

RIPEA COMMUNICATOR

VOL. 32, NO. 2

MAY 2011

Legislative Report: End of the 2011 Regular Session

April 29th was the final day of the 2011 regular session of the Indiana General Assembly. The conference committee on House Bill 1001 passed on a 59-39 in the House and 37-13 in the Senate. A final version of the budget language can be found here: http://www.in.gov/legislative/house_republicans/pdfs/CC100101.pdf.

Each session of the General Assembly has its own personality and 2011 was no different. The only constitutional requirements were to pass a budget and a redistricting plan based upon the 2010 census. Both bills passed with the budget including a 13th check for retirees.

Key provisions to the 13th check are the following:

- The 13th check will be paid before October 1, 2011 but likely in the September 15th check.
- The person must receive a benefit before January 2011 to be eligible for payment.

- At least 5 years of service but less than 10 years, the amount is \$150 (only in the case of a member receiving disability benefits).
- At least 10 years of service but less than 20 years, the amount is \$275.
- At least 20 years of service but less than 30 years, the amount is \$375.
- At least 30 years of service, the amount is \$450.
- This is an increase over 2010 and the same amount as 2009, the largest 13th check yet.

The conference committee of the budget was a mammoth report totaling 273 pages. Beginning on page 270 were provisions for the 13th check for 2011. Here is the history as far the 13th check was concerned.

- HB 1176 was introduced by Reps. Burton, Niezgodski, Crawford, and Crouch with a 1%
See Legislative Report on page 3

RIPEA Grant Money Can Ease Your Financial Struggles

As you know, the mission of RIPEA is to protect you. This involves more than just lobbying on your behalf. As a RIPEA member, you're also eligible to apply for financial assistance during especially difficult times. Thanks to the generosity of thousands of RIPEA members who donated to the RIPEA Foundation, the Foundation is once again providing individual assistance grants to members facing financial hardship.

Individual Assistance Grants are designed to provide relief for RIPEA members suffering from financial challenges related directly to their quality of life. These can include medical expenses, insurance premiums, home modifications for disability access, etc. Due to limited funds, RIPEA is unable to approve grants for home remodeling, car purchase or repairs, tax payments, college expenses or other similar needs. RIPEA members who received a grant the previous year must wait two calendar years before applying again. The maximum grant allowance is normally \$1,000 and the

total dollar amount of the grants may not exceed 50% of annual donations to the Foundation.

If you are experiencing a financial hardship and would like to apply for an Individual Assistance Grant, just fill out the application on page 4 of this newsletter and mail it to RIPEA headquarters, located at 3530 South Keystone Avenue, Suite 305, Indianapolis, IN 46227. All lines of the application must be completed. Please submit your application by July 1, 2011. Individual Assistance Grants will be awarded by August 31, 2011

Thank you to all the generous members who donate to the Foundation and contribute to the Individual Assistance Grant fund. Your compassion and support are truly appreciated, and will help RIPEA continue to provide financial relief to our fellow members during difficult times.

Note: A history of foundation grants and a list of 2010 grants by county are included in this newsletter.

Hearing Loss: The Third Most Common Health Problem in the United States

Special Money Saving Offer 

\$50 OFF One hearing aid or
\$125 OFF Two hearing aids*

Call now! **1-888-319-9208**
Bring this coupon to a HearPO provider to take advantage of this offer.

Limited Time Offer: Expires September 30, 2011
Not valid with any other offers. (Provider please forward coupon to HearPO at time of purchase.)

*Some exclusions apply.
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HearPO is celebrating Better Hearing Month this May.

As part of Better Hearing Month, *HearPO* is encouraging consumers to be more aware of their hearing health.

“Hearing loss can be caused by exposure to loud noises; ear infections, trauma, or ear disease; harm to the inner ear and ear drum; illness or certain medications; and deterioration due to normal aging process,” explains Dr. Melodie Harrington, Au.D., Contract Manager for *HearPO*.

You may have a problem with your hearing and need to see a hearing care professional if you have trouble hearing conversation in a noisy environment such as a restaurant, are unable to hear people talk to you without looking at them, or have a constant ringing or pain in your ears.

The first step in treatment of a hearing problem is a hearing evaluation. You can contact *HearPO* at 888.319.9208 and tell the Client Services Representative that you are a RIPEA member.

Hearing loss currently affects more than 36 million Americans today. Although hearing problems are commonly associated with the normal aging process, more than half of all hearing-impaired persons are younger than 65. With the increased use of personal music players (MP3s) and earbuds, the number of Americans experiencing hearing loss at a younger age is growing

On average, most Americans consider hearing loss a condition that is simply associated with aging, and don't know how to recognize the condition or who is qualified to diagnose and treat the condition. In an effort to raise public awareness for the growing number of Americans suffering from hearing loss, the American Academy of Audiology in conjunction with

Benefit Plans Remain Sound

The Indiana State Teachers' Retirement Fund (TRF) and Public Employees' Retirement Fund (PERF) remain in sound condition, contrary to some recent media reports. The recent media stories were based on a report released by the PEW Center on the States.

Keep in mind that PERF and TRF are made up of all prefunded plans with one exception. The prefunded plans enjoy a healthy aggregate balance of 87.5 percent. That is above the 80 percent target that many experts consider a healthy level and well above the 67 percent reported in recent stories.

