



**OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR
2025 REGULAR SESSION
ACTUARIAL NOTE**

House Bill 9 HLS 25RS-198 Original Author: Bagley LLA Note HB 9.01	Date: April 9, 2025 Organizations Affected: LASERS OR +\$154,400,000 APV
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Bill Header: RETIREMENT/STATE EMPS: Provides relative to retirement eligibility in the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System

Purpose of Bill: Proposed law provides that any member of the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS), regardless of their date of first employment or age, will be eligible to retire without actuarial reduction if they have 30 years of service.

Summary of Impact¹: The estimated net actuarial and fiscal impact of the proposed legislation is summarized below.

This bill provides for earlier retirement eligibility for all employees, which will increase the benefit payments and total liability.

Proposed law is expected to immediately increase the *net actuarial accrued liability* incurred by the retirement system by approximately **\$154,400,000 and the annual contribution rate by 1.50%**. Over the long term, proposed law is expected to increase the *net actuarial present value of expected future benefits and administrative expenses* incurred by the retirement system, and the long-term increase in the contribution rate is expected to be approximately 0.88%. A more detailed explanation can be found in Section I: Actuarial Impact on Retirement Systems.

This bill is subject to the Louisiana Constitution which requires unfunded liabilities created by an improvement in retirement benefits to be amortized over a period not to exceed ten years.

Net Fiscal Costs pertain to changes to all cash flows over the next five-year period including retirement system cash flows or cash flows related to local and state government entities.

In the following table, expenditures and revenues include cash flows to or from the affected retirement system (e.g. administrative expenses incurred by, benefit payments from, or contributions to the retirement system) and do not include administrative expenditures and revenues specifically incurred by the state or local government entities associated with implementing the legislation. A more detailed explanation can be found in Section II: Fiscal Impact on Retirement Systems.

Five Year Net Fiscal Costs Pertaining to:	Expenditures	Revenues
The Retirement Systems	\$ 0	\$ 121,600,000
Local Government Entities	0	0
State Government Entities	<u>121,600,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	\$ 121,600,000	\$ 121,600,000

In the following table, expenditures and revenues include administrative expenditures and revenues specifically incurred by the state or local government entities associated with implementing the legislation and do not include cash flows to or from the affected retirement system (i.e. contribution changes included in the above table). This information is provided by the LLA Local Government Services or the Legislative Fiscal Office. A more detailed explanation can be found in Sections III: Fiscal Impact on Local Government Entities and Section IV: Fiscal Impact on State Government Entities.

Five Year Net Fiscal Costs Pertaining to:	Expenditures	Revenues
Local Government Entities	\$ 0	\$ 0
State Government Entities	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	\$ 0	\$ 0

¹ This is a different assessment from the actuarial cost requiring a 2/3rd vote (refer to the section near the end of this Actuarial Note "Information Pertaining to La. Const. Art. X, §29(F)").

<p>This Note has been prepared by the Actuary for the Louisiana Legislative Auditor (LLA) with assistance from either the Fiscal Notes staff of the Legislative Auditor or staff of the Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO). The attachment of this Note provides compliance with the requirements of R.S. 24:521 as amended by Act 353 of the 2016 Regular Session.</p>	<p>Kenneth J. "Kenny" Herbold, ASA, EA, MAAA Director of Actuarial Services Louisiana Legislative Auditor</p>
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I. ACTUARIAL IMPACT ON RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

This section of the actuarial note is intended to provide a brief outline of the changes in plan provisions and actuarial effect on key aspects of the affected retirement systems.

Proposed law provides for earlier retirement eligibility for many members of numerous subplans of LASERS, as compared to present law. Currently, the affected members have varying eligibility conditions for retirement, depending on their subplan and other factors such as date of hire. Under proposed law, they would become eligible to retire after attaining 30 years of service, regardless of age, in addition to the various other eligibility conditions.

Proposed law would accelerate eligibility for retirement primarily for rank and file participants hired after June 30, 2006. Even though the monthly amount of pension benefit is generally lower when retiring earlier, the benefits are paid for a longer period of time and must be funded over a shorter period of time. The net result is a cost to the plan and to the participating employers.

Based on the participant data and retirement assumptions used in the June 30, 2024 actuarial valuation, the actuary for the system estimates proposed law would increase the system’s Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability (UAL) by approximately \$154.4 million. A 10-year amortization of this increase in the UAL would add approximately \$21.5 million to the employer contribution for that 10-year period. In addition, there would be an \$8.9 million ongoing increase in the Normal Cost, resulting in a total near-term increase in employer contribution of approximately \$30.4 million, or 1.50% of payroll.

Over the long-term (i.e. the expected increase in normal cost for participants hired after June 30, 2006) is an expected increase in employer contribution rate of 0.90% for rank and file participants and 0.06% for judges. Based on the current plan demographics this would translate to an approximate long-term increase in employer contribution of 0.88% of payroll.

This estimate assumes no change in retirement patterns. Therefore, the increase reflects the ability to receive unreduced retirement at an earlier date, as well as higher early retirement benefits for those who retire prior to their normal retirement date. To the extent retirement patterns change related to earlier retirement eligibility, the normal cost component is likely to increase once that participant behavior is reflected in updated assumptions.

