

April 8, 2025

Members of the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement:

On behalf of our respective organizations, we write to express our strong support for legislation to improve retirement benefits for Minnesota teachers, administrators and other members of the TRA community. We strongly support the provision of full retirement without penalty at age 60, specifically the provisions of HF1582 and SF2000. We understand you are considering other options as well. For the record, we support all efforts to improve pensions for Minnesota educators.

The essential component in the proposals include appropriately funding Pension Adjustment Aid to cover the costs of these improvements. This is a basic foundational component of the proposals. School districts are unable to fund the increases in the bills. This must be a state funded commitment.

The legislature needs to continue the examination of all options available to make education an attractive profession. Strong pensions are an essential part of that review. It is unfortunate that school districts currently have difficulty attracting staff for many positions. To be sure, working in public schools is rewarding. However, it must be recognized that increased demand in education contributes to the stress on individuals, particularly as our workforce ages.

Ensuring that veteran educators can confidently retire supports responsible budget planning for school districts. As retirements occur, districts can hire new educators earlier on the salary schedule, helping schools manage costs while maintaining stability in the classroom.

The cost of inaction simply exacerbates the problem. Pension reform is essential, and it needs to occur now. We appreciate your leadership on this critical issue and strongly encourage you to pass legislation this year.

Sincerely,

Deb Henton, Executive Director



Michelle Krell, Executive Director



Bob Driver, Executive Director



Darrin Strosahl, Executive Director

