

## **GSRA ISSUES ACTION ALERT FOR OUR MEMBERS TO WRITE ERS BOARD MEMBERS SUPPORTING THEIR ELECTION OF A GSRA NOMINEE TO FILL VACANT BOARD POSITION**

### **What You Should Know**

In the 2021 legislative session, GSRA managed with your help to have the General Assembly pass, and the Governor sign, a bill that requires the ERS board to review and consider individuals nominated by GSRA to serve in two of the seven ERS board positions. The term of one of those positions ends on June 30. Accordingly, GSRA President Beverly Littlefield nominated a diverse group of six eminently well-qualified GSRA members. She sent their names and qualifications to ERS board chair Eli Niepoky on May 27. ERS director Jim Potvin acknowledged receipt of the nominations the same day.

GSRA's nominees are:

- Bobbie Jean Bennett, retired Commissioner of Personnel Administration and state benefits manager, former ERS board member, and former GSRA president, secretary, and treasurer,
- Janice Carson, M.D., retired assistant chief of DCH's predecessors' division of medical assistance plans, and assistant chief division of public health,
- Royal "Kip" Mann, retired DHR and DJJ program development, regional and district administration, and supervision, and former GSRA president and vice president,
- Ernest Melton, retired director of statewide systems services including statewide payroll, accounting, budgeting and personnel administration, and GSRA board member
- Robert Pollock, retired DFCS regional director for middle Georgia and director of Dougherty County DFCS services, and GSRA board member and chapter president
- Rosa Spencer, retired human resource director for OPB including retirement benefits administration. Current ERS liaison and primary contact for employee retirement information for Georgia DOD

We have confirmed with our nominees that ERS has not contacted them to confirm or vet their nomination. In our view this clearly violates both the letter and spirit of our recently passed legislation. This is not acceptable.

### **Why It Matters**

The ERS board has not in this century had a member who represented us ERS members, the board's beneficiaries. Most other state boards have consumer representatives. The TRS board has four out of ten total members. GSRA has fought hard for such representation as a step towards the board becoming more sensitive to ERS members' needs such as resumption of annual COLAs.

GSRA stands firmly on the long-standing, historic political principle of "Nothing About Us Without Us." We believe strongly that those affected most by policy decisions, in this case, we, the retirees, should be

involved in the making of those decisions. To that end, the full and direct participation of a retiree representative on the Board of Trustees is appropriate and essential.

### **What You Should Do**

Compose a message addressed to all ERS board members (see <https://www.ers.ga.gov/post/ers-0> for the members' names) to be sent to [boardoftrustees@ers.ga.gov](mailto:boardoftrustees@ers.ga.gov).

Suggested content for your message:

- Request that each board member you write consider all six of GSRA's nominees and vote for one of them to serve for the upcoming 2022-2026 term.
- If you personally know any of the nominees, by all means offer your endorsement for that person's appointment.

When you write these messages, we know that your tone will be courteous and respectful. In composing your message, USE YOUR OWN WORDS! We greatly undercut our effectiveness and credibility if we use the same words.

Deliver your messages **ASAP – TODAY!!**