

Legislators will tackle pension issues in 2013

The 2013 Legislative session begins with a new round of concerns about the post-recession health of public pension funds in Minnesota and across the country.

In fact, a Jan. 19 *StarTribune* <http://www.startribune.com/politics/statelocal/187610341.html> article stated that Minnesota's public pension plans are "...worse off than they were..." before sustainability legislation was enacted in 2010".

Not true, said in the executive directors of TRA, MSRS and PERA. In a Jan. 22 statement they called the *StarTribune's* claims incorrect and its story 'skewed'. The leaders didn't stop there. They said the "... numbers used to back up the *StarTribune's* claim were highly misleading..."

"In fact", they said, " on a market -- or real -- value basis, the Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) went from 59.8 percent funded in 2009 to 72.5 percent funded in 2012.

The Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS) General Plan improved from 65.6 percent funded in 2009 to 82 percent funded in 2012, thanks in large part to the 2010 reforms. **In total, the 2010 reforms reduced benefit liabilities for the pension funds by \$5.9 billion."**

As media and political attacks on public employee pensions continue, the **Committee of Thirteen** will be at the legislature providing accurate information and working to protect your pension.

TRA Executive Director will speak at Jan. 29 RTC luncheon

Laurie Fiori Hacking, Executive Director of Minnesota TRA, will be the guest speaker at the January RTC luncheon. The meeting begins at 11:45 AM, Tues., Jan 29, and will be held at the MFT offices, 67-8th Ave., NE Minneapolis.

Drama Celebrates Life of Labor Leader



"We're not asking for what is theirs. We're only asking for what is ours and a little respect, thank you!" — **Nellie Stone Johnson**

A new production of the History Theatre in St. Paul celebrates the life and legacy of Minnesota labor leader Nellie Stone Johnson. A leader in labor and civil rights, a political activist and an advocate for equal access to education, Nellie Stone Johnson was a key figure in Minnesota in the 20th century. The play, "Nellie," runs from Jan. 26 to Feb. 17. Attend on Feb. 1 or Feb. 9, and \$5 of your ticket purchase will go to scholarships for students from union families. More information at: www.historytheater.org

Committee of Thirteen and RTC 59 staff phone banks--and secure victories!

The **Committee of Thirteen** supported 33 candidates with campaign funds and volunteers. The volunteers from the **Committee of Thirteen** and RTC 59 who worked for these candidates was led by **Clarence Falk** and included **Sandi Sevre, Christopher Lynch, Corinne Robinson, Ed Andersen, Eleanor Brown, Gladys Sheehan, Chris Poppe, Jay Ritterson, Kay Kessel and Louise Sundin.**

Volunteers made over **10,200** calls and mailed over **11,500** pieces of mail to actives, retirees, and members of other unions. In addition, volunteers dropped literature and walked and rallied with candidates and campaigns. The list below includes candidates who are/were on the LCPR (Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement), the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federaton target list, and the Minneapolis Legislative Delegation.

Rep. Mary Murphy03B	Rep. Ryan Winkler.....46A	Rep. Phyllis Kahn60B
Sen. Julie Rosen.....23	Sen. Melisa Franzen.....49	Sen. Scott Dibble61
Rep. Steve Smith.....33B	Rep. Ron Erhardt49A	Rep. Frank Horenstein61A
(lost primary)	Rep. Paul Rosenthal.....49B	Rep. Paul Thissen61B
Sen. John Hoffman.....36	Sen. Melissa Halvorson-Wiklund50	Sen. Jeff Hayden62
Rep. Grace Baltich (lost) 36A	Rep. Linda Slocum50A	Rep. Karen Clark62A
Sen. Alice Johnson37	Rep. Bobby Champion59	Rep. Susan Allen.....62B
Rep. Jerry Newton37A	Rep. Joe Mullery.....59A	Sen. Patricia Torres Ray..63
Rep. Mike Nelson40A	Rep. Ray Dehn.....59B	Rep. Jim Davnie.....63A
Rep. Debra Hilstrom.....40B	Sen. Kari Dziedzic60	Rep. Jean Wagenius63B
Rep. John Benson44B	Rep. Diane Loeffler.....60A	Sen.Sandy Pappas65
Rep. Lyndon Carlson45A		

New members named to Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement; first meeting is Jan. 29

House and Senate leaders have appointed the members of the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement. The Commission will hold its first meeting of the 2013 Session on Jan. 29.

Among topics likely to be considered during the 2013 Session--concerns that Minnesota's public pension funds are not recovering quickly enough from the recent recession.

Senate members

Sen. Barb Goodwin
Sen. Jeff Hayden
Sen. Alice M. Johnson
Sen. Sandra L. Pappas
Sen. Julie A. Rosen
Sen. Tom Saxhaug
Sen. Dave Thompson

House members

Rep. Mike Benson
Rep. Phyllis Kahn
Rep. John Lesch
Rep. Will Morgan
Rep. Mary Murphy
Rep. Mike Nelson
Rep. Tim O'Driscoll

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The Committee of Thirteen

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- Janet Kujat (active)
- Bill Kostick
- Ed Andersen
- Lyle Baker
- Barb Boerboon (active)
- Ron Bragg
- Mary Michael Connolly
- Clarence Falk
- Mary Roffers (active)
- Gary Stenerson
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In my opinion

by Jay C. Ritterson, President, Committee of Thirteen

Colleagues and friends, active and retired, thank you for your work on the 2012 election campaign. Your efforts were so important to righting the ship of the State of Minnesota.

You put in many long, often disagreeable hours phoning, door-knocking, writing and talking to groups and individuals. But you were the foot soldiers in defense of fairness, quality education and the community of Minnesota.

You showed us American democracy in action: government of, by and for the people. Thank you.

Our work was clear: convince voters to go to the polls and defeat unfair and unnecessary constitutional amendments and regain control of the House and Senate in Minnesota.

Now we are looking at new work, and we will need your help for this work too.

Minnesota must have jobs to restore the dignity and security of the middle-class. We need effective schools and meaningful education. We need protections for human and civil rights. We need financial and health security for all Minnesota families.

And we need economic stability for the State. We need to repair the road to a better quality of life for all Minnesotans, and you need to be part of that work too.

It is all of us working together that make this a great state. The Committee of Thirteen, watching out for your pension needs, will continue to be your voice at the Legislature, but we need to hear your voices.

Tell us what you want and what you can handle in planning and enjoying your retirement years. **Tell us what you think about a portable Minnesota pension plan.** Those of you nearer to retirement do not accept a sell-out of your future to the private annuity profiteers.

Tell us about those dreams you so truly deserve and for which you have worked long and hard. Those of you in retirement – do not live in fear of crumbling funds.

Tell us your ideas for improvements so that we can continue to refine our message for the Legislature.

As we begin this new year, please accept my thanks once again for all you have done. It makes me proud to say, “I’m from Minnesota.”



“The list of their works is awe inspiring!”

The Minnesota AFL-CIO Retiree Council presented the **2012 Don Anderson Affiliate Excellence Award** to the **Minneapolis Committee of Thirteen** and **RTC 59** “...for their excellent work in political education, political action and community involvement.”

New York teacher retirement system invests in rebuilding

The New York City Teachers Retirement System pledged \$1 billion in new investments for infrastructure projects including improvements to transportation, power, water, communications and housing in New York City and throughout the state that was hit hard by the massive storm Sandy. The \$1 billion pledge is part of a multiyear Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action made by the AFL-CIO, American Federation of Teachers, and other partners.