

TEXAS PENSION PLANS

Texas Teachers looks to get 'boots on ground' in Singapore

June 25, 2018, By Christine Williamson

The Far East beckons the Teacher Retirement System of Texas, Austin, which, like many an explorer, is in search of fabulous riches.

Because about 15% of the \$151.4 billion pension fund already is invested throughout Asia, the investment staff wants to get "boots on the ground" in the region to gain insight into local markets and get to know money managers, said Brian Guthrie, executive director. An investigative squad vetted Asian cities last month and Singapore was tentatively selected as the office location.

The proposal for the new office will be presented to the board at its July 26 meeting. If the idea receives board approval, Mr. Guthrie will introduce the plan to the Texas Legislature to get approval during the next session, which begins in January.

If all goes well, Mr. Guthrie said the plan will be to open the Singapore office in midsummer 2019, initially staffed with three or four people from the pension fund's Texas headquarters, with local employees added over time.

[Pensions & Investments](#)

New leadership approach needed for pension problem

June 27, 2018, By Max Patterson

This year members of the state's monitoring agency for pension funds sat upright when Dan Buckley, Galveston's deputy city manager, offered the attorney's take on troubles with the Galveston Employees Retirement Plan for Police.

Buckley told a review board committee that "Collective bargaining trumps all. Every other state law, every other local ordinance; collective bargaining is the driving force. The directive I have from our general counsel is that collective bargaining is the primary. You can get caught up in everything else but there is nothing else other than collective bargaining when it exists."

[Galveston County - The Daily News](#)

Texas ERS, PAAMCO to Seed Emerging Hedge Funds

June 27, 2018, By Chris Butera

The Employee Retirement System of Texas and the Pacific Alternative Asset Management Company (PAAMCO) have teamed to build a co-investment platform that will seed emerging hedge funds.

The joint venture also allows the Texas pension system to expand its \$1 billion emerging manager program, which aims to boost its EM investments to roughly 10% of its outsourced portfolio.

[Chief Investment Officer](#)

TEXAS ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Gov. Greg Abbott urges Trump to reconsider tariffs that 'threaten future economic growth' in Texas

June 28, 2018, By Tom Benning

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott on Thursday urged President Donald Trump to reconsider his approach on trade, telling his fellow Republican that tariffs on steel and aluminum "may threaten future economic growth both in our state and across the country."

Abbott, in a letter to Trump, highlighted particular harm to Texas.

The governor noted that Texas imports more steel and aluminum than any other U.S. state. He pointed out that the tariffs endanger Texas' booming energy sector. He cited data that many more Texans work in industries that depend on the metals than in those that produce them.

More than just highlighting the direct impact of the steel and aluminum tariffs, the governor also pointed to the \$50 billion in retaliatory levies that China has lined up. Those tariffs would hit more than \$8 billion of tariff-eligible goods that Texas last year exported to China, Abbott said

Among the big targets: cotton, sorghum, beef and wheat

[Dallas News](#)

NATIONAL PENSION, INVESTMENTS & LEGAL

Baby boomer pensions are doomed in the US

June 23, 2018, By John Mauldin

There's been a wave of public school teacher strikes around the US. It started in West Virginia and spread to Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arizona, and elsewhere.

Pensions have been an issue in all of them.

Demographic and economic reality says that younger teachers won't get anything like the benefits they see current retirees receiving. And it's not just teachers. The same is true for police, firefighters, and all other public-sector workers.

[Business Insider](#)

Wells Fargo accused of misconduct again

June 25, 2018, By Matt Egan

The Securities and Exchange Commission said on Monday that between 2009 and 2013, Wells Fargo (WFC) reaped large fees by "improperly encouraging" brokerage clients to actively trade high-fee debt products that were intended to be held to maturity.

Wells Fargo Advisors, the bank's brokerage division, agreed to pay a \$4 million penalty over its handling of the products, known as market-linked investments. The bank must also return \$930,377 of ill-gotten gains — plus \$178,064 of interest.

Wells Fargo, which neither admitted nor denied the SEC's allegations, said in a statement that it "cooperated fully" with the latest investigation.

[CNN Money](#)

City of Austin's paid sick leave law clears its first legal hurdle

June 26, 2018, By Philip Jankowski

Austin's paid sick leave ordinance will remain on the books, at least for now.

On Tuesday, state District Judge Tim Sulak denied a request for a temporary injunction from a coalition of business interest groups who challenged the law passed in February. But his ruling was far from one-sided in favor of the city and the advocacy groups defending the ordinance.

Sulak tossed the Workers Defense Project from the case, ruling that the group had no standing to intervene as a defendant in the suit. The judge also ruled that the Texas attorney general's office, which believes the city's ordinance violates state law, can remain a plaintiff in the case

[**Austin American-Statesman**](#)

Supreme Court Delivers a Sharp Blow to Labor Unions

June 27, 2018, By Adam Liptak

The Supreme Court on Wednesday dealt a major blow to organized labor. By a 5-to-4 vote, with the more conservative justices in the majority, the court ruled that government workers who choose not to join unions may not be required to help pay for collective bargaining.

The ruling means that public-sector unions across the nation, already under political pressure, could lose tens of millions of dollars and see their effectiveness diminished.

The court based its ruling on the First Amendment, saying that requiring payments to unions that negotiate with the government forces workers to endorse political messages that may be at odds with their beliefs.

[**The New York Times**](#)

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