

TEXAS PENSIONS

Texas Teachers' Gets its First Contribution Rate Increase in 25 Years

June 14, 2019, By Elijah Owens

New legislation has led to the first contribution rate increase for the Teachers' Retirement System of Texas in nearly a quarter of a century.

The plan calls for a gradual increase in contributions, beginning with a 7.50% to 7.75% change in 2022, 8% in 2023, and 8.25% in 2024. A previously approved version of the bill sought contribution rates of up to 8.8%.

Tim Lee, executive director of the Texas Retired Teachers Association, said it's "the most positive legislative action for all TRS members in 25 years." Through the bill, the pension fund becomes actuarially sound immediately, rather than the previously forecasted 87 years. The retirement system's funding ratio was 76.9% as of Aug. 31, 2018, according to its most recent comprehensive financial annual report.

[Chief Investment Officer](#)

TEXAS ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Key Economic Development Partners Gather to Support Access to Capital for Rural Texas

June 18, 2019, By Ingrid Wright

The South-West Texas Small Business Development Center Network (SWTXB), located at The University of Texas at San Antonio Institute for Economic Development (UTSA IED), brought key economic development partners together to support a collaborative agreement between the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and Texas United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA) to support businesses and agricultural economies in rural Texas. The collaborators committed to increasing access to capital through enhanced collaboration and coordination in areas of mutual interest.

Other federal agencies including the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC) were present to express their ongoing support to rural Texas.

[UTSA Today](#)

TEXAS ECONOMIC INDICATORS, cont.

Google Continues Growth in Texas

June 18, 2019, By Business Facilities

After serving as its home for more than a decade, Google is extending its commitment to Texas with a new data center in Midlothian, and the lease of two new buildings for its Austin workforce. The projects are part of Google's larger \$13 billion investment in offices and data centers across the U.S., announced earlier this year.

"The Lone Star state has become a hub for tech innovation and we've been fortunate to be a part of its growth from the very beginning," said a statement from Google. "It's the amazing talent and spirit of work and play that brought us to Texas 12 years ago and it's what keeps us here today. We look forward to meeting our new neighbors in the Midlothian-Dallas Metro area and we're excited to be a part of these communities for many years to come."

[Business Facilities](#)

Texas Ranks High in Economic Health

June 19, 2019, By Exsar Arguello

With a 3.7% unemployment rate throughout the state, experts say Texas' economy is flying high, largely due to its economic might.

According to a new study from WalletHub, Texas is the 12th best economy in the nation for 2019. The study cites the state's overall economic activity and health, innovation and employment potential.

[Hays Free Press](#)

NATIONAL PENSION, INVESTMENTS & LEGAL

Calpers' Dilemma: Save the World or Make Money?

June 16, 2019, By Heather Gillers

The California Public Employees' Retirement System was one of the first public-pension systems to tie its investments to social activism. Now it is having second thoughts.

In the last two years, its directors have opposed proposals to sell stocks in private prisons, gun retailers and companies tied to Turkey because of the potential for lost revenue and skepticism about whether divestment forces social change. One of these directors is now urging the system, also known as Calpers, to end its ban on stocks tied to tobacco, a policy in place since 2000.

[The Wall Street Journal](#)

NATIONAL PENSION, INVESTMENTS & LEGAL, cont.

PA State Pension System Trims Its Investment Expectations

June 18, 2019, By Joseph N. DiStefano

The Pennsylvania State Employees' Retirement System (SERS) board, in a meeting last week, adopted some of the changes urged by the state pension reform commission last year when it pushed proposals for cutting costs and clarifying what happens to billions of dollars in public investments and fees.

SERS also voted to temporarily invest less in hedge funds (which it calls "multi-strategy" investments) and park more in bonds while it's working on a new investment plan. Its target had been around 10 percent hedge funds, 11 percent bonds.

[The Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

U.S. Supreme Court Won't Hear Baltimore County Pension Fund Case

June 19, 2019, By Brian Croce

The U.S. Supreme Court will not hear a case involving Baltimore County, Md., and whether it must pay back employees who contributed to the county's \$2.8 billion pension fund at higher rate than their younger co-workers.

The decision was made Monday.

In September, a three-judge panel for the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Va., ruled in favor of the employees and remanded the case to a lower court to determine the amount of back pay to which the affected county employees are entitled.

[Pensions & Investments](#)

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