

Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement

600 State Office Building

100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

St. Paul, MN 55155-1201

HOUSE MEMBERS

Representative Kaohly Vang Her, Chair
Representative Tim O'Driscoll, Secretary
Representative Kaela Berg
Representative Ethan Cha
Representative Danny Nadeau
Representative Michael Nelson
Representative Dan Wolgamott

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Senator Nick A. Frentz, Vice Chair
Senator Jeff R. Howe
Senator Erin P. Murphy
Senator Carla J. Nelson
Senator Sandra L. Pappas
Senator Jordan Rasmusson
Senator Judy Seeberger

COMMISSION STAFF

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March 16, 2023

Room 120, State Capitol

MINUTES

Call to order:

Chair Her called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Representatives Her, Berg, Cha, Nadeau, Nelson, O'Driscoll, and Senators Frentz, Murphy, Rasmusson, Seeberger

Commission Members Absent: Representative Wolgamott and Senators Howe, Nelson, Pappas

Agenda Items

Approval of meeting minutes

Sen. Frentz moved approval of the March 6, 2023, meeting minutes. **MOTION PREVAILED.**

Presentation on the State Auditor's Supplemental State Aid Work Group Report

State Auditor Julie Blaha reviewed the presentation.

Todd Greseth, Wanamingo Firefighter and member of the work group, testified about the disparity in state aid between the metropolitan/large cities to the rural fire departments and the need for change.

HF 2928 (Nelson); SF xxxx (Pappas): State Auditor's Volunteer Firefighter Working Group recommendation on audit requirement threshold increase.

Susan Lenczewski, Executive Director, Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement, reviewed the Overview of Retirement Benefits for Volunteer Firefighters memo and the staff summary of HF2928.

State Auditor Julie Blaha testified in support of the bill.

Aaron Johnston, Assistant Fire Chief and relief association Treasurer, Coon Rapids Fire Department, and working group member, testified in support of the bill.

Ron Johnson, retired Maple Grove Firefighter and Minnesota State Fire Department Association working group representative, testified in support of the bill.

The Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association submitted a letter of support.

HF 2928 was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus bill.

HF 217 (Franson); SF 809 (Westrom): PERA Statewide Volunteer Firefighter Plan; Modifying service counted in determining vesting in a retirement benefit.

Rep. Nadeau moved Amendment H0217-1A. **MOTION PREVAILED.**

Ms. Lenczewski reviewed the staff summary of the bill and the amendment.

Representative Franson presented and testified in support of her bill.

Doug Anderson, Executive Director, Public Employees Retirement Association, testified in support of the bill, conditional upon approval of the -1A amendment.

Philip Zimpel, Firefighter, Forada Fire Department, formerly with the Plummer Fire Department, testified via Zoom in support of the bill.

HF 217/SF 809, as amended, was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus bill.

HF 2007 (Robbins); SF 1975 (Limmer): PERA Statewide Volunteer Firefighter Plan; Mid- year coverage effective date for Hamel and Loretto firefighters, merger of assets and liabilities.

Ms. Lenczewski reviewed the staff summary of the bill.

Representative Robbins and Senator Limmer presented and testified in support of their bill.

Jeffrey Ruchti, Fire Chief, Hamel Volunteer Fire Department, testified in support of the bill.

Jeff Leuer, Fire Chief, Loretto Fire Department, testified in support of the bill.

HF 2007/SF 1975 was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus bill.

HF 2777 (Hudella): PERA Statewide Volunteer Firefighter Plan; Amending the requirements applicable to a relief association after the affiliated fire department joins the plan.

Ms. Lenczewski reviewed the staff summary of the bill.

Representative Hudella presented and testified in support of his bill.

Doug Anderson, Executive Director, PERA, testified that he needs to review the language of Section 2.

HF 2777 was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus bill.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.