

The New Louisiana Voice



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RSEA AND LASERS EXECUTIVES STAND BY GOVERNOR JOHN BEL EDWARDS

as he signs Senate Bill 5 sponsored by Senator Ed Price creating Act 656 of the 2022 Regular Session.

Act 656 grants eligible LASERS retirees an historic 13th check.
See more information on Act 656 in this newsletter.



First row, left to right: Tina Grant, LASERS Executive Counsel; Cindy Rougeou, LASERS Executive Director; Governor John Bel Edwards
Second row, left to right: Senator Ed Price; Jimmy Anthony, RSEA Administrative Director; Charles Castille, LASERS Legislative Chair;
David Thomas, RSEA President; Victor Dennis, RSEA Legislative Chair

RSEA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Well, we are into June now and it has been quite a busy few months. RSEA, in lieu of its regular Chapter meetings, held its first on-line webinar on April 11th. Thanks again to Access2Day for offering to host this state-wide event for us. For those who joined in to the webinar I hope the sessions were informative. For those unable to do so, I thought the webinar went well with a structure very similar

to our face-to-face Chapter meetings. The entire webinar has been placed on the RSEA website along with some recorded messages from the Chapter Presidents. Let's hope we are able to do face-to-face meetings next spring.

Our RSEA Administrative Director, Jimmy Anthony, attended the WEP/GPO Rally in Washington, DC, in May. The elimination of WEP/GPO is one of the critical missions of RSEA so the organization thought it essential for RSEA to participate. Jimmy will have more information about the rally in his comments.

We now have a second RSEA Scholarship award winner. This is our second year to screen the candidates and make an award to the best of the candidates. We were fortunate to have some excellent students apply. Ethan Deshautelle from Marksville was the scholarship winner for this year. Congratulations Ethan! More information about Ethan is contained in this newsletter.

Great news! As of the writing of this column, Senate Bill 5 has passed unanimously in the House and is now awaiting the Governor's signature. SB 5 is the one-time supplemental payment of up to \$2000 to LASERS retirees. Thanks to all who were involved but especially to RSEA and our lobbyist, Frank Jobert, for the tireless efforts to get this bill through the legislature. There were some rough moments with the maximum payment being reduced but the efforts were successful. Maybe again next year??? Frank will have further comments in his column on SB 5 as well as other legislative issues.

RSEA has over the past few months been targeting increasing membership. Our webinar was advertised via Access2day to all LASERS retirees. During the webinar we discussed the activities of RSEA and how the organization supports and protects the benefits of retirees. We urged those non-members to join. Also, through the networking of RSEA and AMBA, a very large membership mail-out to all non-member LASERS retirees was done in late April with an added benefit for non-members to join for half price the first year. The results to date are very promising and new enrollments are continuing to roll in. RSEA is stressing that we need membership in order to continue to protect our benefits. Remember our motto is "Working Today for Your Tomorrow".

The RSEA conference is scheduled for October 11-12 in Marksville at the Paragon Casino. More information is included in this newsletter. I hope to see many of you there!

And of course, a Dad joke: The CEO of IKEA has been appointed Prime Minister of Sweden. He is currently assembling his cabinet.

Have a great summer!

David Thomas
President

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



It has been a really busy spring this year. We worked really hard to bring you the live webinar that replaced our in-person Chapter meetings this year. Almost 200 people attended the event and even more were able to view the recording of the live event on our website. If you haven't seen it, the recording is still active. RSEA members nominated 7 students for the RSEA Foundation Scholarship this

year. You can read more about our scholarship winner in this newsletter. RSEA also sent me the Washington DC to participate in a Rally to eliminate the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset. Read more about the Rally in this newsletter.

Thanks to all of our members who donated to the RSEA Foundation Scholarship since our last newsletter. Below is list of members who donated.

