

## Chris O'Brien

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**From:** Rep. Abney, Marvin L.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 20, 2025 3:36 PM  
**To:** House Finance Committee  
**Subject:** FW: House Bill H-6238

**From:** Tina Rosa <tina.rosa@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 20, 2025 2:48 PM

**To:** Rep. Abney, Marvin L. <rep-abney@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Ackerman, Mia A. <rep-ackerman@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Ajello, Edith H. <rep-ajello@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Alzate, Karen <rep-alzate@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Azzinaro, Samuel A. <rep-azzinaro@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Baginski, Jacquelyn M. <rep-baginski@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Batista, Jose F. <rep-batista@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Bennett, David A. <rep-bennett@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Biah, Nathan W. <rep-biah@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Blazejewski, Christopher R. <rep-blazejewski@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Boylan, Jennifer <rep-boylan@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Brien, Jon D. <rep-brien@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Caldwell, Justine A. <rep-caldwell@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Carson, Lauren H. <rep-carson@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Casey, Stephen M. <rep-casey@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Casimiro, Julie A. <rep-casimiro@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Chippendale, Michael W. <rep-chippendale@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Cortvriend, Terri-Denise <rep-cortvriend@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Corvese, Arthur J. <rep-corvese@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Costantino, Gregory J. <rep-costantino@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Cotter, Megan L. <rep-cotter@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Craven, Robert E. <rep-craven@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Cruz, Cherie L. <rep-cruz@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Dawson, Matthew S. <rep-dawson@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. DeSimone, Anthony J. <rep-desimone@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Diaz, Grace <rep-diaz@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Donovan, Susan R <rep-donovan@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Edwards, John G. <rep-edwards@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Fascia, Richard R. <rep-fascia@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Felix, Leonela <rep-felix@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Fellela, Deborah A. <rep-fellela@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Finkelman, Alex S. <rep-finkelman@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Fogarty, Kathleen A. <rep-fogarty@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Furtado, Jenni Azanero <rep-furtado@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Giraldo, Joshua J. <rep-giraldo@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Handy, Arthur <rep-handy@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Hopkins, Marie A. <rep-hopkins@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Kazarian, Katherine S. <rep-kazarian@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Kennedy, Brian Patrick <rep-kennedy@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Kislak, Rebecca M. <rep-kislak@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Knight, Jason <rep-knight@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Lima, Charlene <rep-lima@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Lombardi, John J. <rep-lombardi@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Marszalkowski, Alex <rep-marszalkowski@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. McEntee, Carol Hagan <rep-mcentee@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. McGaw, Michelle E. <rep-mcgaw@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. McNamara, Joseph M. <rep-mcnamara@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Morales, David <rep-morales@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Messier, Mary <rep-messier@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Nardone, George A. <rep-nardone@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Newberry, Brian C. <rep-newberry@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Noret, Thomas E. <rep-noret@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. O'Brien, William W. <rep-obrien@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Paplauskas, Christopher G. <rep-paplauskas@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Perez, Ramon A. <rep-perez@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Phillips, Robert D. <rep-phillips@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Place, David J. <rep-place@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Potter, Brandon C. <rep-potter@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Quattrocchi, Robert J. <rep-quattrocchi@rilegislature.gov>

**Subject:** House Bill H-6238

Dear Members of the Rhode Island House of Representatives:

I am a retired Public Administrator for the State of RI. I retired after a nearly 30-year State service career in November, 2004 as Human Resources Coordinator for the Department of Corrections. It is my request that you **make HOUSE BILL H-6238 TOP PRIORITY, and support and vote in favor of H-6238**. I have sent a similar request to Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi.

In summary, effective January 1, 2025, this act would reinstate an annual cost of living increase based on the yearly Consumer Price Based Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) to the retirement allowance for all state employees, teachers, MERS, all ERSRI members, and all beneficiaries. For people who are already retired, their COLA will be based on what their annual retirement was in January 2025. For those who are not yet retired, their COLA shall be based on the average of their last three years with an annual COLA based on that amount. The provisions of this act apply prospectively only, and no retroactive payments shall be made. This act would take effect upon passage.

The basic premise is that upon retirement all state retirees signed off their state position, and in exchange, the retiree was given three options to collect retirement funds based on choosing a survivor benefit. The promise of receiving a yearly COLA was an integral part of the counseling activities during the retirement process, as well as a major factor in the choice each individual retiree made to retire and the choice of options. Documents were signed to initiate the retirement choice and amount.

During the 2024 legislative session, the House unanimously voted to pass legislation that restored a partial COLA for those retirees who were already retired prior to the passing of the Rhode Island Retirement Security Act. These retirees received 2.89% on the first \$30,622 of a retiree's total retirement amount, and it was compounded with the existing retirement amount. This was the first time in 14 years that pre-reform retirees received ANY financial relief from the so-called "Pension Reform" that put many retirees in poverty.

**House Bill 6238**, as stated above, would extend a COLA based on the CPI-U to ALL CURRENT AND FUTURE RETIREES. The compounded COLA will be determined by the retiree's actual pension amount.

**H-6238 would be solely paid for by the State Retirement Fund** at a cost of a mere pittance of ERSRI assets. Absolutely NO MONEY would be taken from the General Treasury for this bill.

I do believe Katherine Gregg was on target in a The Providence Journal article dated April 25, 2025. She noted the following during the April 22, 2025 House Finance Committee Hearing:

"Some wrote the House Finance Committee. Others appeared in person. Among them was Deborah Catamero of Johnston, a former teacher and school principal, who wrote:

'For fourteen long years, thousands of Rhode Island retirees have borne the brunt of a broken promise. The removal of the contractual COLA in 2012 has cast a long shadow over their retirement and quality of life during a period of time that should be marked by security and peace of mind.'

'These are people who dedicated their careers to serving the people of Rhode Island as teachers shaping young minds, as dedicated civil servants keeping our state running, health professionals caring for the well being of all,' she continued. 'They planned their futures based on the commitment that their hard-earned pensions would retain their purchasing power through modest annual adjustments.'

'That promise was broken and unjustly taken away ... [leaving many to] choose between medications and keeping the lights on! The lack of a COLA has not only diminished their quality of life but has also stripped them of the dignity they deserve after years of faithful service.'

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. I implore you to make **House Bill H-6238 a TOP PRIORITY, SUPPORT AND VOTE IN FAVOR of House Bill H6238** and restore COLAs for retirees after a fourteen year hiatus. **H-6238** ensures a **more inflation-proof, sustainable retirement** for current and future retirees (state and municipal employees and teachers) who have dedicated their service to this State.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to email me.

Sincerely,

Tina M. Rosa, M.P.A.  
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Providence, RI 02911  
401-556-7457  
House District 6