

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2011**

**SESSION LAW 2012-178  
SENATE BILL 803**

**AN ACT TO MAKE CHANGES TO ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS.**

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 120-32.01(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) Consistent with subsection (a) of this section and notwithstanding any other law relating to privacy of personnel records, the Retirement Systems Division of the Department of State Treasurer shall furnish the Fiscal Research Division direct online read-only access to active and retired member information or records maintained by the Retirement Systems Division in online information systems. Direct online read-only access shall not include access to medical records of individual ~~members~~ members or to tax records and other tax-related documents of members and beneficiaries. Nothing in this subsection shall limit the provisions of subsection (a) of this section."

**SECTION 2.** G.S. 128-27(k) reads as rewritten:

"(k) Post-Retirement Increases in Allowances. – As of December 31, 1969, the ratio of the Consumer Price Index to such index one year earlier shall be determined. If such ratio indicates an increase that equals or exceeds three per centum (3%), each beneficiary receiving a retirement allowance as of December 31, 1968, shall be entitled to have his allowance increased three per centum (3%) effective July 1, 1970.

As of December 31, 1970, the ratio of the Consumer Price Index to such index one year earlier shall be determined. If such ratio indicates an increase of at least one per centum (1%), each beneficiary on the retirement rolls as of July 1, 1970, shall be entitled to have his allowance increased effective July 1, 1971, as follows:

Increase In Index	Increase In Allowance
1.00 to 1.49%	1%
1.50 to 2.49%	2%
2.50 to 3.49%	3%
3.50% or more	4%

As of December 31, 1971, an increase in retirement allowances shall be calculated and made effective July 1, 1972, in the manner described in the preceding paragraph. As of December 31 of each year after 1971, the ratio (R) of the Consumer Price Index to such index one year earlier shall be determined, and each beneficiary on the retirement rolls as of July 1 of the year of determination shall be entitled to have his allowance increased effective on July 1 of the year following the year of determination by the same percentage of increase indicated by the ratio (R) calculated to the nearest tenth of one per centum (1/10 of 1%), but not more than four per centum (4%); provided that any such increase in allowances shall be contingent upon the total fund providing sufficient investment gains to cover the additional actuarial liabilities on account of such increase. The determination of whether there are sufficient investment gains to cover the possible postretirement increase in allowance shall reside exclusively within the discretion of the Board of Trustees and shall be informed by the findings within the annual actuarial valuation reports. In considering whether to grant a postretirement increase, the Board of Trustees shall take into account both the rate of inflation as determined by the Consumer Price Index and the record of investment gains or losses during the preceding three-year period.

The allowance of a surviving annuitant of a beneficiary whose allowance is increased under this subsection shall, when and if payable, be increased by the same per centum.



Any increase in allowance granted hereunder shall be permanent, irrespective of any subsequent decrease in the Consumer Price Index, and shall be included in determining any subsequent increase.

Notwithstanding the foregoing linkage between increases in the Consumer Price Index and correlative contingent increases in retirement benefits determined by the availability of sufficient investment gains to cover the additional actuarial liabilities arising from those increased benefits, the Board of Trustees, may in any year, considering an increase, if any, in the Consumer Price Index, fund a cost-of-living increase in a percentage amount, measured in tenths of one percent (1/10 of 1%), of up to four percent (4%), provided that the Board may use only investment gains to fund such an increase.

For purposes of this subsection, Consumer Price Index shall mean the Consumer Price Index (all items – United States city average), as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics."

**SECTION 3.** G.S. 128-30(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) Pension Accumulation Fund. – The pension accumulation fund shall be the fund in which shall be accumulated all reserves for the payment of all pensions and other benefits payable from contributions made by employers and from which shall be paid all pensions and other benefits on account of members with prior service credit. Contributions to and payments from the pension accumulation fund shall be made as follows:

- ...
- (3) The "accrued liability contribution" shall be set for each employer on the basis of the prior service credits allowable to the employees thereof, who are entitled to prior service certificates, and shall be paid for a period of approximately 30 years, provided that the length of the period of payment for each employer after contributions begin ~~shall be the same for all employers and~~ shall be determined by the Board of Trustees as the result of actuarial valuations.

