

2005 Legislative Wrap-Up

The 2005 legislative session ended June 6, 2005, with a special session ending at 2:00 p.m. on June 7th to complete the tax rebate request by the Governor. Throughout the session, PERS maintained its vigilance on issues of importance to our members, beneficiaries, and employers. The System did not propose any fiscal legislation this session; however our technical bill, Senate Bill 328 passed and was signed by the Governor on June 8th, making minor modifications to certain specific provisions within Chapters 1A and 286 of the Nevada Revised Statutes. The bill becomes effective July 1, 2005. Specifically, the bill:

- Modifies the requirements for a qualified domestic relations order. Before the change, the law required the domestic relations order contain the Social Security number of the member and the alternate payee. PERS' requested modification removes the number because the order may be a public record when held by the court. PERS will still require the parties to provide Social Security numbers privately to the System.
- Modifies the law governing survivor benefits to children of deceased members. Pre July 1, 2005, a child's survivor benefit could be continued between the ages of 18-23 as long as the child continuously remained a full-time student. If the child failed to maintain full-time student status, the benefits ceased and could not be reinstated. PERS' modification allows the System to reinstate the benefits to a child between the ages of 18-23 if the child returns to full-time student status.
- Provides a technical change to the Judicial Retirement Act to clarify provisions regarding participation in the Judicial Retirement Plan.

Other bills that the System was tracking and the Retirement Board took a position on are listed below with the final status of each bill.

Senate Bill 46 – This bill allows for increases in the assumed wage paid to PERS on behalf of volunteer firefighters. The Board was neutral on this bill. The bill passed and was signed by the Governor on June 3rd. Effective July 1, 2005.

Senate Bill 122 – This bill authorizes certain public employees with active military service to purchase additional years of service in the Public Employees' Retirement System. The Board was neutral on this bill. The bill passed and was signed by the Governor on June 6th. Effective June 6, 2005.

Senate Bill 346 – This bill revises provisions relating to the Legislators' Retirement System by making participation in the System optional. The Board was neutral on this bill. The bill passed and was signed by the Governor on June 13th. Effective June 13, 2005.

Senate Bill 369 – This bill makes various changes regarding the judiciary. The Board was neutral on this bill. The bill passed and was delivered to the Governor on June 13th. Effective July 1, 2005.

Senate Bill 438 – This bill authorizes justices of the peace and municipal judges to participate in the Judicial Retirement Plan under certain circumstances. The Board was neutral on this bill. The bill passed and was signed by the Governor on June 6th. Effective July 1, 2005.

Senate Bill 485 – This bill temporarily extends the prospective expiration of provisions governing allowances paid by PERS to certain re-employed retired public employees and continues an experience study. This bill temporarily extends the sunset period for critical labor shortage positions to June 30, 2009, with an experience study to be conducted by PERS in 2008. The Board was neutral on this bill. The bill passed and was signed by the Governor on June 8th. Effective June 8, 2005.

If you are interested in the status of any other bills you may log on to the Nevada State Legislature website at www.leg.state.nv.us.