



# Retired Public Employees Council Chapter 39 – Asotin & Garfield Counties

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Meeting Date: Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Meeting Time: Noon  
Meeting Place: Mama K's Restaurant  
Meeting Address: 902 6<sup>th</sup> St, Clarkston, WA 99403

## REMINDER: CHAPTER NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Nominations & Elections** will be held at the April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting

**Positions:** President, Vice-President, and Secretary/Treasurer

**\*\*\*Nominations and elections of Convention Delegates\*\*\***

Greetings Chapter 39 Members,

Our next meeting is at Mama K's on April 17<sup>th</sup> at noon.

### Governor Inslee Signs Plan 1 COLA Bill – SHB 1985

It's official. For the third year in a row, PERS 1 and TRS 1 retirees will receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). On Tuesday, March 26, Governor Jay Inslee signed Substitute House Bill 1985, providing Plan 1 retirees with a one-time 3% COLA not to exceed \$110 per month. The COLA will be reflected in pension checks received at the end of July 2024.

The bill was sponsored by Representative Joe Timmons, a freshman Democrat representing part of Bellingham and rural Whatcom County. In his short time in the Legislature, Timmons has quickly earned a reputation as an effective advocate for retirees. In 2023, he introduced and passed House Bill 1431, which exempts meals prepared for tenants at senior living communities from sales tax.



RPEC leaders with bill sponsor Representative Joe Timmons. Left to Right: Executive Board Member Claude Burfect, Executive Director Laurie Weidner, Rep. Joe Timmons, Zaida Zapata Quimby, Secretary & Legislative Committee Chair Nancy Heley, and Government Affairs Coordinator Emmett Mills.

## Chapter Nominations and Elections

If you are interested in a leadership position, please consider nominating yourself or having someone nominate you. Fresh leadership within our chapter will help keep our chapter active and lively. Please consider attending nominations and elections at our April meeting. Nominations will also be opened for convention delegates, so if you are interested in attending this year's RPEC Convention, please attend nominations and elections.

I look forward to seeing you on April 17<sup>th</sup>.

Darrell Russell  
President, Chapter 39

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### **April 2024 Executive Director's Report**

#### **Convention 2024, Sept. 24-26, Wenatchee Convention Center**

Are you interested in serving as a chapter delegate to RPEC's biennial Convention? You do not need to be an officer or chapter committee leader to attend. Any member in good standing is eligible to serve as delegate. If you are interested in being considered for your chapter's delegation to Convention, contact your chapter president. Delegates are chosen by election at a chapter meeting. If you are selected to represent your chapter, your Convention registration fee and lodging will be covered by your chapter. Guests may also attend at their own expense. The registration fee is \$150, which covers the Convention packet and all meals. The Convention hotel is the Coast Wenatchee. The RPEC rate is \$116.00 per night before taxes and fees. Visit [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org) for more details or contact your chapter president.

#### **Federal Advocacy**

**Call to action on The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023:** If you have not already done so, please join your fellow RPEC members and AFSCME Retiree chapters nationwide in urging Congress to oppose The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 (H.R. 5779). If this legislation is approved, your federal benefits will be at risk. [The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 \(H.R. 5779\)](#) will create a 16-member fiscal commission to search for ways to reduce the national deficit and balance the national budget. Funding for Social Security and Medicare will be targeted for cuts. **Call 844-331-0441 today! Tell Congress to vote NO on this bill and similar proposals calling for fiscal commissions that aim to reduce your hard-earned retirement benefits.** A detailed [position paper](#) about the proposed debt commission is available at <https://retiredamericans.org>.

**Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) To Vote on Potential New Pharmacy Benefit, April 11**

On April 11, the PEB Board will act on a resolution that will change the pharmacy benefit for Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic Medicare. RPEC's Legislative Committee supports this change, as it will lower monthly premiums for most plan subscribers. The medical benefits in the plan will remain unchanged. The new pharmacy benefit will continue to be administered by Moda to provide continuity of service and care for retirees. By making this plan more affordable, the new benefit, if adopted at the April PEB Board meeting, will help to ensure that an employer-managed plan remains in the mix of healthcare plan options available to public sector retirees. Currently, all but two plans are privatized. Preserving traditional Medicare continues to be a key federal priority for RPEC, in addition to preserving these options for the public sector retirees in Washington. Members are encouraged to attend the April 11 meeting and offer comments during the Public Comment period. Visit [www.hca.wa.gov](http://www.hca.wa.gov) for more details.

**State Advocacy**

Beginning this month, the Legislative Update Calls will be held monthly, the first Friday of each month. Please join us on April 5 from 2-3 p.m. Details are available at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

**Council Welcomes New Team Member**

Jane Hewitt joined RPEC in mid-March as our new Finance and Operations Specialist. Jane brings more than 40 years of relevant work experience to RPEC. She is married with grandchildren, originally hails from Great Britain, and is an animal lover with three rescue pets. Jane can be reached at [jane.hewitt@rpecwa.org](mailto:jane.hewitt@rpecwa.org). Please give her a warm welcome to RPEC!

**Upcoming Events**

Visit [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org) for a full calendar of Council Office and chapter meetings.

- April 11 Public Employees Benefits Board (9:00 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- April 11 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- April 12 Legislative Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 16 Select Committee on Pension Policy (10 a.m.)
- April 19 Pension Policy Workgroup (10 a.m.)
- April 25 Membership Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 25 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- May 3 Legislative Update Call (2:00 p.m.)
- May 6 Executive Board Meeting (9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)
- May 7 Executive Board, Strategic Planning (9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)
- May 8 Public Service Recognition Week (at Heritage Park, Olympia)
- May 9 Public Employees Benefits Board (9 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- May 9 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)