....

**SECTION 4.(a)** G.S. 120-4.32 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 120-4.32. Deduction for payments to certain employees' or retirees' associations allowed.**

(a) Any beneficiary who is a member of a domiciled employees' or retirees' association that has at least 2,000 members, the majority of whom are active or retired employees of the State or public school employees, may authorize, in writing, the periodic deduction from the beneficiary's retirement benefits a designated lump sum to be paid to the employees' or retirees' association. The authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by the beneficiary. A plan of deductions pursuant to this section shall become void if the employees' or retirees' association engages in collective bargaining with the State, any political subdivision of the State, or any local school administrative unit.

(b) Any beneficiary eligible for coverage under the State Health Plan may also authorize, in writing, the monthly deduction from the beneficiary's retirement benefits of a designated lump sum to be paid to the State Health Plan for any dependent whom the beneficiary wishes to cover under the State Health Plan. In the event that the beneficiary's own State Health Plan coverage is contributory, in whole or in part, the beneficiary may also authorize a designated lump sum to be paid to the State Health Plan on behalf of the beneficiary. In addition, a beneficiary may similarly authorize the deduction for supplemental voluntary insurance benefits, provided that the deduction is authorized by the Department of State Treasurer and is payable to a company with which the Department of State Treasurer has or had an exclusive contractual relationship. Any such authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by the beneficiary."

**SECTION 4.(b)** G.S. 128-38.3 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 128-38.3. Deduction for ~~payment to certain employees' associations~~ payments allowed.**

(a) Any beneficiary who is a member of a domiciled employees' or retirees' association that has at least 2,000 members, the majority of whom are active or retired employees of employers as defined in G.S. 128-21(11), may authorize, in writing, the periodic deduction from the beneficiary's retirement benefits a designated lump sum to be paid to the employees' or retirees' association. The authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by the beneficiary. A plan of deductions pursuant to this section shall become void if the employees'

or retirees' association engages in collective bargaining with the State, any political subdivision of the State, or any local school administrative unit.

(b) Any beneficiary eligible for coverage under the State Health Plan may also authorize, in writing, the monthly deduction from the beneficiary's retirement benefits of a designated lump sum to be paid to the State Health Plan for any dependent whom the beneficiary wishes to cover under the State Health Plan. In the event that the beneficiary's own State Health Plan coverage is contributory, in whole or in part, the beneficiary may also authorize a designated lump sum to be paid to the State Health Plan on behalf of the beneficiary. In addition, a beneficiary may similarly authorize the deduction for supplemental voluntary insurance benefits, provided that the deduction is authorized by the Department of State Treasurer and is payable to a company with which the Department of State Treasurer has or had an exclusive contractual relationship. Any such authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by the beneficiary."

**SECTION 4.(c)** G.S. 135-18.8 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 135-18.8. Deduction for payments to certain employees' or retirees' associations allowed.**

(a) Any beneficiary who is a member of a domiciled employees' or retirees' association that has at least 2,000 members, the majority of whom are active or retired employees of the State may authorize, in writing, the periodic deduction from the beneficiary's retirement benefits a designated lump sum to be paid to the employees' or retirees' association. The authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by the beneficiary. A plan of deductions pursuant to this section shall become void if the employees' or retirees' association engages in collective bargaining with the State, any political subdivision of the State, or any local school administrative unit.

(b) Any beneficiary may also authorize, in writing, the monthly deduction from the beneficiary's retirement benefits of a designated lump sum to be paid to the State Health Plan for any dependent whom the beneficiary wishes to cover under the State Health Plan. In the event that the beneficiary's own State Health Plan coverage is contributory, in whole or in part, the beneficiary may also authorize a designated lump sum to be paid to the State Health Plan on behalf of the beneficiary. In addition, a beneficiary may similarly authorize the deduction for supplemental voluntary insurance benefits, provided that the deduction is authorized by the Department of State Treasurer and is payable to a company with which the Department of State Treasurer has or had an exclusive contractual relationship. Any such authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by the beneficiary."

