

A Message From Your Political Consultant



*Jim
Spearing*

Defense, Defense, Defense... Assault On Pensions Imminent!

As we enter the fourth year of the economic slowdown, grim predictions are again being issued from legislative staff for the 2010 session. By their actions, the legislature has placed your pension in their collective cross hairs, particularly the Florida Senate.

During the recent interim committee meetings, the Senate Governmental Oversight Committee folks dedicated two full days of hearings (not hearing any legislation) to public employee pensions and the health of the Florida Retirement System. Politicians don't spend that much time and attention on an issue unless MAJOR changes are in the works, changes that can't be good for you and your family's future.

Yes, these are tough economic times. Yes, our members are willing to share in the sacrifice and already have (three years without a payraise comes to mind). What we are not willing to do is stand idly by while

the financial security of our members is under attack.

This legislative session, more than any in history, will be a defensive struggle to preserve and protect the hard earned progress we have made over the past 20 years to give law enforcement officers a decent pension. We are also going to find out who are true friends are in the legislature when drastic cuts to retirement security are proposed.

You can be certain of one thing. PBA will have "all hands on deck" every moment of the session to fight back against some very bad ideas that are certain to come. You can help. Call your local legislators to tell them that cutting law enforcement pensions had better be a last resort. There is plenty of waste, fraud and abuse in government

that needs to be rooted out before we attack the pensions of the men and women who risk their lives for us every day.

We will deliver that message, loud and clear. ●

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A Message From the President of the CPO Chapter



*Mark
Allieri*

Getting Ready For The Fight

As you are most likely aware, we are heading into another Legislative Session in March, 2010 with another massive budget deficit, which is anywhere in the range of one to three billion dollars. The Legislature has made its intentions clear in that there will be no new taxes on individuals or businesses, and this only leaves wholesale spending reductions on the table. To his credit, **Governor Charlie Crist** has sent the Legislature a budget which calls for no state employee position cuts or salary reductions, but as we are aware, the Legislature has a say on the budget, too.

The PBA legislative experts in Tallahassee have determined that the Legislature must address the immediate budget deficit, but also must look at reducing the state's long term obligations. The long term obligations include our state pension and our state health insurance,

both of which are facing deficits. The legislative leadership is considering the drastic measure of making state employees contribute to the pension system, something which has not been done since before 1975. As far as health insurance, ideas presented so far include, of course, raising premiums; reducing overall benefits; or requiring senior management to start paying for their coverage.

As all members can see, the fight over the budget this year is going to be long and bitter, but rest assured, your elected leaders in the PBA and the professional and dedicated staff at the PBA in Tallahassee will not rest in protecting your jobs, your rights, and your benefits. **If you have**

not done so, I strongly encourage all members to register to receive E-PBA Alerts in order to stay on top of important developments during the session. ●

"To his credit, Governor Charlie Crist has sent the Legislature a budget which calls for no state employee position cuts or salary reductions..."

A fellow walks into a bar, orders a drink, and asks the bartender if he'd like to hear a good Boston College joke. "Listen buddy," he growled. "See those two big guys on your left? They were both linemen on the Boston College football team. That huge fellow on your right was a world-class wrestler at Boston College and that guy in the corner was their all-time champion weight lifter. And I lettered in three sports at Boston College. Now, are you absolutely positive you want to go ahead and tell your joke here?"

"Nah, guess not," the man replied. "I wouldn't want to have to explain it five times."

"Eleven thousand days of our lives: Roughly speaking, that's the amount of time we spend at work between the ages of 21 and 65. It's a staggering amount of time to commit to any one activity."

~ Richard Koonce

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