Testimony of

Joella Bouchard Mudry, President
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Appropriations Committee
(date)

SB 1122 An Act Permitting Payment of Union Dues from Teachers' Retirement Payments

Good afternoon Senator Harp, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee. Thank you for allowing me to appear before you today. My name is Joella Bouchard Mudry and I am the President of the A&R Retiree Council, a statewide union of nearly 500 retired state employees. I am here to testify in favor of SB 1122, An Act Permitting Payment of Union Dues from Teachers' Retirement Payments.

Retired state employees already benefit from the convenience of participating in a voluntary program that allows for automatic dues deduction to the retiree chapter of their local union. It is a simple, cost-effective process that allows the union retiree chapter to focus on issues and activities that are relevant to the members, rather than spending significant resources on the annual solicitation and collection of membership dues.

The Office of the State Comptroller has made these automated monthly deductions from our state retirement checks for years. We have found this system to be straightforward and efficient for all parties. In fact, the overwhelming majority of my members elect to take advantage of this convenience. Members who wish to terminate their voluntary deductions may do so at any time.

The system works well for us and it could just as easily work well for retired teachers and the Teachers Retirement Board. Because they also participate in a state administered pension system, retired teachers should be able to participate in a similar process to collect union dues that retired state employees enjoy. It's a basic matter of fairness.

I urge you to support SB 1122 and provide retired teachers the same convenience that you have afforded to retired state employees. It's voluntary. It's convenient. It's easy to implement.

Thank you for your consideration. I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have.