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AppropriationTestimony  
Teacher Retiree Health Care Fund  
TESTIMONY OF JPR Malloys Zero Health Care Funding.doc

## Appropriations Committee March 22, 2013

Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Jon-Paul Roden. I am a resident of Vernon, taught in the Vernon Schools for 35 years retiring as the district's Coordinator of Computer Science, and am in my sixth year as President of CEA-Retired.

I have testified a number of times before this committee usually on the topic of health care for Connecticut's retired teachers. During the last session, I spoke concerning the state's plan to return the state's portion of funding of the TRB Medicare supplemental health plan to the pre-Fiscal Year 2006 level of funding by shifting the that cost to retirees. I pointed out that there are over 31,000 retired teachers in the Teachers' Retirement system, 21,000 over the age of 65, and about 19,000 on the TRB health care plan.

For my whole teaching career, I knew that there was a health care plan in place and contributed a portion of my salary specifically to that health care fund. There was an implicit promise that a plan would be there for my retirement. Now we have heard the Governor's proposal to skip the state's contribution to that fund in his proposed budget. It is claimed that the fund can sustain this lack of funding. This argument sounds suspiciously like the argument given for so many years as why the state could underfund the pension system. We all know what that underfunding has led to and the publicity that we often read in the news about the status of Connecticut's pensions.

With the governor's zero funding proposal for the health care fund, I am especially concerned for the over 1600 TRB plan oldest participants who retired before the Teacher Enhancement Act and whose pensions are among the lowest in the system. What will happen to them if the fund becomes unstable and retirees are then asked to increase the funds that they pay because the state has broken its promise to see that the health care fund is fiscally secure?

This proposal has upset retired teacher and made some just plain angry. I urge you to keep the promise that was made to retirees as they looked toward retirement - that the cost of their health care would be equally shared with their teaching colleagues, themselves, and the TRB health fund and that the state contributes its promised share.

Don't break that promise and attempt to balance the budget by cutting the state's share and thrusting that additional cost on the backs of retirees and active teachers.

Jon-Paul

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Saint Thomas Aquinas observed: if the primary mission of the ship captain were to preserve his ship, he would never leave port.