

2011 Legislative Changes

No major benefit legislation was enacted by the General Assembly during the 2011 session. Some significant pieces of legislation were enacted. Listed below is a summary of the relevant legislation.

However, the General Assembly convened a special legislative session to solely address pension reform measures which were enacted on November 18, 2011. The objectives of the legislation included enhancing retirement security for plan members, improving the funded status of the plans within the System and stabilizing the projected increase in the required employer contributions.

H5416

During the 2011 legislative session Rhode Island General Law 45-21-14.1 was repealed. The law provided benefits to members for City or Town Council service. The Law now provides that no City or Town Council member elected for the first time after Nov. 6, 2012 shall be allowed membership into the Municipal Employees' Retirement System as a result of that elective service.

H5448 Substitute A

The new legislation provided for technical changes and revisions to various retirement laws under title 36.

H5894 Aaa (As Amended), Article 12

The new legislation allows police officers and fire fighters who have been denied an accidental disability retirement by the Retirement Board shall be able to submit an appeal to the Rhode Island Workers' Compensation Court.

H6046

This new legislation revised Rhode Island General Laws 8-3-7.2 and 8-8.2-10. The legislation provided that there would be no incremental retirement benefit for temporary service as a judge.

H6309

This legislation allows the chair of the Senate Finance and the House Finance Committees, with written permission of the Senate President or the Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively, to request pension impact notes. The cost of pension impact notes which are not related for existing legislation would be paid through the Joint Committee on Legislative Services.

H7186Aaa (RIGL 45-21.2-5) requiring Johnston police officers hired on or after July 1,2010 to be members of the Municipal Employees' Retirement System.

H7751 (RIGL 42-28-11.1) requiring local police officers assigned to the state police for the purposes of assignment on a statewide task force to exercise the same powers of arrest exercised by a sworn member of the state police in certain situations.

H8159 (RIGL 8-10-3.2 & 36-10-36) revising post retirement employment to include general magistrate of the family court.

H7805 Sub A (RIGL 42-28-22) provides for the purchase of service credit for State Police for a leave of absence at full actuarial cost and additional requirements for when the purchase can be made.

H8150 (45-21-8) requiring all employees of the Cranston school department hired after June 30,2013 be enrolled in a defined contribution retirement plan (401(a)) to be established by the Cranston School department, and would preclude participation by those employees in any other municipal retirement plan, and precludes these employees from the purchase of service credit for time served on or after July 1, 2012, while participating in the defined contribution plan (i.e., a 401(a) plan.

H8178 (45-21-8) requiring all town of Middletown employees hired after 1 June 30,2012, be enrolled in a defined contribution plan in lieu of the state municipal employees retirement plan and preclude Middletown employees, if participating in a 403(b) plan, from purchasing service credit for time served after July 1, 2012.

H8256 (45-21.2-22 & 45-21.2-22.1) clarified that the optional twenty (20) year retirement service allowance for members of the police force and firefighter provisions of the general laws by deleting the language "retiring," and by inserting in place of thereof the language "eligible to retire."