill 111.

Today we are asking for your support on the - 4 amendments or what we are calling the “Active but Eligible” provision of ORS 238.395 relating to the death of an active member of PERS, and the benefits paid to their beneficiaries.

In the recent past the Legislature has revised language in statute that dealt with fairness issues regarding benefit amounts in the event of a member’s death within Tier 1 and Tier 2 Retirement. The -4 amendments close what could be considered a loophole that takes earned retirement credit and collects it as a “one size fits all” solution. Hence the term “Active but eligible” moniker proposed in the -4 amendments.

As one example, a Salem Fire Fighter who died in 2019 after 27 years of PERS qualified service only received his member account balance as was the law at the time of his death. If passed the -4 within SB 111 would be a 54% benefit to his spouse in the above example, as if he retired and lived. The -4 is fair, demonstrable and deals with the earned pension benefit for the beneficiary of an active member who died while employed.

We ask you, Senate Labor and Business Committee, to pass the -4 amendments to SB 111.

Thank you for your consideration in advance,

Karl Koenig
President
Oregon State Fire Fighters Council

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