

From: [Jon DeMars](#)
To: [Lisa Diesslin](#)
Subject: Written Testimony - Improve Teacher Pensions Now (For Feb. 12 Meeting)
Date: Monday, February 5, 2024 6:35:58 PM

Hello LCPR Commission,

Thank you for holding listening sessions around the state over the past few months. I attended the Duluth meeting in October. Here is my story and ask:

I graduated from Hamline University in May of 1989 with a double major in physical education and health education along with a minor in coaching. I knew as an aspiring teacher about the rule of 90 and it was an appealing perk for this 22 year old teacher. Well, before I received my first paycheck the rule of 90 was taken away. I had been disqualified by a matter of a few months. This was disheartening. Older teachers I worked with said not to worry. It would be fixed. That was 35 years ago and things have only gotten worse with my pension. Penalties have gotten much worse and I have paid in at a much higher percentage. Not only that, but teaching has gotten much more difficult with each passing year.

I am asking each of you on the LCPR to fix this situation for Minnesota's wonderful public school teachers. Please put in an age/years of service rule that is reasonable for this very difficult and demanding profession. I am currently at the rule of 92 and would like the option to retire while I am still healthy. Also, please reduce the penalties for teachers age 55 and above to 3% per year. The current penalties are overly punitive and truly ridiculous.

Sincerely,
Jon DeMars
34 year teacher
Mounds View Schools