



January 5, 2022

Via Electronic Mail

The Honorable Governor Jim Justice
1900 Kanawha Blvd. E.
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Governor Justice,

We are writing to commend you for your agreement with state legislators to provide a five percent pay raise for all state employees, including public school teachers and service personnel. West Virginians have always been able to count on these dedicated public servants to provide essential services. More than ever before, these last two years have drawn attention to just how devoted these employees always are to providing service to our state, and how steadfast that devotion is even in the most difficult of times. This pay increase is well deserved and will help maintain a stable workforce.

Like current state employees, retired state personnel were deeply committed to serving the people of West Virginia while they were employed, and many have dedicated their time in retirement to continued service to their communities. As you are aware, state pensions do not include an annual cost of living adjustment, and so our state's retirees continue to lose buying power every year. We believe that these dedicated public servants also deserve the five percent increase that current employees will be receiving.

Your announcement of a one-time 2.5 percent bonus for current state employees is also appreciated. With consumer prices rising faster than they have in years, this Inflation bonus will greatly assist state workers – and the West Virginia economy – as we move through this inflationary period. However, we believe that it should not only be given to current state employees, but retired state personnel as well.

Like current employees, retired public sector workers, including retired school personnel, are being affected by the sharp increase in consumer prices over the last several months. In announcing the creation of the Inflatocine, you stated:

“We’re going to do a one-time supplement to try to help our teachers and state employees who are contemplating how they’re going to fill their cars up with gasoline and buy groceries with the inflated prices.”

Given that many of our state’s public service retirees are living on a limited fixed income, keeping up with inflation has been especially difficult for them. Just like current employees, they are wondering how they will fill their cars up with gasoline, buy groceries, pay for needed prescription drugs, and deal with all the other bills that they must pay. Including them in the one-time Inflatocine supplemental payment will help ease some of these concerns. Providing this bonus to retired workers will also help local communities and businesses because the money will not go to savings, but rather will be spent by those retirees for needed goods and services.

We hope you will consider extending this important assistance to those who dedicated their careers to the people of West Virginia. If you have any questions, please contact John Taylor, West Virginia Association of Retired School Employees' Legislative Chair, at (304) 265-5514 or john.taylor1@comcast.net.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



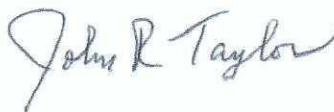
Gaylene Miller
State Director
AARP West Virginia



Irvin Scarberry
President
West Virginia Association of
Retired School Employees



Alfred Campos
Director
NRTA



John R. Taylor
Legislative Chair
West Virginia Association of
Retired School Employees

cc: The Honorable Craig Blair, WV Senate President
The Honorable Roger Hanshaw, WV Speaker of the House
The Honorable Eric Tarr, WV Senate Finance Chair
The Honorable Eric Householder, WV House Finance Chair
Brian Abraham, Chief of Staff, WV Governor's Office
Sarah Stewart, Counsel to the WV Senate President
Dan Greear, Chief of Staff, WV House of Delegates