

RETIREEES



We're looking for one adventurous retiree from each of MSEA's 10 Regions to be a volunteer coordinator on the Retiree Committee. We would also like to form a special MSEA Veterans Group. If you're interested, please feel free to contact the committee chairs with any questions or to volunteer your much-needed time and energy!

Chair Mike Kelley
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The cost for retirees to belong to MSEA is just \$12 a year as stated in the MSEA Constitution: Article VI, Section 8: *Any retired Union member age fifty (50) years or older or with at least ten (10) years of membership, or a disabled Union member, shall be entitled to retain membership in the Union for \$1.00 per month, to be paid in advance at the rate of \$12.00 per year. Retiree's dues are to be pro-rated from the date of retirement to the next January 1st. Thereafter, the retiree's dues shall be payable on January 1st, with thirty days advance notice given by MSEA Central Office.* **By paying your retiree dues of only \$12 per year, you will continue to receive the MSEA News. Please make checks payable to Michigan State Employees Association and mail to: MSEA Central Office, 6035 Executive Dr., Suite 104, Lansing, MI 48911**



State employees and teachers would have the option of adding an annuity to their retirement plan under a pair of bills reported out of the House Financial Liability Reform Committee on January 24. An annuity is a contract in which someone pays a third party--usually an insurance company--a lump sum payment in exchange for a fixed income over a certain period of time and other benefits. Committee Chair Thomas Albert (R-Lowell) sponsored **HB 5231** which gives the option to state employees who now have defined contribution plans. Albert said he and the administration want to limit which providers can participate to those who will provide safe investments for retirees. Rep. Steve Marino (R-Mt. Clemens) sponsored

HB 5230, which changes and improves the annuity option available to teachers with defined contribution plans.



SB 0787, sponsored by Sen. Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge), would let senior citizens, those over age 65, opt out of unlimited personal injury protection (PIP) in their no-fault auto insurance coverage and thus reduce their premiums. Currently, when drivers turn age 65 and go on Medicare, their auto insurance rates go up. Most health insurance programs in Michigan coordinate with auto insurance and seniors get a discount for coordinated coverage. When they switch to Medicare, they lose that discount. The proposed legislation would allow those 65 and older to leave the system and request a cap on their auto

insurance. They also wouldn't have to pay into the catastrophic fund. All other states either make PIP in auto insurance optional or cap it at very low levels. Jones said no-fault insurance is "out of control" and "ready to collapse." It has gotten so bad, many drivers in the city of Detroit can't afford their auto insurance premiums, and therefore drive without coverage, despite Michigan's law requiring all drivers to carry auto insurance. The bill has been referred to the Senate Insurance Committee, chaired by Sen. Joe Hune (R-Gregory), for review. Hune is a co-sponsor of the legislation.



SB 0713, sponsored by Sen. Jim Marleau (R-Lake Orion), would allow judges to grant visitation rights for adults to see their ailing parents. The Senate Judiciary Committee, chaired by Sen. Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge), took testimony from the adult children of deceased celebrities and a group, Michigan Elderly Abuse, with their personal stories of being shut out by officials and denied their rights to visit elderly and sick parents. Following the testimony, the committee voted unanimously to report out the bill.

On Feb. 6, Gov. Rick Snyder signed two bills into law that would protect inheritances from people in the state public administrator system. **HB 4821 and HB 4822** are in response to a "small number" of public administrators who have been using the system to

make money and take advantage of estates and their heirs. The bills are now **Public Acts 13 and 14 of 2018**.



WHY JOIN?

Dear Michigan AFSCME Retiree,

Thank you for your service while working and joining Michigan AFSCME Retiree Chapter 255. By joining our Chapter, you are helping protect the retirement benefits that you earned through a lifetime of work.

You're now part of a national network of over 200,000 public service retirees across the country. Together, we are fighting to protect our pensions and healthcare benefits here in Michigan and nationally we are fighting to protect and expand Social Security and Medicare.

Signing up as a member is the first step toward making sure that we have real retirement security. We'll keep you informed about the latest

developments from Lansing and Washington, D.C. that could impact your retirement.

One great way to stay informed is to "Like" our new Facebook page! Search for Michigan Retirees United AFSCME Chapter 255 or go to: www.facebook.com/MIAFSCMERetirees

In 2017, we were successful in beating back attacks on our health care, but special interests aren't going to give up. That is why it's critical to stay informed and engaged during the legislative session.

But we know that the most important thing is showing up. Working with AFSCME Council 25, we are planning lobbying trainings for retirees in Lansing and around the state, so retirees like us can wield their political power effectively. These are just some of the ways we are planning to protect our retirement security, but we all know that if we want to see real results, we must elect allies at all levels of government!

That's where PEOPLE comes in.

Just like when you were working, our retiree dues cannot go toward political activity, so **PEOPLE is how retirees and working members come together to elect pro-retiree and worker candidates, and fight back against the super-rich and their politicians' agenda to gamble Social Security on Wall Street and privatize Medicare.**

Sign up today as a PEOPLE MVP at \$8.35 a month to help protect your retirement security! Many of us contributed each month and, just like joining Chapter 255, retirees must sign up again.

But being a member of Chapter 255 has its benefits beyond just protecting our retirements. All AFSCME retirees can sign up for AFSCME Advantage benefits. You can take advantage of any of these "members only" benefits, such as discounts on your cell phone bill, at any time. For more information on member-exclusive benefits, go to: www.afscme.org/advantage.

If you haven't already, be sure to sign up as an AFSCME Retiree, and welcome to our Chapter!

In Solidarity,

Henry Lykes, President

MI AFSCME Retirees Chapter 255



Gov. Rick Snyder issued an executive order the end of January, creating a consortium to strengthen broadband access across Michigan. Broadband is high speed Internet access which is always on and faster than dial-up access. Expanding broadband is an important quality-of-life issue for older adults, especially those who live in rural areas where access is limited, according to AARP Michigan. The Michigan Consortium for Advanced Networks has been charged with identifying gaps in broadband service coverage and capacity, and recommending solutions for the state to enhance connectivity.

"Affordable and reliable high-speed Internet access can provide new opportunities for Michiganders to use telehealth and other technologies that improve quality of life and allow more people to age in place," said Paula Cunningham, AARP Michigan State Director.

About three-quarters of American adults have broadband Internet service at home, according to a Pew Research study. However, only about half of those 65 and over have broadband service at home. In Michigan, 1.1 million people remain without access to broadband.