

From the UNM Retiree Association Legislative Committee:

As we go into the last week of the New Mexico 57th Legislative Session, we are often reminded it is not over until it is over, and anything can happen. That is not always true because in many of the ERB and PERA bills we watched nothing much happened. They may be resuscitated next year.

All of what occurred early in the session with the PERA bills to increase their COLA and not the ERB's COLA is an excellent reminder to stay steady. Getting excited before needed only leads to increasing your blood pressure needlessly.

SB 75a, Educational Retirement Changes, received a Do Pass by the Senate and the House. It is now on Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's desk awaiting her signature or veto.

These are the following bills presumed dead:

ERB:

HB 254a, Educational Retirees Returning to Work Time Period. There is a similar bill on the Senate side.

HB 454, Educational Retirement Changes – A 13th check for retired members.

PERA:

HB 96, PERA Member Temporary Payment.

HB 164, Increase Retiree COLA.

SB 30, PERA Two Percent Cost of Living Adjustments.

SB 117, PERA Cost of Living Adjustment.

We continue to follow these bills.

ERB:

HB 251, Educational Retirement Beneficiary Changes. It is scheduled for the Senate Calendar, March 19, 2025.

SB 133a, Educational Retirees Returning to Work. It is scheduled for the House Appropriations and Finance Committee, March 19, 2025, 1:30 p.m.

You can count on your UNM Retiree Association to alert you if any other ERB bills arise during the session that concerns retirement benefits for ERB active or retired members.

ERB Legislation:

HB 251, Educational Retirement Beneficiary Changes

Sponsor: Representatives William Hall, Tanya Mirabal Moya, and Brian Baca

Synopsis: The bill allows a retired member under option B or C, with a member's spouse as the designated beneficiary, to exercise a one-time irrevocable option to deselect the designated beneficiary and designate another. If passed, this will bring ERB into parity with PERA.

Status: HB 251 received a unanimous **DO PASS** in the House Labor, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee. The House Education Committee gave HB 251 a **DO PASS**. Received a **DO PASS** in the House

Current Location: It is scheduled for a hearing on the Senate Floor calendar, Monday, March 19, 2025.

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/bills/house/HB0251.pdf>

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/firs/HB0251.PDF>

HB 254a, Educational Retirees Returning to Work Time Period

Sponsor: Representatives Tanya Mirabal Moya, Joy Garrett, Brian Baca, and Anita Gonzales

Synopsis: The bill extends the current 36 months RTW period to 84 months but was amended to extend the current statutory employment period from 36 months to 60 months in the House Labor, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee.

Status: Received a **DO PASS** with amendment in the HLVMA Committee.

Current Location: House Appropriation Committee

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/bills/house/HB0254.pdf>

HB 454, Educational Retirement Changes

Sponsor: Representatives Brian Baca and Joy Garratt

Synopsis: The bill directs sixty million to ERB to provide 13th checks to ERB retirees in fiscal years 2026 and 2027. Sixty million dollars (\$60,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the educational retirement board for expenditure in fiscal year 2026 and subsequent fiscal years to provide adequate funding to cover the cost of the temporary, additional, non-compounding payments. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund.

Status: It has been sent to the House Education Committee for a hearing.

Current Location: House Education Committee

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/bills/house/HB0454.pdf>

SB 75a, Educational Retirement Changes

Sponsor: Senator Natalie Figueroa,

Synopsis: Relating to educational retirement; making changes to the educational retirement act; clarifying restrictions on receipt of gifts; providing for unclaimed member contributions to be deposited into the educational retirement fund; clarifying certain terms; allowing for a member on disability status who is over sixty and who receives an annuity adjustment to continue receiving the annuity adjustment; requiring payment of allowed service within ninety days; allowing for disclosure of member or retired member information to the public employees retirement board to administer.

Status: It received a **DO PASS**, 9 for, 0 against and sent to the Senate Finance Committee with amendments. It received a **DO PASS** in the Senate Finance Committee. Passed the Senate Floor, 34 to 0. It received a unanimous **DO PASS** in the House Education Committee. DO PASS in the House Government, Elections & Indian Affairs Committee. Received a **DO PASS** in the Senate and the House.

Current Location: On the Governor's desk.

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/bills/senate/SB0075.pdf>

[https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/Amendments In Context/SB0075.pdf](https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/Amendments%20In%20Context/SB0075.pdf)

SB 133a, Educational Retirees Returning to Work

Sponsor: Senators Peter Wirth and Mimi Stewart

Synopsis: The bill amends Section 22-11-25.1 NMSA 1978 of the Educational Retirement Act to raise the maximum amount a retiree may earn per year from return-to-work employment with an affiliated employer, from \$15 thousand to \$25 thousand, without suspending their retirement benefits. This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or June 20, 2025.

