

Special 2015 Legislative Report

VGEA NEWS

VIRGINIA GOVERNMENTAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

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Insurance Bill Approved

VGEA Legislative Day Coming

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House Proposes Raises!

Bills, Bills, Bills...

Session Week 3

January 30, 2015



House Subcommittee Approves Insurance Bill

The House Appropriations Committee's Compensation and Retirement Subcommittee yesterday unanimously recommended approval of HB 2277 (sponsored by Delegate Riley Ingram (R-Hopewell City)). The bill would establish a minimum life insurance floor for State employees who retired with at least 30 years of service.

This VGEA initiated bill is intended to ensure that state retirees have a residual life insurance benefit amount that is sufficient to cover their

House Budget Writers Release Pay Proposal Outline

Governor Also Pushes for Pay Increase

Yesterday House Appropriations leaders released the outline of their pay proposal under consideration for state employees and state-assisted local employees. Many details remain to be worked out and will be released on Sunday, February 8. [Click here](#) to read the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* article about it.

But this is the information we've been given. The outline includes a compression pay adjustment (similar to the one provided in August 2013) *plus* a 1 percent cost-of-living adjustment for all state employees.

While details regarding the compression adjustment plan were not released, the 2013 plan provided a base pay increase of \$65 for each year of continuous state service for those with a minimum of five years of service up to a maximum of 30 years of service. The VGEA has recommended to the Committee that they consider lowering the five-year minimum threshold AND increasing the yearly amount. Contrary to years past, neither the



Delegate S. Chris Jones (R-Suffolk), Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee

final expenses. The bill will now advance to the full Appropriations Committee for action next week.

Your VGEA lobbying team testified in support of the bill during the subcommittee meeting and will continue efforts to move it forward.

RSVP Now for VGEA Legislative Day



Presidents' Day

Monday,

February 16

8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

***Meet at the VGEA Office
1011 E. Main St., Richmond
for coffee and bagels then
walk to General Assembly
Building. Walk around to
talk to your legislators,
then meet back at the
office for sandwiches. You
are***

***on your own in the
afternoon if you'd like to
tour Thomas Jefferson's
Capitol Building.***

compression pay adjustment nor the cost-of-living adjustment would be tied to performance requirements or lack of conduct violations.

Here's how the salary adjustments would work, for example: if the 2013 compression plan amount plus a 1 percent cost-of-living adjustment were applied to a state employee making the median classified state employee salary of \$38,957 with the average service of 12 years, that employee would receive a total base salary increase of 3 percent or \$1,170. A straight 2 percent across the board adjustment would have only resulted in a \$780 increase for this employee. Under the outlined plan, the percentage increase will vary by employee but those employees who have suffered the longest from the lack of salary increases should benefit the most. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER** that many important details of this outline have yet to be decided.

Your VGEA lobbying team is continuing to advocate for a higher per-year amount in the compression pay adjustment and additional help for employees in those pay classes and pay bands who are experiencing extraordinary high turnover rates and which fall below the federal poverty limits. This includes adult and juvenile correctional officers, mental health direct care workers, custodial workers and others.

For state-supported local employees (constitutional officer employees, local social service department employees, others), the outline included a 2% across-the-board increase while funding would be provided to local school boards for the state share of a 1.5% increase in teacher salaries.

While not stated in the outline, any pay adjustment is expected to be tied to continued state revenue collections continuing to exceed the current projections.

Senate budget writers are not expected to release any details of their budget proposal until Sunday, February 8, the date by which each committee must adopt its amendments to the 2014-2016 biennium budget. VGEA lobbyists have been meeting with Senate Finance Committee members and staff to advance a pay proposal in the Committee that meets the VGEA priorities.

None of these pay proposals would have occurred without the VGEA. Your membership and your dues support this work. Remind your colleagues of that and ask them if they are members. We get stronger with every member we enlist.

The VGEA will do its best to keep you informed. **Check vgea.org in between newsletters for breaking news and voice your opinions on the VGEA Facebook page!** *Thank you for your continued support on behalf of State employees and retirees.* Have questions or concerns? **Call the VGEA at 877-302-7146 or email info@vgea.org with questions.**

Bills of Interest to VGEA Members

VGEA Legislative Director Jim Roberts has compiled this comprehensive legislation list that may be of interest to VGEA members. Bills and amendments marked failed will be deleted from the next issue.

For more details and to RSVP call the VGEA Office toll-free: 877-302-7146 or email info@vgea.org

VGEA Offers Four \$2,500 College Scholarships: Apply Today!

The new 2015 **VGEA Scholarship Application is now online!** If you have been a **VGEA member for at least one year; you, your spouse, children and grandchildren are eligible** to apply.

[Click here to download the application, which contains the complete 2015 guidelines.](#) There are also a few new rules, so be sure to read it carefully. All post-high school students are eligible, if their college/ university or graduate school is SCHEV certified.

The **deadline to return your completed application packets is February 27**, and only the first 100 will be considered. **Be sure to submit your application soon!**

We will revise it each week of the General Assembly session to keep members informed about the progress and outcome of each bill as they move through the system. For more details, visit Virginia's Legislative Information System at <http://lis.virginia.gov> or **click the number link** that should take you directly to the corresponding bill's summary.

