

May 17, 2013

**2013 LEGISLATIVE REPORT
"We Mean Business!"**

Once again, the members of MRTA have proven, without a doubt, that **"THE WORLD IS RUN BY THOSE WHO SHOW UP"** and **"THERE IS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS."** Because of your membership with MRTA and because of your desire to protect and promote your world class retirement benefits, I am pleased to tout your successes.

As billionaires were writing \$100,000 checks to legislative leaders to "reform" public education and to privatize retirement, MRTA members went to work by showing up at [MRTA Legislative Day with over 700 in attendance.](#) You didn't stop there. Members then went to work walking petition forms to MRTA meetings and local school buildings obtaining officially 29,998 signatures in just an 18 day timeframe with a final total of **31,212 signatures!!!!** Approximately 75% of these signatures were personally signed with the remaining 25% of signatures sent in on-line. This was just phenomenal! You sent a stern message to legislators. There is little doubt our petition worked! **Retirement is MRTA's priority and we mean business!** CONGRATULATIONS MRTA Members!!

#1) We stopped all of Senator Lamping's (R -Saint Louis County) negative legislation regarding PSRS/PEERS and defined benefit retirement plans. [KILLED: SB 221, SB 475, SB 476, and SB 477.](#) All of these bills were authored by Senator Lamping who is the Chairman of the Senate Pensions Committee.

#2) HB 631 Elmer (R- Nixa) and then SB 125 Nasheed (D -Saint Louis City) were beaten back which is a seldom occurring event of being defeated on the House floor by vote. These bills were in regard to teacher pay based on grades, elimination of tenure, elimination of RIF provisions, etc. These very negative pieces of legislation were being promoted by Washington D.C. based Students First and were funded by billionaires. MRTA was essential to these being defeated as we teamed up with MSTA, MNEA, and administrators. Ninety-nine percent of MRTA members and their families vote and our elected officials know it because of your involvement.

#3) The PSRS provisions of 25-and-Out and 2.55 after 31 Years were renewed in SB 17 as amendments. 25-and-Out was made permanent. 2.55 after 31 Years was given a one year extension. MRTA supported these renewals. These provisions were actuarially revenue neutral as an expense to our system. We were, however, disappointed that 2.55 after 31 Years was not made permanent. Thus, we will have to address it again next year and this will give Senator Lamping opportunity to come after us again.

#4) HB 470 Barnes (R - Jefferson City) allowed Home School students to participate in virtual classes provided for by Missouri tax dollars. This bill died on the

House calendar.

#5) HB 458 Scharnhorst (R - Saint Louis County) was a voucher bill opposed by MRTA. It finally became a voluntary donation scholarship program. No tax dollars are involved. Once again, we have defeated vouchers that take tax dollars away from public schools.

COMMENT: One of MRTA's priorities is full funding of the Foundation Formula for Missouri Public Schools. Currently, the Foundation Formula is approximately \$460 million short of being fully funded according to the 2005 rewritten Formula. The Formula of 2005 was \$1 billion less for Public Schools than what the 1993 Outstanding Schools Act mandated. There are reports the state is now expecting state revenues to be approximately \$400 million higher than was anticipated. The Legislature is now talking about building a new state office building and funding other capital projects. There has been NO MENTION of fully funding the Foundation Formula. The State Constitution mandates funding for public education as the #2 priority after debt service, hence House Bill 2. MRTA members should encourage legislators to fully fund the public schools as mandated by the Constitution. I have been told by DESE that six to ten thousand teachers could be hired statewide if the funding was there. Only 66 million new dollars were appropriated this year per the Governor's recommendation. We should and can do much better.

Thank you for your membership with the association of retired education professionals. Congratulations on another successful year at protecting your retirement benefits! I am proud of each and every one of you!
YOU MEANT BUSINESS!