



# RSA Legislative Update

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**O**n January 11, 2022, the Legislature convened for the 2022 Regular Session and has been working on a number of RSA-related bills, including bills to modify ERS and TRS Tier II, provide retiree bonuses, modify the return to work rules for retirees, and change the benefit option available to surviving spouses of retirement-eligible members who die in active service.

Once again, the Legislature is considering bills to modify ERS and TRS Tier II by allowing 30-year service retirement, providing hazardous duty credit to FLC members, and slightly increasing the member contribution rate. The House always passes the Tier II modification bills, but they typically stall out in the Senate. Hopefully, this is the year for final passage.

Due to labor shortages in various areas of public employment, legislators are considering changes to the return to work laws that would allow additional flexibility for public employers to hire retirees to fill vacancies. The RSA is working with these legislators to ensure that these changes would not harm the RSA and would give

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employers the needed flexibility.

A number of bills to grant bonuses to ERS and TRS retirees have been introduced. It is expected that the Legislature will pass retiree bonuses, but the amount is still being debated. The Alabama Retired State Employees' Association and the Alabama Education Association, along with its retiree division, the Alabama Education Retirees Association, are working to ensure that retirees receive a meaningful bonus.

Finally, a bill has been filed by Rep. Ellis (R-Columbiana) to change the benefit option that is available to surviving spouses of retirement-eligible members that die in active service. Currently, these spouses may choose between a lump-sum payment or 50% of what the member would have been eligible to receive had they retired. This bill would allow surviving spouses to receive 100% of what the member would have been eligible to receive. The bill has a lot of support from legislators, employers, and employee associations, and we are hopeful that it will pass this session.

Check out the RSA's Legislative webpage for weekly summaries and our bill tracking chart at [www.rsa-al.gov/about-rsa/legislation/](http://www.rsa-al.gov/about-rsa/legislation/). ●