

TEXAS PENSIONS

Bill Increasing State Contributions to Texas Teachers Passes House

April 26, 2019, By James Comtois

Legislation increasing state contributions to the \$153 billion Texas Teacher Retirement System, Austin, passed the Texas House of Representatives, a news release issued by the Texas House Republican Caucus said.

The House on Thursday passed an amended version of Senate Bill 12, which passed unanimously 31-0 in the state Senate on March 25, in a 145-1 vote (with one member abstaining and three absent), according to LegiScan, a legislative tracking and data service provider.

[Pensions & Investments](#)

Brexit is a Mess, but Texas Teachers is Keeping its London Outpost

April 30, 2019, By Chris Butera

Amid the turmoil surrounding Britain's exit from the European Union, some board members of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas wondered if maintaining the pension plan's London investment office was wise.

But Jerry Albright, the chief investment officer of the \$154.3 billion fund, assured them at the board's April 25 meeting that the prospects of the UK-based operation were good, regardless of the situation with Brexit. So the office is staying put.

[Chief Investment Officer](#)

Governor Abbott Reappoints Brainard to State Pension Review Board

May 1, 2019, By the Office of the Texas Governor

Governor Greg Abbott has reappointed Keith Brainard to the State Pension Review Board for a term set to expire on January 31, 2025. The board reviews all Texas public retirement systems, both state and local, for actuarial soundness and compliance with state law.

Keith Brainard of Georgetown is the research director for the National Association of State Retirement Administrators. He has over 30 years of public sector finance experience, with a substantial focus on pensions sponsored by state and local government. He is a former city council member for the City of Georgetown. Brainard received a Bachelor of Arts in government from The University of Texas (UT) at Austin and a Master of Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at UT.

[Office of the Texas Governor](#)

TEXAS ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Texas Telecommunications Companies Committed to Rural Broadband

April 30, 2019, By Lyn Kamerman

From the Gulf Coast to the wide-open spaces of West Texas, connecting communities with voice and high-speed data connectivity is vital to Texas' future in an increasingly digital world.

Through decades of investing millions in miles of network infrastructure crisscrossing the state, Texas telecommunications companies are making strong progress in expanding access to voice and high-speed data — or broadband — to the most remote and hard-to-reach areas.

In 2017, Texas lawmakers approved legislation to make sure rural Texans reap the benefits of high-quality communications to support education, hospitals, businesses, first responders, border security and consumers.

[TribTalk](#)

Why Pre-K Is Critical for the Texas Economic Miracle

May 1, 2019, By Kim Manns and Brendan McGuire

The health of our Texas economy depends on the strength of our education system. Business leaders rely on an efficient and effective college and career pipeline that can generate a qualified and prepared workforce, and that begins with high-quality early childhood education. That's why PNC Financial Services Group supports Texas' goal to achieve 60% postsecondary completion among Texans ages 25 to 34 by the year 2030.

But consider this: The high school class of 2030 began kindergarten in 2017. And according to the 2018 Annual Report from the Texas Education Agency, only 47% of those students started their academic career kindergarten-ready, according to local school district assessments.

[Dallas News](#)

From Property Taxes to Teacher Pay, Here's How the Texas House and Senate Compare on Spending Priorities

May 2, 2019, By Edgar Walters and Darla Cameron

Behind closed doors at the Texas Capitol, a panel of House and Senate budget writers is negotiating which public programs will receive state funding over the next two years. Both chambers approved separate spending plans in recent weeks. But before the regular legislative session ends May 27, they must work out key differences on how to spend the state's anticipated surplus. Including public schools, teacher salaries, women's health, prison guard pay and more, we've laid out some of the biggest spending priorities where lawmakers must find compromise before sending a final version to Gov. Greg Abbott for approval. These figures come from the Legislative Budget Board.

[Texas Tribune](#)

NATIONAL PENSION, INVESTMENTS & LEGAL

Branford PD to Restore Traditional Pensions in New Contract

April 26, 2019, By Mark Zaretsky

After years of discussion about the unforeseen negative effects of the Police Department's 2011 shift from a traditional "defined benefit" pension plan to a "defined contribution plan" akin to a 401(k), it looks like the department is moving back to pensions.

The move was done to stem what has been an increased rate of departure for both experienced officers and relatively new hires and make Branford a more attractive destination for new recruits and transfers from other departments.

[New Haven Register](#)

R.I. Lawmakers Propose 'Stipends' on Top of Pensions for Retired State, Local Employees

May 1, 2019, By Katherine Gregg

A push is on by a small group of lawmakers to give a pension boost to retired state and municipal employees and public school teachers in years when they do not get a cost-of-living increase.

When the dust settled on the legal fight over the 2011 pension overhaul championed by then-state Treasurer and current Gov. Gina Raimondo, guaranteed annual COLAs had been relegated to history. They were replaced by likely increases every four years that would vary in size depending on how well the state's pension investments had fared in the years leading up to that point.

[Newport Daily News](#)

Kentucky Lawmakers Briefed on Governor's Pension Measure

May 1, 2019, By Bruce Schreiner

Kentucky lawmakers received briefings Wednesday on a new pension bill as Gov. Matt Bevin's administration continued preparations for a special legislative session aimed at giving relief to regional universities and many agencies faced with surging pension costs.

Some resistance started emerging amid the briefings meant to build legislative support for the draft legislation. The advocacy group Kentucky Government Retirees said it had obtained a copy and termed it "bad funding policy" that should be rejected by lawmakers.

"The new pension bill increases overall costs, compels the nation's worst-funded state pension plan to serve as a creditor, and encourages employers to force employees out of the state retirement plan," the group said in a statement.

[AP News](#)

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