

TEXAS PENSIONS

Texas lawmakers indicate they may use rainy day fund for school security, hurricane recover and teacher's pensions

January 11, 2019, By Edgar Walters

A group of state leaders with huge influence over what public services receive funding said Friday they were prepared to make a significant withdrawal from the state's savings account.

At a public hearing, House and Senate leaders listed myriad needs they could pay for out of the savings account, including leftover costs from Hurricane Harvey, a bill coming due for retired teachers' pensions and unspecified public school safety improvements. That savings account, known formally as the Economic Stabilization Fund and colloquially as the rainy day fund, is projected to reach an unprecedented \$15 billion in the coming budget cycle if left untouched.

[Texas Tribune](#)

Texas Teacher's Close Out Year with \$1.8 Billion in New Commitments Across 12+ Strategies

January 11, 2019, By Elijah Owens

The Texas Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) approved over \$1.8 billion in commitments to more than a dozen strategies during December, a recently issued report from the pension revealed.

A majority of the capital committed was allocated towards vehicles that primarily focus on real assets investments, such as infrastructure, real estate, and energy. However, private equity vehicles with large buyout strategies received some attention from the \$154 billion investor.

[Chief Investment Officer](#)

Couch Potato portfolio: The most diverse and complicated investment strategies got whacked in 2018

January 13, 2019, By Scott Burns

That's the message, once again, that Mr. Market sent to those who seek to beat him.

- The simplest portfolio did relatively well.
- The most diverse and complicated portfolios got whacked.

Unfortunately, the operative word is "relatively." Most investors lost money last year. You "won" by losing less. Most of us prefer to win by making more.

If this keeps happening, some very basic ideas may get called in for an overhaul. Or, heaven help the gurus and investment consultants — they could be scrapped altogether.

[Dallas Morning News](#)

TEXAS ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Big Money into Texas' economy: State sees 20% increase in oil and natural gas tax revenue

January 10, 2019, By Jami Seymore

Looking over the course of a year, oil and natural gas production tax revenue in Texas increased greatly, with last December's revenue going up more than 20 percent from this time last year, according to the Texas Comptroller.

There was an increase in production in 2017 and 2018, particularly where the price of oil has stabilized for two years, basically in a row," said Judy Stark, President of the Panhandle Producers and Royalty Owners Association. "In 2017, that's where you'll see your revenue hit 2018, so it was higher in 2018 than it would have been in 2017."

When adding up those oil and gas tax revenues throughout the year, that adds billions of dollars into the state's economy.

[News Channel 10](#)

Texas economy "facing uncertain water" heading into 2019, says Dallas Fed economist

January 16, 2019, By News Release & Posted By Staff

Texas employment is forecast to grow between 0.9 and 1.9 percent in 2019, said Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas assistant vice president and senior economist Keith Phillips today in San Antonio.

The forecast means Texas should add 113,671 to 239,972 jobs in 2019. State employment grew at 2.4 percent, adding approximately 293,000 jobs in 2018 and outpacing the nation's 1.8 percent job growth.

"After accelerating strongly in 2018, Texas job growth is likely to slow to about 1.4 percent in 2019 as labor constraints limit growth along I-35 corridor and low oil prices slow growth in oil-producing regions," Phillips said.

[Everything Lubbock](#)

Slowdown for Apple could ripple through Austin's tech sector

January 15, 2019, By Nicole Cobler & Sebastian Herrera

Weakening demand for the iPhone is creating some concern for Apple suppliers with major Austin operations.

Apple recently lowered its quarterly revenue guidance to \$84 billion, down from the company's previous guidance of \$89 billion to \$93 billion. CEO Tim Cook said the cut, which marked the first time the company has downgraded its guidance in more than 15 years, is due to a downturn in China's economy and a decline in iPhone sales.

But that drop hasn't just affected Apple, which employs about 6,200 people in Austin and in December announced that it will build a new corporate campus that will initially employ up to 5,000 people.

[Austin American Statesman](#)

Texas House and Senate about \$3 billion apart on public education spending

January 15, 2019, By Edgar Walters

Almost everyone at the Texas Capitol agrees the state should spend more money on public schools, but for House and Senate leaders, how much is enough? On Tuesday, that became a \$3 billion question.

A day after the Texas House unveiled a proposal to pump more than \$7 billion in new state funds into public schools, the Texas Senate answered with a budget that would boost the state's share of public education spending by about \$4.3 billion compared with the previous two-year budget cycle.

[Texas Tribune](#)

NATIONAL PENSION, INVESTMENTS & LEGAL

PG&E to file for bankruptcy after stock losses related to California wildfires

January 14, 2019, By Rob Kozlowski

G&E Corp. announced in an 8-K filing with the SEC on Monday that it plans to file for bankruptcy following months of stock losses and potential liabilities from the recent California wildfires.

Participants in the company's 401(k) plan and other shareholders have been hurt by the stock losses.

The announcement by the San Francisco-based utility that it plans to enter Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on Jan. 29 comes after months of stock losses as the result of fire damage to its lines and infrastructure, as well as allegations that its equipment caused by the Camp Fire that began Nov. 8.

Pensions & Investments

KY Legislators: Public pension reform might not pass this session

January 11, 2019, By Mike Fussell

A special session failed to provide a fix to Kentucky's pension crisis. Now, one week into the 2019 regular session, there are still no substantial efforts materializing on chamber floors aimed at finding a solution.

At Thursday Night's Chamber Dinner, legislative leaders made an admission that a solution to fix the state's \$38 billion pension crisis might not even come this year.

Wave 3 News

Reform of controversial pension program approved by L.A. City Council

January 15, 2019, By Jack Dolan

The Los Angeles City Council voted Tuesday to reform a controversial retirement program that allowed hundreds of veteran police and firefighters to take extended leaves from work at essentially twice their usual pay.

The Deferred Retirement Option Plan pays city cops and firefighters their salaries and early pension payments for the last five years of their careers. Under the new measure — which will apply only to new participants and not those already in the program — pension checks will be withheld from those who miss significant time due to injury or illness in any given month. Those employees will still receive their full salary for the time off.

Los Angeles Times

DEEPER FINDINGS: Public kept in the dark about city pension performance

January 14, 2019, By Yamil Berard

After a long relationship with the Atlanta General Employees' Pension Fund, money managers from an Atlanta investment firm were in the hot seat.

GLOBALT Investments had drawn returns that appeared to be at least \$1 million short of the goal, records showed. Hired to sweeten the \$1.3 billion pot of retirement benefits, the firm wound up on a watch list because of underperformance. The pension board wanted to know why the firm missed its target.

Atlanta Journal Constitution

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