

A Great Success!

TRTA Day at the Capitol Makes Impact on Texas Legislature

More than 800 TRTA members converged on the Texas Capitol today to stress the importance of maintaining state appropriations to the TRS-Care health insurance program and TRS pension trust fund.

TRTA members delivered a message to the Texas Legislature, and it came through loud and clear...RESTORE FUNDING TO TRS AND TRS-CARE; PROTECT OUR HEALTH CARE PROGRAM!!

In addition, many legislators promised they would fight any effort to transition the pension fund from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan.

Legislators in both the Texas Senate and House recognized the work done by TRTA volunteers to improve the livelihood of all public education retirees.

Senator Robert Duncan and Representative Vicki Truitt authored resolutions recognizing this week as TRTA week. This news was met with loud applause from the hundreds of retirees taking nearly every seat in the public galleries. In fact, the Texas Senate was standing room only!

A dozen senators spoke in favor of the resolution in the Texas Senate. Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst commented that the Texas Senate budget proposal is placing a higher priority on TRS and TRS-Care.

TRTA members were encouraged to keep educating legislators about reinstating funding for the TRS-Care health insurance program.

TRTA members need to know that their participation in the TRTA Day at the Capitol made a difference for TRS retirees this legislative session! With over 800 participants attending the Capitol event, and over 2,500 emails sent in just 3 hours, legislators heard from their constituents. Many expressed a deep commitment to keep their promise to education retirees and work to restore funding to the TRS-Care program and TRS pension fund.

The TRTA Board of Directors, State Legislative Committee, and staff cannot tell everyone who participated in today's event, whether by being in Austin or participating virtually via email or phone, how much we appreciate you! For all you have given, done and continue to do, we thank you.

Later this week, TRTA will post pictures from our big event. Please feel free to email us pictures you have taken as well (send your photos to cindee@trta.org or laura@trta.org).

We also want to thank our state elected officials. EVERYONE worked hard to make this a great event. We extend our sincerest gratitude to state Senator Robert Duncan, Representative Vicki Truitt and their wonderful staff for making this a successful event. We also appreciate every member of the Texas Senate and House who addressed the crowd in the galleries. These heartfelt comments are appreciated.

As a final thought about how we should approach the remainder of this legislative session, consider the statement Senator Royce West offered from the floor of the Texas Senate today:

"...the question is 'what happens when you leave.' We need to make certain that as we weather the storms of the financial crisis that we are in, that we don't forget our retired teachers."

TRTA will continue to push for you this entire legislative session, doing all we can to ensure that no legislator has the opportunity to forget the great service you have given to this state.

Please write your representatives and encourage them to support retired educational personnel in this session. If you live in another part of the state use <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/> to find the names and addresses.

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