



**Retired Public Employees Council of Washington  
Chapter 6 – Everett Area Newsletter  
January/February 2024**

**Your Voice for Retirement Security**

Working to protect and enhance the pension, Social Security, and health care benefits of public sector retirees in Washington.

**RPEC Chapter 6 Officers - Contact Info**

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Secretary:	Debby Lippincott	360-774-1595	<a href="mailto:debby.lippincott@gmail.com">debby.lippincott@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer:	Jim Brandley	425-337-0884	<a href="mailto:js.brandley@gmail.com">js.brandley@gmail.com</a>

Do you know someone recently retired in the state retirement system? Tell them about RPEC. You can also receive email reminders for each meeting. Please send an email to:

**RPEC Chapter 6 Secretary [rpecchpt6@gmail.com](mailto:rpecchpt6@gmail.com)**

**RPEC Legislative Day** was held the week of January 22nd. The planned venue closed shortly before the in-person meeting, but Council staff were able to pull together virtual meetings. Chapter 6 members were able to meet with state legislators from Legislative Districts 10, 38, 39, and 44. The emphasis of the meetings was to support House Bill 1985. HB 1985 would provide another one-time 3% COLA increase with a cap of \$125 for PERS 1 and TRS 1 retirees. The cap has recently been amended to \$110 and appears likely to be approved by the Washington State House and Senate.

**March 2024 Meeting**

The March RPEC Chapter 6 Meeting will be held on **March 5 at 1 p.m. at the Snohomish County PUD Building, 2320 California Street, Everett, WA 98201**. The chapter will be meeting in person, but we also hope to offer members the ability to participate online via Zoom. The sign-in information will be emailed out to all members for whom we have email addresses. If you are not yet on the list for email notices, please contact us!

**State Treasurer Pellicciotti** has asked to attend our March meeting as part of his project to travel around the state to meet with citizens. Mike Pellicciotti (*Pelleh-chee-otti*) was elected **Washington's 24th State Treasurer** in 2020.

As Washington's chief financial officer, Mike is dedicated to financial transparency, protecting Washington's financial health, and advancing policies that best serve our state's working families and retirees.

Before becoming Treasurer, he served two terms in the Washington House of Representatives, where he served on House fiscal committees, including the Capital Budget Committee. In the legislature, Mike fought for more equitable and open government, passing laws to get "dark money" out of politics and requiring that the legislature provide its public records.



Before representing the 30th Legislative District of South King and North Pierce Counties, Mike was an assistant attorney general who managed a state unit that combatted economic fraud in Washington.

He has a bachelor's degree in business administration, and he received his master's in rural development as a United States Fulbright Scholar, where he studied economic development. His Juris Doctor is from Gonzaga University, and he is a lifelong fan of Gonzaga Basketball.

**Elections:** The chapter will be nominating officers in March. Elections will be held at the April meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup>. The following positions will be open:

**President:**

- Preside at meetings
- Appoint all committee chairpersons and members
- Ex officio member of all committees except election committee
- Co-sign checks
- Maintain communications with Council Office
- Attend various statewide meetings

**Vice President:**

- All the above in the absence of the President
- Assist in the securing of speakers

**Secretary:**

- Take notes for and prepare minutes for executive and membership meetings
- Draft and prepare newsletter in coordination with president and others
- Send out electronic meeting reminders
- Prepare official correspondence, if assigned and necessary
- Maintain electronic mailing list (unless assigned to Membership Committee)

**Treasurer:**

- Deposit funds for the chapter and maintain credit union account(s)
- Maintain accurate financial records
- Make monthly financial reports to executive board and membership meetings
- Sign checks for approved spending and arrange for co-signers
- Submit books and records for annual audits

**Executive Board Members-at-large** (at least three and up to four):

- Represent the interests of the membership at executive board meetings
- Entitled to vote at executive board meetings

Chapter 6 needs to fill the very vital position of **Membership Chairperson**. This person would recruit new members and help retain current members with the help of the Membership Committee.

Chapter 6 also needs to fill the position of **Technical Support person**. This person would need to know how to set up computer equipment for the monthly meetings to connect those members who want to attend the meeting by Zoom.

If you need additional information on any of these positions, please contact Christine Lavra.

We send out monthly meeting reminders and periodically other important messages via email. If you do not receive these, we may not have your correct email address. Please contact us at [rpecchpt6@gmail.com](mailto:rpecchpt6@gmail.com) to update your email address.

