

ROBERT "BOB" GRANT
REPRESENTATIVE, 2ND DISTRICT
MOST OF CRAWFORD COUNTY
AND PART OF CHEROKEE AND
BOURBON COUNTIES

202 S. APPLETON
FRONTENAC, KANSAS 66763
LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE 1-800-432-3924



TOPEKA
HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
RANKING MEMBER: FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
INSURANCE
MEMBER: AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES
TRANSPORTATION
SPECIAL CLAIMS AGAINST THE STATE
STATE BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2466

February 2, 2012

Chairman Rhoades and members of the House Appropriations Committee, today I stand before you to appeal to you to right a wrong or at least look at an issue of fairness.

Early in 2011, rumors were being circulated that the KPERS retirement plan was in trouble and a large scale revision to a 401K plan was going to be put in its place. I heard from a number of former state employees who chose to retire before the announcement of the retirement incentives due to pressure and concerns about possible state layoffs and/or changes in the KPERS plan. Many of these employees felt they had little choice but to retire early or face losing hard earned benefits if their jobs were eliminated.

The incentives that were announced should have been offered from the start rather than added during the middle of the proposed retirements. I believe these incentives were known about but were held back to see how many people would get nervous or scared and retire without the state having to offer the incentive package.

These employees devoted many years working for the people and the State of Kansas and I feel it is a disservice not allowing them the same benefits extended to those retiring after August 2.

I ask that you do the right thing and be fair to these retirees. Thank you for your time and I will stand for questions.

Steven A. Endicott
605 W. Ranch St.
Cherokee, Ks. 66724
620-457-8260
1-26-12

To Appropriation Chairman and Committee:

I was a state employee with 34 years of service. My, last day of employment with Pittsburg State University was on April 29, 2011. My, official retirement date was May 1, 2011.

I became aware that a discussion on March 26, 2011 was leaning towards an early state employee buy out.

This should have been presented to me, that this was going to be offered. We were entitled to the offer of insurance for 5 years or the \$6500.00 cash payment. We were left out of this offer.

Thank you for your time and any help would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Steve Endicott

January 28, 2012

Appropriations Chairman and Committee:

I retired from Pittsburg State University on June 1, 2011, after 21 years of service as the Physical Plant Accountant. Like many others, I was very worried the legislature would change my pension plan and reduce my benefits perhaps as soon as FY 2012, according to an article in a local newspaper. I retired June 1 because if I waited until July 1, that would have been FY 2012. I realize I would probably have received a larger benefit had I worked even one more day or one more month. But, according to the State of Kansas website at that time, your retirement date must be the 1st day of the month. I believed I had to retire by June 1 in order to preserve my benefits as they had been guaranteed.

Prior to March of 2011 when the local newspaper article came out about possible changes, I had attended a pre-retirement seminar at Pittsburg State University facilitated by the Human Resource Services Department. Some general retirement benefit information had been explained and had indicated that retired exempt employees continue to receive their health insurance benefits paid entirely or in part by the State of Kansas. I asked the question, "Do you see this happening for any other group of employees?" to which Michele Sexton, Director of Human Resource Services, replied "Not for Classified."

Additionally, I contacted Representative Terry Calloway in March of 2011 regarding the local newspaper article and asked him what he thought about the situation. He told me he thought I'd be OK. He inferred that the Legislature would not work fast enough to make any changes before FY 2012. Mr. Calloway did not make any mention of retirement incentives being contemplated. In the end it was my decision to go ahead and retire on June 1. I could not take the chance that Mr. Calloway's assurance that I would be "OK" would actually come to fruition.

I was stunned when learning the State of Kansas was offering early retirement incentives to those who qualify. I do qualify and those incentives would be a tremendous boost to my retirement situation. I believe I should be eligible to receive the \$6,500 one time lump sum payment. I am continuing to carry and pay the entire cost for my Blue Cross Blue Shield health insurance. I took a 10% lump sum payment from my retirement account to pay for my health insurance until I reach age 65 and receive Medicare benefits. Now others who are no more qualified than me have received additional benefits.

I believe any Kansas State employee who retired at any time since January 1, 2011, should be included to receive the early retirement incentives. I am asking you to make the decision to include others in my situation and extend the additional benefits to us.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Respectfully,



Jo A. Ramage
517 E. Jefferson St.
Pittsburg, KS 66762-5442
620-231-8648
jramage1@cox.net

January 27, 2012

TO: The Appropriations Chairman and Committee

My name is Dale Herlocker. I worked at Pittsburg State University for 33 years, retiring on May 1, 2011. I retired because of the Kansas Legislators' articles in the Pittsburg Morning Sun Newspaper in February. The articles said the Kansas Legislators were considering not honoring the 85 point system for retirement, and that they could take that away. The scare tactics worked. I had only been retired less than 90 days when I learned about the Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program.

I am writing you with concern about the Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program. The eligibility requirements should be changed to include recent retirees. We have put in the same years of service as the people who are eligible for the VRIP now.

I think I am entitled to the health insurance benefit for 5 years that is being offered to the other retirees.

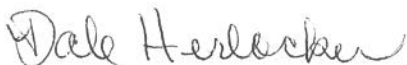
I asked our Human Relations Office about a Retirement Incentive Program before I signed the retirement papers, and was told there wasn't an incentive program for health insurance. Had I known you were going to offer the VRIP, I would have waited 3 months to retire.

I am hoping there is some action taken on behalf of the recent retirees who were cheated out of this.

I have written letters to Bob Grant, Bob Marshall, Governor Brownback, Lynn Jenkins, and Steve Scott (PSU President).

Bob Grant is the only person I contacted that has tried to help me. He has been in touch with me and is doing his best to see that the right thing is being done for people who have worked their entire life for the State of Kansas. I have never been without a job, always paid my bills, I have always tried to be an honest citizen. If you need to contact me for any reason, my information is listed below.

Thank you very much for considering this letter, I do appreciate it.



Dale Herlocker

1747 Robertson

Carthage, MO 64836

Phone: 417-388-9089

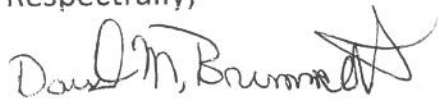
January 26, 2012

Kansas Appropriations Chairman and Committee

Because of the news stories about Kansas Public Employees Retirement System changes requested to be made by legislation that would result in the possible decrease of retirement benefits a state employee who has paid into the retirement system for years I was forced to look into and eventually retire from my position with the Pittsburg State University where I was employed for more than 16 years. I retired May 10, 2011 because I feared that waiting would have resulted in my pension being lowered considerably.

After my retirement in May, 2011 the plan to buy out long term employee's was discussed and put into effect. This plan resulted in people age 55 or older being able to retire and at the same time to have health insurance for up to 48 months paid in part by the state and the balance by the retiree. I was not given this option and feel it is unfair to those of us that retired because we felt threatened that our pension would be reduced or not there and are paying out of our pocket the full amount of health insurance premiums.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David M. Brummett". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "D" and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David M. Brummett

P. O. Box 81

Mindenmines, MO 64769