

March 20, 2024

## **Trouble with the Post Office: TPEA's Communication Challenge**

**Austin, TX – March 20, 2024** – Since November 2023, the Texas Public Employees Association (TPEA) has been unable to access mail sent to our physical address via Business Reply Mail (BRM). BRM is mail that is pre-paid by a business. For example:

- We mail renewal notices to our members and include a pre-paid BRM envelope to save them the cost of a stamp and make it easier for members to return their membership renewal form to us.
- We also used these BRM envelopes in a bulk mailing in October 2023 to the Employees Retirement System (ERS) retirees. To date, we have not received many of the reply envelopes to that mailing yet have heard from numerous people that they mailed us their applications and payments.
- We sent test letters using the BRM and, to date, have not received any of those letters either.

“Our goal is to ensure that everyone can reach us by whatever means is most comfortable for them,” said Ann Bishop, TPEA’s Executive Director. “Unfortunately, we have seen a fundamental breakdown in one of our communication methods and we need to address it.”

The post office located at Chimney Corners in northwest Austin processes the mail for TPEA’s physical address, and since February, mail delivery using the BRM has also affected our PO Box. They have been unwilling to provide us with information about the breakdown in service and have ignored numerous requests for assistance from multiple people. We have escalated the issue to the post office manager and the Postmaster and have received no response or business reply mail. We are escalating the matter with legislators to try and remedy this issue.

### **About TPEA:**

Founded in 1946 by dedicated state employees, the Texas Public Employees Association (TPEA) has fought for over 75 years to promote and preserve the salaries and benefits for state employees and retirees—these benefits make it possible for Texans to devote themselves to careers in keeping Texas prosperous and growing. Today, TPEA is one of the largest associations for active and retired state employees, and it's also the only nonunion, nonpartisan association serving state employees during and after their careers. TPEA was instrumental in the creation of the Employees Retirement System (ERS) pension fund, and it successfully lobbied the Legislature to offer health insurance to state employees and retirees.

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