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

We are now about 1/3 of the way through the short, 60-day legislative session. Thanks to your individual and collective efforts, our priorities are known by legislators and are moving through the legislative process.

### **Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) Update**

In response to our budget proviso from the 2023 legislative session, the Health Care Authority (HCA) released the findings of a study highlighting healthcare plan options that would have the same excellent benefits available through the Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic Medicare but would have more affordable premiums. The report will be discussed by the PEB Board at its annual retreat on February 1<sup>st</sup>. HCA is recommending the adoption of a new configuration of UMP Classic Medicare. The medical benefits will remain unchanged in the new configuration. The pharmacy benefit would shift to an employer-managed Plan D pharmacy plan that nearly mirrors what is currently available in UMP Classic Medicare. HCA estimates this change will save retirees upwards of \$200 per month on premium costs. The new configuration is more affordable because the Plan D pharmacy benefit would be eligible for federal pharmaceutical drug subsidies. HCA will be hosting three virtual public forums and one in-person public forum in February to give retirees an opportunity to share feedback on this proposed new configuration. Details about how to register for the public forums will be available at [www.hca.wa.gov](http://www.hca.wa.gov). Information will also be published in the weekly NewsFlash and at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

### **State Advocacy**

*Legislative Day 2024:* Eighty-three meetings were conducted with legislators and staff. All told, nearly 200 RPEC and WEA-R members participated. We appreciate the excellent meeting summaries provided by attendees. This information will be useful in the spring as RPEC's Political Action Committee (PAC) considers endorsements for those seeking reelection.

*Ad Hoc COLA for PERS/TRS 1:* Thanks to your efforts and meetings that we have also coordinated with top fiscal policy decision-makers, Substitute HB 1985 is poised for a House floor vote. The bill will provide a one-time 3% COLA for retirees vested in Plans 1 with a cap of \$110 per month. Please reach out to your legislators and urge them to continue to support this bill.

*Slightly lower premiums for the priciest PEBB healthcare plans:* Through our efforts with the Office of Fiscal Management and fiscal policy leaders, the Governor provided a \$10 increase to the Medicare Explicit Subsidy in his preliminary operating budget. The state provides the subsidy to lower monthly premium costs. Those who have chosen the more expensive healthcare plans will benefit from the increase. As budget negotiations begin in February, we will be advocating for this increase to remain in the final budget act.

*Weekly Legislative Update & bill tracker:* All members are invited to attend the weekly Legislative Update held each Friday via Zoom from 2-3 p.m. The bill tracker is also updated each Friday. The tracker and Zoom link for the Friday Legislative Update are available at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

### **Federal Advocacy**

*Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 Moves to House Vote:* Your federal retirement benefits are, again, at risk thanks to legislation that was approved in January in the House Budget Committee and is poised for a full House vote. The [Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 \(H.R. 5779\)](https://www.congress.gov/bills/117/5779) will create a

16-member fiscal commission to search for ways to reduce the national deficit and balance the national budget. Retiree and senior advocacy organizations fear the Commission will prioritize Social Security and Medicare funding cuts over other federal expenditures. RPEC is sending official communication to House delegation members urging them to protect Social Security and Medicare benefits. A detailed [position paper](#) about the proposed debt commission is available at <https://retiredamericans.org>.

### **Executive Board Approves Strategic Plan**

The Executive Board approved RPEC's strategic plan at its November meeting. The plan will guide RPEC's priorities through 2027. The plan was informed by research conducted in spring 2023 by AFSCME Retirees and data gathered by the Council Office. A background document, summarizing the strategic plan goals, is available at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

### **Upcoming Events**

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

- Feb 9, 16 & 23            Legislative Update call (2:00 p.m.)
  - Feb 8 & 22                Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
  - Feb 9                        Legislative Committee (10:00 a.m.)
  - Feb 19                      Council Office closed, Presidents' Day
  - Feb 26                      Executive Board Meeting (9:00 a.m.)
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## **e-Newsletter now available**

**We are now offering a digital version  
of our Chapter Newsletter**

**By choosing email rather than a mailed  
paper newsletter, you help reduce mailing  
expenses and staff workload. Plus, you can  
get the newsletter and meeting reminders  
faster and in **C-O-L-O-R!****

**Let us know how you want to  
receive your monthly newsletter:**

**Email    or    Mailed paper**

**Please include your name, email  
address and year you joined**

**Reply to:**

**[rpecchpt6@gmail.com](mailto:rpecchpt6@gmail.com)**