II. FISCAL IMPACT ON RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

This section of the actuarial note pertains to annual fiscal costs (savings) associated with the retirement systems.

Fiscal costs or savings include only cash flows to or from the affected retirement system (e.g. administrative expenses incurred by, benefit payments from, or contributions to the retirement system) and do not include administrative expenditures and revenues specifically incurred by the state or local government entities associated with implementing the legislation. A fiscal cost is denoted by “Increase” or a positive number. Fiscal savings are denoted by “Decrease” or a negative number. A revenue increase is denoted by “Increase” or a positive number. A revenue decrease is denoted by “Decrease” or a negative number.

Table A: Retirement System Fiscal Cost

Expenditures	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2027-28</u>	<u>2028-29</u>	<u>2029-30</u>	<u>5-Year Total</u>
State General Fund	\$ 0	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 121,600,000
Agy Self-Generated	Increase	0	0	0	0	0
Stat Deds/Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Funds	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local Funds	0	0	0	0	0	0
Annual Total	Increase	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 121,600,000

Revenues	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>5-Year Total</u>
State General Fund	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Agy Self-Generated	0	30,400,000	30,400,000	30,400,000	30,400,000	121,600,000
Stat Deds/Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Funds	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local Funds	0	0	0	0	0	0
Annual Total	\$ 0	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 30,400,000	\$ 121,600,000

Changes in employer contributions are reflected in the State General Fund and/or Local Fund expenditure lines above. The actual sources of funding (e.g., Federal Funds, State General Fund, etc.) may vary by employer and are not differentiated in the table.

The proposed legislation is expected to have the following effects on retirement related fiscal costs and revenues during the five-year measurement period.

1. Expenditures:

- a. The retirement system has estimated a potential increase in one-time operating expenditures of up-to \$80,000 for an external consultant to modify existing IT systems as well as printing costs to update LASERS publications, to reflect changes in proposed law. This is reflected in the 2025-26 FY Agy Self-Generated expenditures.
- b. Benefit payments are not expected to increase during the five-year measurement period because only participants hired after June 30, 2006 will be affect by proposed law and would not reach the 30 years of service requirement until after the 5-year measurement period. All other tiers of employees are eligible to retire on or before achieving 30 years of service under present law

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- c. Increases in employer contributions are reflected in the State General Funds line above. The increase in contribution requirement is expected to be approximately \$30.4 million per year, based on estimates prepared by the actuary for the system using June 30, 2024 participant data and retirement assumptions. The resulting increase in the actuarial accrued liability is approximately \$154.1 million, which would be amortized over 10 years at approximately \$21.5 million, and the Normal Cost would increase by approximately \$8.9 million per year. The impact of proposed law would first be reflected in the June 30, 2025 actuarial valuation, which determines the expected contribution rate for FY 2026-27.

2. Revenues:

Changes in retirement contributions identified as changes in State General Fund expenditures have corresponding changes in Agy Self-Generated revenues.

III. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

This section of the actuarial note pertains to annual fiscal costs (savings) related to administrative expenditures and revenue impacts incurred by local government entities other than those included in Section II.

The proposed legislation is not expected to have any additional effects on fiscal administrative costs and revenues related to local government entities during the five-year measurement period, other than those outlined above.

IV. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT ENTITIES
(Prepared by Legislative Fiscal Office)

This section of the actuarial note pertains to annual fiscal costs (savings) related to administrative expenditures and revenue impacts incurred by state government entities other than those included in Section II.

Other than the impact on employer contribution rates which is already reflected in Section II above, there is no anticipated direct material effect on governmental expenditures and revenues as a result of this measure.

V. ACTUARIAL DISCLOSURES

Intended Use

This actuarial note is based on our understanding of the bill as of the date shown above. It is intended to be used by the legislature during the current legislative session only and assumes no other legislative changes affecting the funding or benefits of the affected systems, other than those identified, will be adopted. Other readers of this actuarial note are advised to seek professional guidance as to its content and interpretation, and not to rely upon this communication without such guidance. The actuarial note, and any referenced documents, should be read as a whole. Distribution of, or reliance on, only parts of this actuarial note could result in its misuse and may mislead others. The summary of the impact of the bill included in this actuarial note is for the purposes of an actuarial analysis only, as required by La. R.S. 24:521, and is not a legal interpretation of the provisions of the bill.

Actuarial Data, Methods and Assumptions

Unless indicated otherwise, this actuarial note was prepared using actuarial data, methods, and assumptions as disclosed in the most recent actuarial valuation report adopted by the Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee (PRSAC). The assumptions and methods are reasonable for the purpose of this analysis.

For certain calculations that may be presented herein, we have utilized commercially available valuation software and/or are relying on proprietary valuation models and related software developed by our actuarial contractor. We made a reasonable attempt to understand the intended purpose of, general operation of, major sensitivities and dependencies within, and key strengths and limitations of these models. In our professional judgment, the models have the capability to provide results that are consistent with the purposes of the analysis and have no material limitations or known weaknesses. Tests were performed to ensure that the model reasonably represents that which is intended to be modeled.