**SECTION 4.(d)** G.S. 135-75 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 135-75. Deduction for payments to certain employees' or retirees' associations allowed.**

(a) Any beneficiary who is a member of a domiciled employees' or retirees' association that has at least 2,000 members, the majority of whom are active or retired employees of the State or public school employees, may authorize, in writing, the periodic deduction from the beneficiary's retirement benefits a designated lump sum to be paid to the employees' or retirees' association. The authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by the beneficiary. A plan of deductions pursuant to this section shall become void if the employees' or retirees' association engages in collective bargaining with the State, any political subdivision of the State, or any local school administrative unit.

(b) Any beneficiary eligible for coverage under the State Health Plan may also authorize, in writing, the monthly deduction from the beneficiary's retirement benefits of a designated lump sum to be paid to the State Health Plan for any dependent whom the beneficiary wishes to cover under the State Health Plan. In the event that the beneficiary's own State Health Plan coverage is contributory, in whole or in part, the beneficiary may also authorize a designated lump sum to be paid to the State Health Plan on behalf of the beneficiary. In addition, a beneficiary may similarly authorize the deduction for supplemental voluntary insurance benefits, provided that the deduction is authorized by the Department of State Treasurer and is payable to a company with which the Department of State Treasurer has or had an exclusive contractual relationship. Any such authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by the beneficiary."

**SECTION 5.** G.S. 135-106(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) After the commencement of benefits under this section, the benefits payable under the terms of this section during the first 36 months of the long-term disability period shall be equal to sixty-five percent (65%) of 1/12th of the annual base rate of compensation last payable

to the participant or beneficiary prior to the beginning of the short-term disability period as may be adjusted for percentage increases as provided under G.S. 135-108, plus sixty-five percent (65%) of 1/12th of the annual longevity payment to which the participant or beneficiary would be eligible, to a maximum of three thousand nine hundred dollars (\$3,900) per month reduced by any primary Social Security disability benefits and by monthly payments for Workers' Compensation to which the participant or beneficiary may be entitled. When primary Social Security disability benefits are increased by cost-of-living adjustments, the increased reduction shall be applied in the first month following the month in which the member becomes entitled to the increased Social Security benefit. The monthly benefit shall be further reduced by the amount of any monthly payments from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs, any other federal agency or any payments made under the provisions of G.S. 127A-108, to which the participant or beneficiary may be entitled on account of the same disability. Provided, in any event, the benefit payable shall be no less than ten dollars (\$10.00) a month. However, a disabled participant may elect to receive any salary continuation as provided in G.S. 135-104 in lieu of long-term disability benefits; provided such election shall not extend the first 36 consecutive calendar months of the long-term disability period. An election to receive any salary continuation for any part of any given day shall be in lieu of any long-term benefit payable for that day, provided further, any lump-sum payout for vacation leave shall be treated as if the beneficiary or participant had exhausted the leave and shall be in lieu of any long-term benefit otherwise payable. Provided that, in any event, a beneficiary's benefit shall be reduced during the first 36 months of the long-term disability period by an amount, as determined by the Board of Trustees, equal to a primary Social Security retirement benefit to which the beneficiary might be entitled.

