



**Survey of Candidates for Elective Office
Regarding the Public Employees Retirement System of Mississippi
January 2017**

The Mississippi Retired Public Employee Association (MRPEA) represents approximately 142,635 active members and over 99,483 retirees and beneficiaries of the Public Employees Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS). As a candidate for the PERS Board Retiree Representative this year, we are providing you with an opportunity to respond to this brief survey. Please scan your signed and completed survey to the attention of Becky Cade at cade.consulting@att.net. If you prefer to fax, please fax it to 1-601-510-9259. **MRPEA may distribute the results of the survey to its members and other interested parties without restriction.**

With the creation of the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) in 1952, the Mississippi Legislature made a promise to its public service employees to provide them with basic financial retirement protection for life. In exchange, employees were mandated to pay into the retirement system in good faith with the expectation that the State would meet its promise to help fund those benefits.

Please circle your response(s) to each question:

1. Do you support philosophically Defined Benefit Retirement Systems?

Yes

No

2. If elected to office, will you support the State maintaining the current retirement system benefits including the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)?

Yes

No

3. Do you believe that benefits should ever be reduced for:

Existing retirees? Yes ~~No~~

Current employees? Yes ~~No~~

Future employees? Yes No

4. As a member of the PERS Board will you support adjusting employer contribution rates in accordance with the recommendation of the actuary and state law should that become necessary in the future to maintain the fiscal solvency of the system?

~~Yes~~ No

5. Do you support maintaining the existing structure of the PERS Board?

~~Yes~~ No

Please offer any additional comments below:

Mississippi has contracts with retirees and current employees that include a defined benefit retirement system and COLA provisions. It is a state financial obligation/promise that must be honored just like any other state debt. Future employees could receive more or less benefits depending on the retirement contract at the time of initial employment.

Thank you for your interest in PERS, MRPEA and the dedicated Mississippi public servants that it represents. Please print and sign your name in the space provided.

Philip W. Pepper (Name) *Philip W. Pepper* (Signature)