

The Legislative Session ended at 6:00 pm May 13, 2011. THANKS to MRTA there was no legislation passed that would have been detrimental to our retirement system or benefits. Below is a recap of your wonderful work in protecting and enhancing our hard earned retirement. On February 8th and 9th over 200 MRTA members "showed up" at the Capitol during MRTA Legislative Days. This year we had approximately 80 new legislators and you "educated" them! HB 409 died on that day because of your strong showing even with terrible weather. "THE WORLD IS RUN BY THOSE WHO SHOW UP!" Great job MRTA!!

Legislative Report

Submitted by Ron Schlimme, MRTA Legislative Committee Chairman

#1) On February 3rd MRTA sent a letter to the Governor and every member of the State Legislature stating MRTA's strong opposition to the concept of a State Investment Board (SIB). The SIB is an attempt to seize Missouri's Public Pension funds and put them under the control of a private investment board with limited liability and without any elected representative positions. The concept of the SIB was never brought forward this session. We believe Senator Crowell (S-27 Cape Girardeau) will bring it back in 2012. It will be the senator's last session as he will be term limited.

#2) HB 409 (Koenig R-88 St. Louis County) died in committee. This bill would have created a Defined Contribution (401K) system for new hire educators. This privatization would have eventually run our system out of money to pay benefits. HB 409 was also bad for Missouri Public Education in that it does not encourage educators to make a career of teaching. Our current retirement system is very good, the best in the nation, and is a big reason in keeping experience in the classroom. Public servants like educators deserve retirement security. All Americans do!

#3) HB 15 passed. Thanks to your e-mails and phone calls. This bill allowed \$189 million of 2009 Federal Stimulus dollars to flow to Missouri Public Schools. This bill allowed funding for public schools to remain flat. In these times this is very good. It prevented teachers from getting laid off, stemmed the tide of growing class sizes, allowed continued active educator contributions to our retirement system.

#4) HB 229 was passed as consent and without amendment. This legislation was needed by our colleagues of the Public School Retirement System of Kansas City. It was a bill dealing with work after retirement and specifies that the system is intended to be a qualified plan

under federal law. There were other needed clean up changes also incorporated within the bill. MRTA was happy to help and happy that the legislation did not turn into a "Christmas Tree" retirement bill where the SIB and Defined Contribution Legislation could have been added.

#5) HCR 10 was introduced by Representatives Nolte R-33, Anders D-51 and Gatschenberger R-13 asking the Missouri Legislature to support the repeal of the WEP/GPO provisions of Social Security in Congress. The Bill was not allowed a hearing.

Special Note: Our Missouri income tax exemptions for education retirees are still in place. HCS HB 979 & 885 (Koenig R-88 St. Louis County, Brattin R-124 Harrisonville) was voted out of committee but did not have any more movement. This bill would have repealed our Missouri income tax exemptions for retired educators.

The repeal of teacher tenure, the expansion of Charter Schools, and vouchers did not pass. THANKS to many of you who called and e-mailed your state elected officials.

Editorial Comment: *As you can see membership at MRTA is serious business. MRTA protects your retirement security.*