After 36 months of long-term disability, no further benefits are payable under the terms of this section unless the member has been approved and is in receipt of primary Social Security disability benefits. In that case the benefits payable shall be equal to sixty-five percent (65%) of 1/12th of the annual base rate of compensation last payable to the participant or beneficiary prior to the beginning of the short-term disability period as may be adjusted for percentage increases as provided under G.S. 135-108, plus sixty-five percent (65%) of 1/12th of the annual longevity payment to which the participant or beneficiary would be eligible, to a maximum of three thousand nine hundred dollars (\$3,900) per month reduced by the primary Social Security disability benefits and by monthly payments for Workers' Compensation to which the participant or beneficiary may be entitled. When primary Social Security disability benefits are increased by cost-of-living adjustments, the increased reduction shall be applied in the first month following the month in which the member becomes entitled to the increased Social Security benefit. The monthly benefit shall be further reduced by the amount of any monthly payments from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs, for payments from any other federal agency, or for any payments made under the provisions of G.S. 127A-108, to which the participant or beneficiary may be entitled on account of the same disability. Provided, in any event, the benefit payable shall be no less than ten dollars (\$10.00) a month.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, foregoing, but subject to an additional integration with the five-year and 10-year retirement vesting provisions as set forth in this paragraph, the long-term disability benefit is payable so long as the beneficiary is disabled and is in receipt of a primary Social Security disability benefit until the earliest date at which the beneficiary who became a member prior to August 1, 2011, is eligible for an unreduced service retirement allowance from the Retirement System, at which time the beneficiary would receive a retirement allowance calculated on the basis of the beneficiary's average final compensation at the time of disability as adjusted to reflect compensation increases subsequent to the time of disability and the creditable service accumulated by the beneficiary, including creditable service while in receipt of benefits under the Plan. In the case of any long-term disability beneficiary who became a member on and after August 1, 2011, and ordinarily would not be eligible for a retirement benefit without 10 years of membership service, for purposes of this conversion from long-term disability to service retirement, and for that purpose only, noncontributory creditable service granted while in receipt of disability benefits under this Article shall be deemed to be membership service, through the completion of 10 years of combined membership and noncontributory service on short-term and long-term disability benefits in total. In the event the beneficiary has not been approved and is not in receipt of a primary Social Security disability benefit, the long-term disability benefit shall cease after the first 36 months of the long-term disability period. When such a long-term disability recipient begins receiving this unreduced

service retirement allowance from the System, that recipient shall not be subject to the six-month waiting period set forth in G.S. 135-1(20). However, a beneficiary shall be entitled to a restoration of the long-term disability benefit in the event the Social Security Administration grants a retroactive approval for primary Social Security disability benefits with a benefit effective date within the first 36 months of the long-term disability period. In such event, the long-term disability benefit shall be restored retroactively to the date of cessation."

**SECTION 6.** G.S. 147-69.2(b)(8) reads as rewritten:

"(8) With respect to assets of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System, the Consolidated Judicial Retirement System, the Firemen's and Rescue Workers' Pension Fund, the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System, the Legislative Retirement System, the North Carolina National Guard Pension ~~Fund~~ Fund, and the Retiree Health Benefit Fund (hereinafter referred to collectively as the Retirement Systems), and assets invested pursuant to subdivision (b2) of this section, they may be invested in equity securities traded on a public securities exchange or market organized and regulated pursuant to the laws of the jurisdiction of such exchange or market and issued by any company incorporated or otherwise created or located within or outside the United States; provided the investments meet the conditions of this subdivision. The investments authorized for the Retirement Systems under this subdivision cannot exceed sixty-five percent (65%) of the market value of all invested assets of the Retirement Systems.

The assets authorized under this subdivision may be invested directly by the State Treasurer in any equity securities authorized by this subdivision for the primary purpose of approximating the movements of a nationally recognized and published market benchmark index. No more than one and one-half percent (1.5%) of the market value of the Retirement Systems' assets that may be invested directly under this subdivision can be invested in the stock of a single corporation, and the total number of shares in that single corporation cannot exceed eight percent (8%) of the issued and outstanding stock of that corporation.

So long as each investment manager has assets under management of at least one hundred million dollars (\$100,000,000), the assets authorized under this subdivision may also be invested through any of the following:

- a. Investment companies registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940; individual, common, or collective trust funds of banks and trust companies; and group trusts that invest primarily in investments authorized by this subdivision.
- b. Limited partnerships, limited liability companies, or other limited liability investment vehicles that are not publicly traded and invest primarily in investments authorized by this subdivision. Investments under this sub-subdivision shall not exceed six and one-half percent (6.5%) of the market value of all invested assets of the Retirement Systems.
- c. Contractual arrangements in which investment managers have full and complete discretion and authority to invest assets specified in such contractual arrangements in investments authorized by this subdivision."

**SECTION 7.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2012.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 29<sup>th</sup> day of June,  
2012.

s/ Neal Hunt  
Presiding Officer of the Senate

s/ Paul Stam  
Presiding Officer of the House of Representatives

s/ Beverly E. Perdue  
Governor

Approved 4:51 p.m. this 12<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2012