



RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COUNCIL CHAPTER 3 NEWSLETTER

March 2025

RPEC Chapter 3 Meeting Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Razzi's Pizzeria
8523 Greenwood Ave N.
Banquet room upstairs

Take buses #5 from downtown and #45
Parking in back

**The chapter will pay up to \$10 off each
lunch, plus the tip!**

11:15 Executive Board Meeting

11:45 Arrive for Lunch

12:00 Zoom attendees log in

12:00 Chapter Business Meeting. Includes a discussion on the best ways to utilize the chapter's \$26,000 fund balance.

12:30 Guest Speakers: **Debbie Haigh** and **Claude Burfect**, our two Seattle-area representatives to the RPEC Executive Board, will discuss current and future RPEC actions to increase our retirement security.

Food for the Needy: Please bring non-perishable food items to donate. David Rader will take them to the Rainier Valley Food Bank.

Attend online on Zoom!

-Go to www.zoom.us

-Click on "Join"

-Enter Meeting ID 856 8884 8661

-Passcode 8888

Or by phone: dial 253.215.8782

Chapter officer elections in April. Please contact Matt Groshong if interested!

President's Message

Hello Chapter 3 Members,

I'm reminding all of us that **the most important thing we can do as RPEC members is to voice our opinions to our state legislators on bills that affect our retirement security!** Look for emails from our state office alerting you to state your PRO position on a bill to a legislative committee, or to contact your district's legislators.

It takes just a few minutes to do this, and each email lists the specific step-by-step instructions on how to do it online. Remember: the 13,000 RPEC members working together are a potent political force.

This month, our speakers are our two District Representatives to the RPEC Executive Board, Debbie Haigh and Claude Burfect. They will tell us what RPEC is currently doing to protect our retirement security and what our plans are for the future. Here is your chance to learn about who we are and what we do!

We would be delighted to meet you on March 18th, either in person or on Zoom.

Matt Groshong

Chapter 3 President, mgroshong1@gmail.com

Treasurer's Report

Chapter 3's checking balance is \$6,832.38 after receiving \$699.50 from the RPEC office for January dues, and savings balance is \$5,110.98. CD #1 balance is \$3,882.85, and CD #2 balance is \$10,336.48.

David Rader

Legislature/Congressional Report

Most recently, internet users were asked to sign in PRO on HB 1123 for House Appropriations to approve funding. It ensures access to primary care, behavioral health and affordable hospital services, establishes Medicare reimbursement limits for hospital services, including inpatient and outpatient care for non-Medicare patients, requiring hospitals to use Medicare hospitalization rates, fixing and lowering costs.

Note: Members not online will get plenty of chances to call the toll-free number during the second half of the session. They will pass on messages to your lawmakers, but now they say they neither have the staff nor the bandwidth to handle stated PRO positions.

We signed in PRO on SJM [Senate Joint Memorial] 8002 that eliminates a \$20.00 copay, caps out of pocket medical expenses, eliminates excessive administrative costs and profits in the Medicare Advantage program while adding benefits to Medicare, like hearing, dental, and vision. This helps level the playing field between Medicare and Medicare Advantage.

We signed in PRO on HB 1474 (PERS/TRS 1 COLA benefit increase) to make sure that House Appropriations Committee approves funding for all RPEC-supported bills for 2025. It provides a 3% COLA with a cap of \$110 per month for Plan 1 PERS/ TRS retirees.

MEMBERSHIP

On February 22, Colleen assisted Debbie Haigh and another Chapter 30 member (South King County) at a membership table at the WA Federation of State Employees (WFSE) Policy Group meeting. Records were not kept, but the following are notes from results while I was there: one associate member for Chapter 21 (Tri Cities) who will retire on 4/1/25; 1 potential member for Chapter 14 (Medical Lake) who took an associate member form for a co-worker; 2 union contacts in the Seattle area and 1 in Tri Cities area turned in. Our Executive Director's "welcome presentation" was well received.

Colleen McGinn

Food For the Needy

Bring non-perishable food items to the chapter meeting. David Rader will take our donations to the Rainier Valley Food Bank.

