



## State Fiscal Note for Bill Number: 2023-H-5093

**Date of State Budget Office Approval:** Wednesday, May 24, 2023

**Date Requested:** Thursday, May 18, 2023

**Date Due:** Sunday, May 28, 2023

<i>Impact on Expenditures</i>		<i>Impact on Revenues</i>	
FY 2023	\$0	FY 2023	N/A
FY 2024	Indeterminate	FY 2024	N/A
FY 2025	Indeterminate	FY 2025	N/A

*Explanation by State Budget Office:*

This bill amends two sections of the Rhode Island General Laws, both within Chapter 16-16, entitled “Teachers’ Retirement.” This bill expands survivor benefits associated with the Teachers’ Retirement program to former spouses and will take effect upon passage.

This bill first amends R.I.G.L. § 16-16-1 entitled “Definitions” by adding an additional criterion under “(4) Former Spouse Divorced” to now include being married to the deceased member for ten years and that the deceased member was required by court order to contribute to post-divorce support.

Next, this bill renames R.I.G.L. § 16-16-26 from “Spouse's or Domestic Partner's Benefits” to “Spouse's, Former Spouse Divorced, or Domestic Partner's Benefits.” Additionally, this section is also amended to include former spouses as eligible for monthly survivor benefits if they comply with the new provision of R.I.G.L. § 16-16-1 (above) and there are no dependent children, parents, or other spouse or domestic partner that are entitled to these benefits.

*Comments on Sources of Funds:*

Appropriations for the State’s portion of public teacher pensions are housed within the Teachers’ Retirement program of the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), all financed using general revenues. The State funds 40.0 percent of the employer’s share of retirement contributions on behalf of teachers who are members of the Teachers’ Retirement System.

*Summary of Facts and Assumptions:*

The Teachers’ Retirement program is administered by the Employees’ Retirement System of Rhode Island (ERSRI), which is overseen by a 15-member Retirement Board and chaired by the General Treasurer. ERSRI itself provides retirement, disability, and survivor benefits to State employees, public school teachers, judges, and State Police, amongst others.

The Budget Office assumes the true fiscal impact of this legislation is ultimately indeterminate without a complete actuarial study by the Employees’ Retirement System. However, due to the specific nature of this expansion of survivor benefits the Budget Office assumes the actual expenditure impact if passed would likely be de minimis. This is because the current law, R.I.G.L. § 16-16-1, already grants these survivor benefits to divorcees if the individual is the mother or father of the deceased member’s children or if the individual legally adopted the deceased member’s children while married, while the children were below 18 years of age. This bill only adds an additional criterion which can be met to receive these benefits, as mentioned

*Prepared by:*

Andrew Braca / 4012228132 / andrew.braca@omb.ri.gov

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

Page 1 of 2

in the bill summary above.

*Summary of Fiscal Impact:*

As discussed above, the financial impact of this bill is indeterminate but likely de minimis.

*Budget Office Signature:*



Digitally signed by  
Joseph Codega  
Date: 2023.05.24  
14:28:14 -04'00'

*Fiscal Advisor Signature:*

