

From the UNM Retiree Association Legislative Committee:

From our hard working UNMRA Legislative Committee:

Get ready. Get set. Go! The relay race is on. We are at the halfway mark for the 56th Legislative session and legislation is being handed off to committees and then on to the House or Senate. One thousand, two hundred and thirty legislative actions have been filed since January 16. Those filings include bills, joint-memorials, resolutions, and dummy bills. Forty-three bills and memorials have passed the House. Forty-seven bills and memorials have passed the Senate.

And then we have the dummy bills. In anticipation of late filings and unanticipated legislation, a determined number of bills are filed with the title “Public, Peace, Safety, and Welfare” at the beginning of each session. They are empty bills awaiting to be amended with a new title and legislative content. A dummy bill can be introduced at any time. To date, thirty- six dummy bills have been introduced in the House and thirty-seven dummy bills in the Senate.

Since you last heard from the UNM Retiree Association, three bills were introduced that we are now following, SB 392, HB 210, and SM 16. You can learn more about these bills by reading the information below.

UNM RA IS TRACKING THE FOLLOWING BILLS:

ERB:

SB 20a, CHANGES TO ERB

Sponsor: Senator Gay Kernan

Synopsis: This bill allows eligible employees of Southeast New Mexico (Carlsbad) to participate in the Alternative Retirement Plan. Amended to remove – to also provide an exception to allow certain contracts of the ERB to exceed four years pursuant to the procurement code.

Status: Received a DO PASS in Senate Education Committee (SRC), Wednesday, January 30.

Current Location: Senate Finance Committee. Awaiting hearing date.

HB 189a: EDUCATIONAL RETIREMENT CHANGES

Sponsor: Rep. Cathyrnn Brown

Synopsis: It is a companion bill in the House for SB 20a

Status: Received a DO PASS in House Education Committee, (HEC), with amendments, February 13.

Current Location: House Appropriation and Finance Committee, (HAFC). Awaiting a hearing date.

SB 492, EDUCATIONAL RETURN TO WORK CHANGES

Sponsor: Senator George Munoz

Synopsis: This bill extends the 90-day layout law, passed in 2022, from a 36-month sunset to 60-months.

Status: Senate Education Committee (SEC). Awaiting a hearing.

Current Location: Senate Education Committee

OTHER PENSION ISSUES TO WATCH:

HB 210, TEMPORARY PAYMENT TO CERTAIN PERA MEMBERS

Sponsors: Rep. Patricia Lundstrom, Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero, Rep. Christine Chandler, & Rep. Bobby Gonzales

Synopsis: This bill will require the Public Retirement Association (PERA) pension fund to pay pension recipients who are at least 65 years old an additional, non-compounding payment equal to 2% of the member's annual benefit. The 2% payment would be calculated each fiscal year based on the total payment for that year and will be recurring and coming from the general fund. Payments would be inclusive of all previously granted cost of living (COLA) adjustments. Payments would be made from the year 2024 through 2028. The 2% non-compounding will be on top of the 0.5% compounding that begins 2023 and comes from the PERA fund. This bill was introduced to help retirees facing the financial challenges from inflation living on a fixed income.

No bill for ERB retired pension members 65 or older to increase their COLA is being considered this session. What is a dummy bill?

Status: Heard in House Labor, Veterans, and Military Committee (HLVMC), February 10.

Passed unanimously. You can listen to the committee recording at <https://sg001-harmony.sliq.net/.../Powe.../20230220/-1/70838>

Current Location: House Appropriations & Finance Committee

SM 16: STUDY DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PENSIONS

Sponsor: Senator Bill Tallman

Synopsis: The bill requests the State Auditor to establish a Task Force to study the feasibility of implementing a DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PENSION PLAN for Public Employees.

Status: Senate Rules Committee.

Current Location: Senate Rules Committee.

BUDGET:

HB 2, GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2023

Sponsors: Rep. Nathan Small and Rep. Meredith Dixon

Synopsis: Making general appropriations and authorizing expenditures by state agencies by law.

Status: Heard on January 23 in the HAFC and substitutions HB 2 & 3 sent to the House where it passed, 52 yay and 17 nays.

Current Location: Referred to the Senate Finance Committee, no date set.

SB 158, GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2023

Sponsor: Senator George Munoz

Synopsis: Making general appropriations and authorizing expenditures by state agencies by law.

Status: Senate Finance Committee.

Current Location: Senate Finance Committee.

Committee testimony can be given via ZOOM and committee and floor hearings can be watched by the public via webcast.

Over the session, we will update you on legislation we are following and their progress.

Please stay tuned for future updates!

IT IS UP TO ALL OF US, RETIREES AND THOSE STILL WORKING, TO PROTECT OUR BENEFITS!!! WHAT CAN YOU DO??

- Track the bill – State bill finder site - https://nmlegis.gov/Legislation/Bill_Finder

- Sign up with UNM Government and Community Relations to receive bill updates and alerts – <https://govrel.unm.edu/updates/index.html>.
- UNM 2023 Legislative Priorities -
- <https://govrel.unm.edu/.../2022-legislative-priorities3.pdf>
- Know your state senators and representatives contact information before you really need it - Find your legislator by address - https://www.nmlegis.gov/Members/Find_By_Address
- Write, call, or tweet legislators and ask them to protect your pension and the COLA - CAPITOL SWITCHBOARD - (505-986-4300) & [#nmlegis](#)

2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION CALENDAR:

- Monday, January 3 – Friday, January 13 - Legislation may be pre-filed.
- Tuesday, January 17 - Opening day (noon)
- Thursday, February 16 - Deadline for introduction (Note: a legislation, dummy bill can be introduced at any time.)
- Saturday, March 18 - Session ends (noon)
- Friday, April 7 - Legislation not acted upon by the governor is pocket vetoed.
- Friday, June 16 - The effective date of legislation, not a general appropriation bill or a bill carrying an emergency clause or other specified date.

https://www.nmlegis.gov/Members/Find_By_Address