

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am certain you have already received hundreds of emails, letters, and phone calls urging you to support COLA restoration through Bill H-8147. Rhode Island state retirees have gone **thirteen years** without the cost-of-living adjustment that was promised to us, even as the cost of simply existing has risen dramatically.

Since 2013, **real estate taxes have increased more than 20%**. For the 2025 budget, the state approved a **12% property-tax increase** because Little Compton “couldn’t find” \$1.5 million. At the same time, Little Compton is allowed to bring in out-of-district students whose parents pay only **\$6,000**, while **taxpayers cover the remaining \$23,000 per student**. Why doesn’t the funding follow the student from their home district, as it does elsewhere?

Meanwhile, every essential expense continues to climb: **food, gas, oil, propane, internet, phone service** — all rising at a pace retirees cannot absorb. **Electricity rates have skyrocketed**, even for those of us who have invested in solar and done our part to reduce strain on the grid. Where is the oversight? Why is there no meaningful control on electricity rates in this state?

The state has found the money to increase pay for select groups of workers, yet **retirees who devoted decades of service are left behind**. We are expected to survive on pensions that have not kept pace with inflation for more than a decade.

We have done our part.

We have waited long enough.

Now the state must do its part.

Please support Bill H-8147 and restore the COLA that was promised to Rhode Island retirees.

As I am hopeful you will support us, I leave you wishes for a succesful budget.

Peg Bugara

36 Wild Cherry Dr.

Little Compton, Ri 02837

