



House Pensions and Benefits Committee
Representative Johnson, Chair
Working after retirement

February 11, 2015
Submitted by Diane Gjerstad

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the working after retirement provision scheduled to sunset June 30th, 2015.

Wichita Public Schools is a large district with enrollment over 51,000 students attending 82 schools. Appropriate staffing is key for the success and safety of our students. When the regular teacher or paraprofessional is absent, students in the classroom deserve a certified professional who is able to maintain classroom discipline and move students academically.

The state's largest district has been judicious in the use of 'working after retirement' employees to fill positions. The district actively recruits in 17 states to find the talent and skills required to provide a widely diversified student body a educational experience. As aggressively as the district attempts to be in filling positions, we find from time to time, areas difficult to find qualified individuals. Working after retirement is a tool which is used sparingly.

During the 2013/14 school year the Wichita district employed 16 persons under the "working after retirement" provision. Of the total half were special education teachers. One is a teacher of visually impaired students. Special education services require certified instructors who are able to provide appropriate educational services. Working after retirement allows districts to fill hard to find instructional positions. Since special education requires certified teachers and is a mandate, we would suggest exempting special education positions from the KPERS surcharge.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to provide comments. This is an important staffing tool which is being used cautiously. We encourage the committee to extend the working after retirement statute and to exempt special education instructors from the surcharge.