MARCH 2025 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

It's hard to believe that this long legislative session is only on day 39 (date of publication) given our level of engagement on bills that impact your retirement security. With your help, we have registered more PRO sign-ins and testified on more bills than we have in at least the past five legislative sessions. For that, we thank you. Every time you take a few moments to answer our "Calls to Action" through the weekly NewsFlash, you are signaling the importance of our bills to the legislators. Keep up the good work! Please monitor your emails, as there will be more opportunities for you to help us elevate our shared legislative priorities, including improving healthcare access and affordability, increasing property tax exemptions, and securing a much-needed cost-of-living adjustment for our brothers and sisters vested in PERS/TRS 1.

Legislative Session Update, Week 6

To date, more than 1,000 bills have been introduced in the House and 769 bills in the Senate. Interestingly, bills are still being introduced! In addition to considering legislation, the Legislature is also hyper focused on finding ways to trim expenditures given the projected state deficit, which has been estimated to be between \$12 billion and \$15 billion. The legislative committees are generally advancing bills that support ongoing state investments/priorities and those that save the state money.

More Ways for RPEC Members to Engage in Advocacy

From late February through March 12th, bills that have successfully passed through the initial legislative process will be poised for full Senate and full House floor votes. We will keep you apprised of how our priority bills are doing and may ask you to reach out to your state legislators to urge them to support RPEC's

priority bills. This will be another opportunity for you to thank them for supporting policies that provide retirement security for public sector retirees.

When RPEC members reach out prior to floor action, it also signals that RPEC is paying attention to votes! Please read your emails and the weekly NewsFlash for more details on when and how to take the next steps in the legislative process.

Stay informed!

The best way to stay informed is to read the weekly NewsFlash (sent via email each Friday), participate in the weekly Legislative Update Calls (held weekly at 2 p.m. on Fridays, see details on the Calendar at www.rpecwa.org), and read your chapter newsletter.

You also can keep apprised of the 30+ bills RPEC is tracking by accessing the bill tracker on the website at <https://rpecwa.org/legislative-bill-tracker/>.

Finally, all members are also invited to attend the statewide Legislative Committee meeting on March 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The Zoom link is available on the calendar on the RPEC website at www.rpecwa.org. These meetings address our federal priorities, our priority bills moving through the Legislature, and the status of our work with state agencies.

RPEC to Host Washington State Investment Board Educational Webinar, March 28

Did you know that RPEC is the only retiree organization that has a active member serving on the Washington State Investment Board (WSIB)? Learn more about the WSIB and its important work by attending an educational webinar on Friday, March 28th from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. via Zoom. Registration is required. The program will include presentations by three speakers, including WSIB Vice Chair Yona Makowski, who is an active member of RPEC Chapter 2. The program will include time for Q&A.

Register at <https://rpecwa.org/washington-state-investment-board-educational-program/>

Note: You must be registered on the RPEC website to access the webinar registration form.

RPEC to Host Member-Only Webinar on Universal Healthcare, April 4

Registration is also now open for a special member-only webinar on the status of universal healthcare both in our state and nationwide. The educational webinar will be held on Friday, April 4th from 10:00-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. The program will feature two leaders from the Universal Healthcare Commission and Rose Roach, National Coordinator, Labor Campaign for One Payer. The presenters from the Commission will address the status of universal healthcare in our state. Rose will provide an overview of the federal landscape and the steps that the labor community nationally and other states are taking to bring the U.S. closer to realizing a Medicare-for-all model. The program will include time for Q&A. Registration is required.

Register at <https://rpecwa.org/rpec-speakers-series/>

Note: You must be registered on the RPEC website to access the webinar registration form.

Important Dates

Visit the RPEC website at www.rpecwa.org for the full calendar:

March 7: Legislative Update Call (2:00 p.m.)

March 13: Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)

March 14: Legislative Committee (10:00 a.m.)
Legislative Update Call (2:00 p.m.)

March 27: Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)

March 28: Washington State Investment Board Member-only Webinar, (10:00 a.m.)

April 4: Universal Healthcare Member-only webinar, (10:00 a.m.)