

Dear LCPR,

Thank you for taking the time to meet about pension reform and for the options you have brought forward. The most recent option of lowering the NRA to 64 sounds nice, but it nowhere near fixes the issues we are facing. The issue education is currently facing is the ability to recruit and retain teachers. Around 60% of teachers are leaving within their first five years, and fewer and fewer teachers are coming out of college to join the profession. Career teachers, those of us who have, and are willing to stick it out, are being left in the dust. At age 60, I will have 38 years of experience. I will have the same reduction penalty as someone who could have taught for five years but is 60 years old. How is that equitable?

If you really wanted to recruit and retain, you would make 35 years of service a full-length teaching career. One with 35 years of service should be able to retire with a full pension. Starting at 22, I will need to teach 42 years to reach 64 and receive 0 penalties. As a math major, I know that is not a smart investment in my time or money. If you told students that they could retire at 57 with a full pension, more and more would join. I understand the cost of pension reform is high, but it wouldn't be as high if you made career teachers a priority. Second-career teachers or late starters do not deserve to receive the same pension as me. Fix career pensions first and more will join the field.

Thanks,

Jesse Johnson