Status: SB 133 was heard in the Senate Education Committee (SEC) on Friday, February 7, 2025, where it received a **DO PASS**, 7 for, 0 against with amendment. It received a **DO PASS** in the Senate Finance Committee. It received a **DO PASS** in the House Education Committee.

Current Location: It is scheduled for a hearing in the House Appropriations and Finance Committee, March 19, 1:30 p.m.

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/bills/senate/SB0133.pdf>

https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/Amendments_In_Context/SB0133.pdf

PERA Legislation:

HB 96, PERA Member Temporary Payment

Sponsors: Representative Joseph Sanchez, Cynthia Borrego, and Nicole Chavez

Synopsis: Would provide an additional non-compounding payment to those receiving pension benefits from the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) in FY26 and FY27. Payments would equal 2 percent of the beneficiary's payments from the prior fiscal year. The additional payments would only be distributed in the years FY26 and FY27 and would not be considered when calculating future cost-of-living adjustments.

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/firs/HB0096.PDF>

Status: HB 96 was heard in House Labor, Veteran's, and Military Affairs Committee on January 23, 2025, and received a **DO PASS**, 10 Yes, 0 No.

The bill was referred to the House Appropriations Finance Committee, (HAFC).

Current Location: Assigned to the House Appropriations Finance Committee and awaiting a hearing date. **Assumed Dead.**

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/bills/house/HB0096LV1.pdf>

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/firs/HB0096.PDF>

HB 164, Increase Retiree COLA

Sponsor: Representatives Joy Garratt and Alan Martinez

Synopsis: House Bill 164 (HB164) would increase annual cost-of-living adjustments for retirees from state government receiving benefits from the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) who House Bill 164 – Page 2 are 65 or older. Additionally, the bill would allow local governments to opt into a program to have cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) increased for retirees from their governments by making contributions to cover the actuarial impact of the increased contribution. HB164 appropriates \$10 million from the general fund to PERA to fund cost-of-living adjustment increases for state government retirees. This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or June 20, 2025. However, the bill's provisions are specific to increase in FY26 and future years.

Status: Scheduled for the House Government and Indian Affairs Committee (HFIAC), Monday, February 10, 8 a.m., Room 305. The bill received a **DO PASS.**

Current Status: Awaiting a hearing in the House Appropriations Finance Committee. **Assumed Dead.**

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/bills/house/HB0164.pdf>

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/firs/HB0164.PDF>

SB 30, PERA Two Percent Cost of Living Adjustments

Sponsors: Senators Liz Stefanics, Alan Martinez, Joy Garratt, Linda Trujillo, and Cynthia Borrego,

Synopsis: Relating to Public Employees Retirement; Restoring a 2% Cost-of-Living Adjustment for Certain Retired Members; Making an Appropriation.

Status: It was amended and received a **DO PASS** by the Senate Health and Public Affairs Committee, (SHPAC).

Current Location: Senate Finance Committee. **Dead for this session.**

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/bills/senate/SB0030.pdf>

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/firs/SB0030.PDF>

SB 117, PERA Cost of Living Adjustment

Sponsor: Senators Michael Padilla and Liz Stefanics

Synopsis: Relating to public employee retirement; repealing and reenacting a new section 10-11-118 nmsa 1978 (being laws 2020, chapter 11, section 61) relating to cost-of-living adjustment provisions for qualified pension recipients; providing cost-of-living adjustments that are equal to social security and supplemental security income cost-of-living adjustments; making an appropriation.

Status: Awaits a hearing in the Senate Health and Public Affairs, (SHPAC).

Current Location: Awaits a hearing in the Senate Health and Public Affairs Committee, (SHPAC).

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/bills/senate/SB0117.pdf> **Dead for this session.**

Committee testimonies can be received via zoom. The public can watch floor and committee hearings via webcast. If you are planning on going to the Roundhouse to visit a legislator or attend a session in the House or Senate, please follow all Roundhouse guidelines.

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 2024 Legislative Priorities -

<https://govrel.unm.edu/state-legislative-sessions/2022/2022-legislative-priorities3.pdf>

- Know your state senator's and representative's 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 - CAPITOL SWITCHBOARD - (505-986-4300) &
[nmlegis.gov](https://www.nmlegis.gov)

2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION CALENDAR:

- Thursday, January 2 – Friday, January 17 - Legislation may be pre-filed.
- Tuesday, January 21 - Opening day (noon)
- Thursday, February 20 - Deadline for introduction (Note: Legislation filed as a dummy bill can be introduced at any time.)
- Saturday, March 22 - Session ends (noon)
- Friday, April 11 - Legislation not acted upon by the governor is pocket vetoed.
- Friday, June 20 - The effective date of legislation, not a general appropriation bill or a bill carrying an emergency clause or other specified date.