PERF and TRF systems have a long and solid track record of paying the required contributions as required for plan health and stability. And prudent market strategy and strong investment performance in 2009 and 2010 increased the overall assets to a combined \$25 billion. In short, while pension funding remains an important national issue, please be assured that both TRF and PERF remain sound for current and future retirees. Your monthly benefit is completely safe.

Jodi L. O'Neill, MSM
Communication Manager, Public Employees Retirement Fund

RIPEA COMMUNICATOR is published quarterly by the Retired Indiana Public Employees Association.
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William R. Murphy Executive Director

Important Telephone Numbers

- Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield** 1-866-649-2041
RIPEA Group Health Plan
- AMBA** 1-800-258-7041
Dental/Vision/Long Term Care/Cancer/
Whole Life/Medical Air Service Association
- G.E.T.O.** 1-877-867-3639
Vacation Condos at Reduced Rates - www.getravelop.com
- Genworth** 1-866-582-2436
Long Term Care
- HearPo** 1-888-432-7464
Hearing Plan
- MetLife** 1-800-438-6388
Auto/Home
- P.E.R.F.** 1-888-526-1687
Retirement Checks & Benefits
- RIPEA Office** 1-800-345-9214

Email us at ripea@ripea.org or
visit our website: www.ripea.org.

The RIPEA office hours,
Monday through Friday, are: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and a 13th check based on years of service.

- A hearing was held in Employment, Labor on February 8 and HB 1176 passed out of committee 10-0 with both provisions.
- HB 1176 was reassigned to Ways and Means on February 16 and passed out of committee 21-0 after deleting the COLA provision.
- The walk-out occurred and the committee report was never adopted. HB 1176 became one of the 22 dead bills after the walkout.
- Your legislative committee expected the Ways and Means version to be amended into the Budget in the House but, for various reasons, it never was.
- Sen. Kenley began hearings on the Budget in the Senate.
- Your RIPEA lobbyists met with Senator Kenley to ask him to include the 13th check in the Budget or another bill. In addition, your lobbyists met with Governor Daniels' staff to encourage his support.

- On April 7, your RIPEA leadership asked its members to contact your Senators to explain the importance of the 13th check. Senators acknowledged that you replied.
- Sen. Becker, R, Evansville, introduced an amendment that was the same as passed in the House. The amendment passed 49-0 and was included in the Budget. We expected that, when our language came up, the bill would have the support of the legislature.
- On April 29th, the final day and the last bill of session, the Budget bill passed 59-39. Any opposition to the final bill was for other provisions of the bill, not our 13th check.

RIPEA had many proponents and, in listing some we could risk missing others, the following legislators were extremely helpful: Sen. Becker, Reps. Espich, Burton, Niezgodski, and Gutwein.

As the final step, Gov. Daniels must sign the bill. Every indication is that it will happen but it will happen after publication of the Communicator.

Congratulations and thank you for your assistance.

Doug Kinser, RIPEA Lobbyist

Mark Your Calendar! RIPEA's 21st Annual Convention will be September 12, 2011 at Primo Convention Hall in Indianapolis. For the 21st year, the fee will be \$12.00. Details will follow in the August *Communicator*.

Foundation Grants in Review

History of Foundation Grants

Year	Applications	Applications Approved	Percent Approved	Amount of Grants
2001	51	15	29%	\$7,500
2002	35	12	34%	\$5,260
2003	55	14	25%	\$7,124
2004	79	22	28%	\$10,954
2005	72	18	25%	\$10,412
2006	97	21	22%	\$11,734
2007	135	26	19%	\$15,109
2008	194	29	15%	\$18,723
2009	261	38	15%	\$21,239
<u>2010</u>	<u>225</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>24%</u>	<u>\$29,416</u>
TOTAL	1,204	250	21%	\$137,470

2010 Grants Approved by County

County	Grants Approved
Marion	15
Lake	8
Allen	6
Vigo	4
Wayne	4
St. Joseph	2
Kosciusko	2
Howard	2
Floyd	1
Delaware	1
Monroe	1
Starke	1
Vanderburgh	1
Porter	1
Morgan	1
Hendricks	1
Clark	1
<u>Johnson</u>	<u>1</u>
Total by County	53
<u>Florida</u>	<u>2</u>
Grand Total	55

RETIRED INDIANA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION

3530 South Keystone Avenue, Suite 305 • Indianapolis, IN 46227

2011 Individual Grant Application

Application must be received in our office by July 1, 2011.

Member's Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone No. _____ Soc. Sec. No. (Last 4 Only) _____

Name, Address and Telephone Number of Person completing this application if other than applicant: _____

Total Gross Monthly Income:

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Spouse</u>	<u>Total</u>
Social Security	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
PERF	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Employment	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Amount of Grant Requested \$ _____

Purpose for which Grant will be used (If additional space is needed for a complete explanation, please attach a separate sheet): _____

If Grant is to assist with payment of an existing financial obligation, please include a copy of the bill or a list of expenses if submitting a credit card bill.

Will any part of this obligation be paid by insurance? _____ If yes, how much? _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

For Office Verification of Membership by: _____ Amount Recommended: _____

Use Only Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

NOTE: All lines of this application *must* be completed including income of member, spouse and total!! If all lines are not completed, the application will not be considered.

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