



State of Rhode Island  
Office of the General Treasurer

**James A. Diossa**  
General Treasurer

12 May 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney  
Chair, House Committee on Finance

The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance

**RE:** *2026-H 8253, An Act Relating to Public Officers and Employees – Retirement System – Contributions and Benefits*

Chair Abney:

I write with regard to 2026-H 8253, a common-sense proposal that modifies post-retirement employment rules for retired police officers in the Municipal Employees' Retirement System ("MERS").

Retired police and fire personnel are permitted to work 75 days per year while still receiving their pension pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-21-54. The Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island ("ERSRI") must suspend pension payments if that period is exceeded. *See id.* Title 36, however, prohibits any member "who has retired under the provisions of title 16 [teachers], 36 [state employees], or 45 [municipal employees, including police]" from being "employed or reemployed by any state agency or department unless any and all retirement benefits to which the member may be entitled . . . are suspended for the duration of any employment or reemployment."

When read together, these provisions prohibit municipal police officers from working for the state or a state entity after retirement absent benefit suspension. This includes municipal police officers working state-funded details. Even if a member was hired by a third-party contractor or a municipality, it is considered state employment if the state provides funding for the underlying project.

This rule can create incongruous outcomes. A retired police officer hired by a municipality within the MERS system to work a detail for local road construction that is paid for by that municipality can work up to 75 days without benefit suspension. Yet, a retired police officer hired by a municipality within the MERS system to work a detail for road construction that is paid for by the *state* must suspend their benefit or incur a penalty. When a retired officer accepts a detail, the

system that assigns that detail does not provide information as to the funding source. Consequently, members must blindly accept details without knowing whether they will incur statutory penalties.

This legislation is intended to remedy such unfair outcomes. It would allow retired police officers to work up to 75 days after they retire *regardless* of the underlying funding source.

While this amendment affects a narrow change, it may have an impact on the pension system. Though that impact is expected to be marginal, a pension impact note prepared by the state actuary is necessary to confirm the true impact on the MERS system. The Chairperson of the House Finance Committee – with the approval of the Speaker of the House – can request a pension impact note concerning proposed legislation originating in the House. *See* R.I. Gen. Law § 45-21-42.2.

Please feel free to reach out by email at [Robert.CravenJr@treasury.ri.gov](mailto:Robert.CravenJr@treasury.ri.gov) or by phone at (401) 330-0661 with any further questions.

Respectfully,



Robert E. Craven, Jr.  
Director of Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Office of the General Treasurer

cc: The Honorable Raymond Hull