To the extent that this actuarial note relies on calculations performed by the retirement systems' actuaries, to the best of our knowledge, no material biases exist with respect to the data, methods or assumptions used to develop the analysis other than those specifically identified. We did not audit the information provided, but have reviewed the information for reasonableness and consistency with other information provided by or for the affected retirement systems.

Conflict of Interest

Employees of the LLA are members of LASERS and the signing actuary is in the class of affected employees. However, there is nothing in the proposed legislation that will compromise the signing actuary's ability to present an unbiased statement of actuarial opinion.

Risks Associated with Measuring Costs

This actuarial note is an actuarial communication, and is required to include certain disclosures in compliance with Actuarial Standards of Practice (ASOP) No. 51.

A full actuarial determination of the retirement system's costs, actuarially determined contributions and accrued liability require the use of assumptions regarding future economic and demographic events. The assumptions used to determine the retirement system's contribution requirement and accrued liability are summarized in the system's most recent Actuarial Valuation Report accepted by the respective retirement board and by the Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee (PRSAC).

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The actual emerging future experience, such as a retirement fund's future investment returns, may differ from the assumptions. To the extent that emerging future experience differs from the assumptions, the resulting shortfalls (or gains) must be recognized in future years by future taxpayers. Future actuarial measurements may also differ significantly from the current measurements due to other factors: changes in economic or demographic assumptions; increases or decreases expected as part of the natural operation of the methodology used for these measurements (such as the end of an amortization period; or additional cost or contribution requirements based on the system's funded status); and changes in plan provisions or applicable law.

Examples of risk that may reasonably be anticipated to significantly affect the plan's future financial condition include:

1. Investment risk – actual investment returns may differ from the expected returns (assumptions);
2. Contribution risk – actual contributions may differ from expected future contributions. For example, actual contributions may not be made in accordance with the plan's funding policy or material changes may occur in the anticipated number of covered employees, covered payroll, or other relevant contribution base;
3. Salary and Payroll risk – actual salaries and total payroll may differ from expected, resulting in actual future accrued liability and contributions differing from expected;
4. Longevity and life expectancy risk – members may live longer or shorter than expected and receive pensions for a period of time other than assumed;
5. Other demographic risks – members may terminate, retire or become disabled at times or with benefits at rates that differ from what was assumed, resulting in actual future accrued liability and contributions differing from expected.

The scope of an actuarial note prepared for the Louisiana Legislature does not include an analysis of the potential range of such future measurements or a quantitative measurement of the future risks of not achieving the assumptions. In certain circumstances, detailed or quantitative assessments of one or more of these risks as well as various plan maturity measures and historical actuarial measurements may be requested from the actuary. Additional risk assessments are generally outside the scope of an actuarial note. Additional assessments may include stress tests, scenario tests, sensitivity tests, stochastic modeling, and a comparison of the present value of accrued benefits at low-risk discount rates with the actuarial accrued liability.

However, the general cost-effects of emerging experience deviating from assumptions can be known. For example, the investment return since the most recent actuarial valuation may be less (or more) than the assumed rate, or a cost-of-living adjustment may be more (or less) than the assumed rate, or life expectancy may be improving (or worsening) compared to what is assumed. In each of these situations, the cost of the plan can be expected to increase (or decrease).

The use of reasonable assumptions and the timely receipt of the actuarially determined contributions are critical to support the financial health of the plan. However, employer contributions made at the actuarially determined rate do not necessarily guarantee benefit security.

Certification

Kenneth J. Herbold is an Associate of the Society of Actuaries (ASA), a Member of the American Academy of Actuaries (MAAA), and an Enrolled Actuary (EA) under the Employees Retirement Income Security Act of 1974. Mr. Herbold meets the US Qualification Standards necessary to render the actuarial opinion contained herein.

VI. LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Information Pertaining to La. Const. Art. X, §29(F)

- This bill contains a retirement system benefit provision having an actuarial cost.

Some members of a retirement system could receive a larger benefit with the enactment of this bill than what they would have received without this bill.

Dual Referral Relative to Total Fiscal Costs or Total Cash Flows:

The information presented below is based on information contained in Sections II, III, and IV for the first three years following the 2025 Regular Session.

Senate

- 13.5.1 Applies to Senate or House Instruments
If an annual fiscal cost \geq \$100,000, then bill is dual referred to:
Dual Referral: Senate Finance
- 13.5.2 Applies to Senate or House Instruments
If an annual tax or fee change \geq \$500,000, then bill is dual referred to:
Dual Referral: Revenue and Fiscal Affairs

House

- 6.8F Applies to Senate or House Instruments
If an annual General Fund fiscal cost \geq \$100,000, then bill is dual referred to:
Dual Referral: Appropriations
- 6.8G Applies to Senate Instruments only
If a net fee decrease occurs or is an increase in annual fees and taxes \geq \$500,000, then bill is dual referred to:
Dual Referral: Ways and Means