



**Retired Public Employees Council**  
**Chapter 10 – Fort Steilacoom Area**  
**Robert Devlin, President: (253) 878-2844**  
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<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>Thursday, September 7th, 2023</b>
<b>Meeting Time:</b>	<b>Lunch at 11:00, Business meeting at 12:00</b>
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	<b>Black Bear Diner</b>
<b>Meeting Address:</b>	<b>10115 S Tacoma Way Tacoma, WA 98499</b>

Greetings Chapter 10 Members,

Please join us on **Thursday, September 7th, 2023**, at Black Bear Diner in Lakewood for lunch and the Chapter 10 membership meeting. We will gather for lunch and social time at 11:00 AM and begin our business meeting at noon. **New members are encouraged to attend!**

Please see the Executive Director's Report below for details about other RPEC team members.

I look forward to seeing you on September 7th!

Robert Devlin  
President, Chapter 10  
Retired Public Employees Council of Washington

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### **Chapter 10 Officers**



## **August 2023 Executive Director's Report**

Did you know that it takes more than 10 exposures to a positive message or piece of information before it registers in our subconscious? Conversely, it takes far fewer exposures to negative messages for them to stick. Unfortunately, our brains are wired to hang onto negative information more than positive. Fascinating and unfortunate. Each day, we are exposed to positive messages and information, but we must be intentional to focus on it.

RPEC has a lot of good going on. Our Council Office team shares our good news and useful information through a variety of channels, including our weekly *Newsflash* eblasts, blogs on the website, social media posts on Facebook, the quarterly newsletter, standing committee meetings and more. When you read or receive positive information about RPEC, please pass it on. When we receive positive information from trusted sources, we tend to remember it. So, share our good news with RPEC members and the active seniors you know in your community. If you are still in contact with your former coworkers, pass along our good news. If you represent RPEC on a central labor council, talk us up! You can be an active part of increasing the positive visibility of RPEC just by sharing our good news. Here are some of the pieces of good news you may consider sharing:

### **Federal Relations**

#### **Washington State Labor Council Convention Votes Unanimously To “Level the Playing Field” for Traditional Medicare**

At the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) convention in July, delegates unanimously approved a resolution aimed at expanding Medicare benefits to include vision, dental and hearing like Medicare Advantage plans. The resolution calls on Congress to fully fund Medicare and halt policies that adversely impact the program's long-term stability. The resolution was co-sponsored by RPEC, along with other key partners including Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action and the Washington State Alliance of Retired Americans. [Read the resolution here.](#) As RPEC reaches out to members of the Congressional delegation, we are asking them to “level the playing field,” by safeguarding the Medicare Trust Fund and making Medicare benefits more robust.

### **State Relations & Advocacy**

#### **RPEC accepts 2023 WSLC Mother Jones Group Award on behalf of Coalition**

Each year, the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) gives awards to stellar labor champions at its annual constitutional convention. This year, the Public Employees Benefits Board Stakeholders' Medicare Coalition, which was formed and is led by RPEC, earned the 2023 WSLC Mother Jones Award. The award is given to an individual or group that embody and “channel” the spirit of Mary “Mother” Jones, who is considered the founder of today's labor movement. Read more about the award and the Coalition's work in the quarterly membership newsletter, which will be in your mailboxes soon.

## **Political Action Committee**

2024 is going to be a pivotal election year in Washington state. Many key statewide races are on RPEC's radar, including the Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, and Insurance Commissioner. That's why the RPEC PAC is already working with members to bolster its coffers to support pro-retiree candidates for statewide office and State Legislature. Recently, members received letters asking for donations. As of the writing of this monthly letter, 248 members had signed up to automatically contribute a collective \$1,433 per month to the RPEC PAC via pension deduction. Additionally, 70 members made one-time contributions totaling \$3,653. Many contributions were accompanied by written notes explaining why they have donated or increased their PAC contribution. Some have donated in appreciation for RPEC's leadership in safeguarding the Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic Medicare while others have noted our work to restore a permanent cost-of-living adjustment for Plan 1 retirees. If you have not already done so but would like to donate, there is still time to do so. PAC contributions can be of any size. Most members donate through a monthly pension deduction. The PAC is also happy to receive one-time contributions through personal checks or cash.

## **Healthcare**

At its June meeting, the Public Employees Benefits Board approved premium increases to all healthcare plans for retirees. Read more about the premium increases in the quarterly membership newsletter, coming to your mailboxes soon. Unfortunately, the Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic Medicare premium is increasing by another 22%. As noted in last month's Executive Director letter, RPEC is working with members of the Washington congressional delegation to seek federal subsidies to help lower premiums for plans like UMP Classic Medicare. RPEC also intends to pursue an amendment to existing legislation to increase the explicit state subsidy, which has not exceeded \$183 in more than a decade.

## **Recurring COLA for PERS 1/TRS 1**

Efforts continue to urge the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP) to pursue legislation to fund an ongoing cost-of-living adjustment for Plan 1 retirees. Members of the Legislative Committee and the Pension Policy Workgroup continue to attend the monthly SCPP meetings and testify. Meetings are taking place this summer with the legislators who serve on the SCPP and other legislative champions.

## **Monthly Legislative Update Calls Extend through December**

The Legislative Update Calls will be held monthly through December. The next call will take place on August 4<sup>th</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup> from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Visit [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org) for the login information.

## **Free annual RPEC membership – Recruit 2 new members**

For a limited time, RPEC is offering members a chance to earn one year's free membership. For every two new members you recruit, you will receive a check for \$84! To get credit, your name must appear in the "Recruited by" field on the new members' membership

applications. Associate members do not count until they become full dues-paying members. Checks will only be issued to current members in good standing. If you recruit just two new members, you receive a check worth a year of dues! In July, there were 3 members who earned a 'Recruit 2, Get Your Dues' reward. Those 3 members were Sharon Etheridge (Ch 13), Colleen McGinn (Ch 3), and District 5 Representative Penny Hall (Ch 20).

## **Upcoming Events**

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

- Sept. 1 – Monthly Legislative Update Call (2:00 pm)
- Sept. 4 – Council Office Closed, Labor Day
- Sept. 8 – Political Action Committee Meeting (10:00 am)
- Sept. 8 – Protecting Your Email & Avoiding Online Scams Webinar (1:00 pm)
- Sept. 12 – WSARA Convention, Federal Way
- Sept. 14 – Healthcare Workgroup Meeting (3:30 pm)
- Sept. 15 – Monthly Leadership Call (1:00 pm)
- Sept. 18 – Senior Lobby (10:00 am)
- Sept. 19 – Select Committee on Pension Policy Meeting (10:00 am)
- Sept. 22 – Pension Policy Workgroup Meeting (10:00 am)

Best,  
Laurie