Donor	In Memory of
Carolyn B Malbrue	Clifton Malbrue
Patti A. Maxwell Masotti	Bruno E. Masotti
Donna Adorno	None
Brenda F. Taylor	None
Linda Frickie	None
Karen Graham	None
Andrea McCarty McFaul	None
Glen Roscoe	None
Michael Duran	None
Wilton Lebo	None
Cynthia Wallace	None
Elizabeth Hollier	None
Stephen Beck	None
Mary R. Davis	None
Peter NG	None
Bobby Mayweather	None
Aaron Frank McGee	None
Janet Brocato	None
Patrice Bruno	None
Chasity Cheramie	None
Nadine Gaspard	None
Nita Rose Harper	None
Larry Bruce Morgan	None
Janice James	None
Sharron Allement	None
Thomas D. Collins	None
Ada B. Hall	None
Jacques Sanborn	None
Geraldine Clemons	None
Morris Lottinger	None
Mary Casey	None
David Thomas	None

Newsletter costs are getting very expensive so in order to save money, we are urging members to opt in for a digital copy instead of a print copy. This could potentially save us thousands of dollars if enough members opt in. Please give us a call or email us to drop you from receiving a printed copy of the newsletter. But don't worry, if you decide later, you would prefer the printed copy, just let us know and we will start resending it to you again. Also, you can always go to our website and download the current or even past issues of our newsletter.

In order for us to better communicate with our membership we are asking that every member with an email address to please join our Email Club and send us your email address. We promise to not bombard you with emails, but will only send you important and timely information that you should be aware of as it pertains to your benefits and well being as a retiree.

Jimmy Anthony
Administrative Director

RSEA LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



The 2022 Regular Louisiana Legislative Session is finally concluded! This year's Regular Session ended (sine die) at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, June 6th. It is anticipated that a 2nd Special Legislative Session on Congressional redistricting will have been held by the time you receive this message. The 2nd Special Session of 2022 was scheduled for opening at noon on June 15th and will have ended no later than 6:00 PM June 20th.

The session was relatively uneventful for RSEA, with the exception of two major LASERS' sponsored retirement bills, both authored by Senator Edward "Ed" Price: Senate Bill 5, a one-time/nonrecurring state supplemental payment to eligible retirees; and Senate Bill 438, a new LASERS retirement plan consisting of a Defined Benefit foundation with a Defined Contribution add-on or overlay.

SB-438 (D-Ed Price/R-Tony Bacala) was not successful, and it remained in the Senate Retirement Committee by virtue of a 3-3 tie vote, as a motion to move the bill favorably failed. While the measure was billed as bipartisan legislation, and was supported by the Governor's Office, LASERS and RSEA, it was opposed in retirement committee testimony by the Reason Foundation, Public Affairs Research Council (PAR) and the AFL-CIO. The bill ultimately failed as it remained in committee when the session ended.

Since the last LASERS' COLA (cost of living adjustment) was in 2016 and there were insufficient funds in the LASERS Experience Account to fund a COLA this year, the LASERS Board of Trustees sponsored **SB 5 by Senator Ed Price (Primary Author)**. This measure provides for a one-time supplemental lump-sum payment that is equal to the **lesser** of \$2,000 or the retiree/beneficiary's monthly retirement benefit. To be eligible for this payment, LASERS' retirees must be at least 60 years of age and must have been receiving a retirement benefit at least one year as of June 30, 2022. The lump-sum benefit payment will be made by LASERS to eligible retirees/beneficiaries no later than September 15, 2022. Of special note, this bill received unanimous support in the Senate (35-0) and in the House of Representatives (96-0)!

On behalf of RSEA and its members, I wish to extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the LASERS Board of Trustees and Staff, Senator Ed Price and the entire Louisiana legislature, and Governor John Bel Edwards for their unanimous support of this measure!

Special mention of HCR-11 is also warranted. This instrument was authored by Representative Michael "Mike" Johnson of Pineville, LA. (District 27). This measure impacts all state and statewide retirement systems and memorializes (urges and requests) the United States Congress to take actions necessary to review and eliminate or reduce the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) better known as the Social Security Offsets.

This resolution goes a step further than previous resolutions, in that, it also urges the other forty-nine (49) state legislatures in the U.S. to call upon their respective Congressional delegations to reduce or repeal the WEP/GPO. Finally, HCR-11 also urges and requests the Louisiana Attorney General to explore civil and other legal actions to restore public employees' Social Security benefits that they have paid for and earned, and to join with other affected states to recover rights and benefits of public employees. HCR-11 passed both chambers of the Louisiana legislature with unanimous votes: 35-0 in the Senate and 88-0 in the House of Representatives and it is being sent to every other legislature in the United States & to the President of the United States.

