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## TEXAS PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

### **Dear Representative:**

Welcome to the 89th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature. Thank you for your commitment and service to the state.

TPEA has been a nonpartisan, nonunion organization representing state employees and retirees for 79 years. We look forward to working with you to address the issues important to our state workforce and thereby ensure the effective implementation of legislation that you pass for our state.

Our request for this legislative session is for a long-overdue benefit enhancement for the state of Texas retirees whose dedicated service to Texas helped make it an excellent place. ERS retirees have gone almost 25 years without a pension increase, and we believe that rampant inflation requires a meaningful rise in what retirees take home.

Secondly, although state workers' turnover rate may have decreased, it is still extremely high. Therefore, TPEA asks for a modest pay increase and perhaps a retention bonus to keep our workforce intact.

Third, we appreciate the additional money allocated for the ERS healthcare plan in the introduced version of the Appropriations Bill. The effects of inflation have been felt. Despite a sterling record of cost containment and competitive bidding, overall healthcare costs threaten to drain the health plan reserve fund and necessitate benefit cuts. TPEA endorses the ERS request and thanks you for your support.

The TPEA team will visit you and your staff early in the legislative session, and we look forward to working with you on these issues that are so important to the state's employees and retirees. Please let us know if you have questions or concerns.

Warm regards,

Ann Bishop

TPEA's Executive Director