[HB 1942](#) Health insurance; prior authorization for drug benefits.

[SB 1017](#) Employment applications; inquiries regarding criminal arrests, charges, or convictions. - **Reported with amendments**

[SB 977](#) Virginia Sickness and Disability Program; open enrollment period. - **Reported from Senate Finance with amendments**

[SB 785](#) Public employment; prohibits discrimination based on basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. - **Reported from Senate Finance with amendments**

[HB 1969](#) Virginia Retirement System; cash balance retirement plan.

[SB 1135](#) Adoption leave; creates new classification for state employee. - **Reported from Senate Finance with amendments**

[HB 2277](#) Life insurance for retired state employees.

[SB 1438](#) State and local government employees; prohibited use of state funds to pay membership dues.

[SB 674](#) Virginia Information Technologies Agency; email archiving

[SJ 213](#) Constitutional amendment (first resolution); marriage. - **Failed**

[HJ 492](#) Constitutional amendment (first resolution); marriage.

[HJ 493](#) Constitutional amendment (first resolution); marriage.

[SB 680](#) Magistrates; appointment and supervision. - **Failed**

[HB 1288](#) Same-sex marriages; civil unions. - **Failed**

[SB 681](#) Minimum wage; increases from its current federally mandated level to \$8.00 per hour. - **Failed**

[HB 1289](#) Same-sex marriages; civil unions. - **Failed**

[SB 682](#) Same-sex marriages; civil unions. - **Failed**

[SJ 214](#) Constitutional amendment (first resolution); marriage. - **Failed**

[HJ 500](#) Constitutional amendment (first resolution); failure to pass an appropriation act.

[HJ 501](#) Study; JLARC; reorganization of law-enforcement agencies; report. - **Failed**



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Membership questions?

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(Pictured above: the Virginia Capitol was designed by Thomas Jefferson and has been used as the "White House" in recent movies, including Spielberg's "Lincoln." You may tour it as part of Legislative Day on Feb. 16.)

SB 687 Virginia Retirement System; limitations on average final compensation. - **Failed**

HB 1316 Virginia Retirement System; average final compensation.

SB 692 Virginia Law Officers' Retirement System; conservation officers. - **Reported from Senate Finance with amendments**

SB 696 Conflict of Interests Acts, State & Local Government & General Assembly; certain gifts prohibited.

HB 1358 Virginia Retirement System; creditable service for members of General Assembly.

HB 1377 Health insurance; credits for retired school division employees.

HB 1387 Health insurance; coverage for renewals of Schedule IV prescription eyedrops.

SB 735 General Assembly Conflicts of Interests Act; prohibited conduct related to travel.

SB 738 Virginia Sickness and Disability Program; open enrollment period for certain members of VRS. - **Reported from Senate Finance with amendments**

SB 739 State Police, Department of; appointment of supervisory officers.

HB 1400 Budget Bill.

SB 800 Budget Bill.

SB 752 State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act; prohibited conduct for Governor's Secretaries.

SB 772 Payment of wages; discrimination between employees on basis of sex. - **Failed**

SB 777 General Assembly Conflicts of Interests Act; gift-free legislator, penalty.

HB 1449 Virginia Human Rights Act; childbirth or related medical conditions, cause of action.

HB 1466 Capitol Police; security for Gov-elect, Lt. Gov-elect, Att. General-elect, members of Court of Appeals.

SB 812 Lobbyist disclosure; definition of executive action, procurement transactions.

SB 813 Virginia Retirement System; technical amendments to the programs administered by System. - **Reported from Senate Finance with amendments**

HB 1480 Virginia Retirement System; creditable service for General Assembly members.

[HB 1498](#) Virginia Human Rights Act; prohibits discrimination in public employment.

[HB 1512](#) Minimum wage; increases to \$15.15 per hour. - **Failed**

[HB 1546](#) Virginia Law Officers' Retirement System; sworn members of enforcement division of DMV added.

[HB 1598](#) Conflicts of Interests Acts, State and Local Government and General Assembly; prohibited gifts.

[HB 1643](#) Virginia Human Rights Act; public employment; prohibited discrimination; sexual orientation.

[HB 1659](#) Virginia Retirement System; increase of retirement allowance

[SB 1121](#) IT responsibility of agency directors. - **Passed Senate**

[SB 1075](#) State health plan; participation by local school divisions. - **Reported from Senate Finance with amendments**

[SB 1022](#) Virginia Retirement System benefits. - **Passed Senate**

[HB 2156](#) Health insurance; coverage for hearing aids and related professional services.

[HB 2081](#) Employers; disclosure of social media account information. - **Reported with Amendments**

[HB 1916](#) Fraud and Abuse Whistle Blower Protection Act; definition of state agency. - **Passed Senate**

[HB 1890](#) Virginia Retirement System; purchase of service credit for prior service.

[HB 1883](#) Virginia Sickness and Disability Program; open enrollment period; State Police Retirement System.

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