It is now up to the U.S. Congress to undertake legislation at the Federal level to repeal one or both of these dreadful federal offsets. This leads us to an update of two of the many pieces of federal legislation currently pending in the U.S. Congress pertaining to the WEP and GPO.

Let me first begin with **H.R. 82** by Congressman Rodney Davis (R-IL). This bill was first introduced on January 4, 2021 as The Social Security Fairness Act of 2021. If successfully passed and signed by the President, it would eliminate the GPO and WEP effective for Social Security benefits payable after December, 2021. It currently has 282 Cosponsors, 203 Democrats and 77 Republicans, including the entire Louisiana congressional delegation. This bill only lacks eight (8) additional cosponsors to reach a threshold of 290 sponsors and thereby force a floor vote in the House of Representatives which would be a watershed moment in the drive to pass meaningful Social Security reform legislation.

Another measure, **S.1302** (Social Security Fairness Act) by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) was recently introduced on April 22, 2021 and has 39 Cosponsors (33 Democrats, 4 Republicans and 2 Independents). Both of Louisiana's Senators, Cassidy and Kennedy are currently signed on as cosponsors. This measure, like HR-82 above, would repeal the WEP and GPO for months beginning after December, 2021.

In furtherance of our efforts to seek progress on these bills, RSEA's Administrative Director, Jimmy Anthony recently concluded a trip to Washington, D.C. to lobby for full or partial repeal of WEP and GPO. On May 18th Jimmy attended a "Lobby Day and Rally" in D.C. along with Janis Hernandez, Past President of the Louisiana Retired Teachers Association (LRTA). They were joined by other proponents of full repeal of the WEP and GPO from such states as California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maine, Virginia and Rhode Island. They were able to meet with several U.S. Senators and Representatives and convey our message on full repeal of the dreaded Social Security offsets. It was a successful day as they were able to get an opportunity to reiterate our message with a unified voice consisting of ours and others similarly situated as Louisiana. Our thanks, once again, to Representative Mike Johnson (District 27-Pineville) for continuing to organize and lead the Louisiana's efforts for full repeal of the WEP/GPO.

With the conclusion of the 2022 Regular Session, you will find the 2022 "RSEA Legislative Report" (elsewhere in this newsletter), which details the bills RSEA was tracking during the session, along with RSEA's recommended positions and the bills' final outcomes.

Frank L. Jobert, Jr.,
Legislative & Governmental Affairs Direc



2022 Legislation Impacting RSEA with Recommended Positions

SB5 -- Price RSEA:Support/Passed

System Impacted: LASERS

Provides for a nonrecurring one-time supplemental payment to eligible LASERS retirees and beneficiaries.

SB438 -- Price RSEA:Support/Failed

System Impacted: LASERS

Creates a New Retirement Plan consisting of a Defined Benefit foundation with a Defined Contribution add-on/overlay for new LASERS employees.

HB 19 -- DeVillier RSEA:Support/Passed

System Impacted: LASERS

Provides relative to membership in LASERS Hazardous Duty Services Plan by adding employees of the office of the State Fire Marshal who are Firefighter 1 certified and who provide emergency response...

HB 29 -- Nelson RSEA:Support/Failed

HB 31 -- Tarver, P. RSEA:Support/Failed

Systems Impacted: LASERS, TRSL, LSERS, LSPRS

Proposes a constitutional amendment that, if approved by voters on 11/8/22, would authorize use of nonrecurring state revenue funds to provide a non-recurring lump-sum payment to eligible retirees and beneficiaries of the systems.

HB 592 -- Zeringue RSEA:Support/Passed

System Impacted: LASERS

Makes supplemental appropriations for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 and allocates \$21.8 million to LASERS to apply to the balance of the Unfunded Accrued Liability (UAL).

HCR 11 -- Johnson RSEA:Support/Passed

System Impacted: All State and Statewide Systems

Urges and requests the legislatures of each state of the United States to pass similar resolutions calling upon Congress to support actions necessary to review and eliminate the WEP and GPO.

LASERS UPDATE

What You Need to Know About the One-Time Supplemental Payment

Act 656 (SB 5) passed in the 2022 General Session of the Louisiana Legislature authorizing a **ONE-TIME ONLY** supplemental benefit payment for eligible retirees and beneficiaries. This legislation was sponsored by Senator Ed Price, Chair of the Senate Retirement Committee, and LASERS because the average rank-and-file LASERS retiree had not received a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) since 2016. While there were not enough funds in the Experience Account to provide a typical COLA, **Act 656** provides some relief in the form of a one-time supplemental payment to over 45,000 eligible LASERS retirees and beneficiaries.

Who is eligible for the payment?

- Retirees and beneficiaries retired for at least one year as of June 30, 2022;
- Must be at least 60 years of age.

Should I Call LASERS with Eligibility Questions?

Please **DO NOT** call LASERS to find out if you qualify for the one-time only payment. That determination will not be finalized until our eligible retiree list and payment amounts are

reviewed and audited by staff. **If you qualify, LASERS will mail notification letters on August 1. Notification will also be posted to your myLASERS account prior to August 1.**

How much money will I receive?

- One-time payment will be equal to the lesser of the retiree or beneficiary's current monthly benefit;
- Or capped at \$2,000.

The payment will equal the member's gross pay (capped at \$2,000). There will be no deductions made except for federal tax.

When can I expect to receive my payment?

The legislation authorizes payment to be made no later than September 15, 2022.

More details are available at <https://lasersonline.org/one-time-supplemental-payment/>.

Watch LASERS RSEA Webinar Presentation Online

LASERS was pleased to participate in the RSEA live webinar on Monday, April 11, 2022. LASERS Chief of Staff Trey Boudreaux provided an update on the System and addressed topics of interest to our active and retired members. You may view our

video presentation and resource materials on the LASERS website: <https://lasersonline.org/lasers-update/>.

Update Your Contact Information with LASERS

The security of your information is a top priority for LASERS. As a result of the rise in data breaches, it is critical that your address, phone number(s), and email address are kept current to ensure receipt of communications from LASERS.

If you are not sure what LASERS has on file, you may check your contact information in myLASERS to see if updates are needed. If you are an active member, make sure your Human Resources office is aware of any contact information changes. If you are a retiree, you may complete a [Contact Information Update form](#) and submit it to LASERS.

New! Monthly Cybersecurity & You Email from LASERS

If you already receive LASERS Member Connection emails,

you may have noticed a new one targeted to cybersecurity. Each month, our IT staff will share the latest helpful tips and information to assist members in keeping their data and devices secure.

If you have not subscribed to LASERS Member Connection, sign up on our website: <https://lasersonline.org/media/member-connection/>.

Be Prepared for Hurricane Season

Are you enrolled in direct deposit? If so, that's great news! Your LASERS benefit payment goes straight into your financial institution with direct deposit. No worries about delayed paper checks because of post office and road closures, or other emergency shutdowns.

If you are not yet enrolled, sign up today! The Direct Deposit Authorization form is available on myLASERS and for download on the LASERS website.

Your Ship Has Come In; AMBA Passport Helps You Save Big!

The graphic features a dark red background with various percentage discounts (e.g., -70%, -50%, -40%, -30%, -20%, -10%, 0%) scattered across it. At the top center is a white circular icon containing a red and yellow sale tag with a white percentage sign. Below the icon, the text "AMBA PASSPORT" is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Underneath that, "GIVES YOU THOUSANDS OF WAYS TO" is written in smaller white capital letters, followed by "SAVE HUNDREDS" in the largest, bold, white capital letters.

What's even better than summertime travel adventures? Saving big on your summertime travel adventures, of course! And with AMBA Passport from MyAMBAdiscounts, you can get in shape get out to sea. Whichever you choose, we can help you can save hundreds!

Whether it's golf packages and vacations from Golfbreaks or scenic North American hikes with Active Adventures, you can have fun and fitness at the same time. You can also explore Canada, Iceland, and even the Galapagos. All of our partners are committed to providing you amazing times and great memories with excellent service and expert guides!

Of course, not everyone's idea of a vacation is to be on their feet all day. