

14 May 2026

Senate Committee on Finance  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Support of S 2818 An Act Relating to Public Officers and Employees --  
Retirement System -- Contributions and Benefits

Dear Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of 2818, specifically, to restore the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) to state employees who retired after 2012.

Rhode Island state workers contribution rates to the pension system (8.75 % or 12 %) is higher than the average state and federal employee contribution rate and is in the upper percentile of employee contribution rates. Despite this high contribution rate the overall benefit received by the RI state employees is significantly lower than the rest of the systems.

The current RI COLA system, which is based upon a portion of the retirement allotment, is realistically only granted once every four years. The proposed legislation would create a COLA which is more in concert with most of the other retirement systems and would help offset the aforementioned inequities.

Accordingly, it is strongly recommended that the committee adopt this bill.

With Sincerest Regards,

Paul Kulpa

*Paul Kulpa*

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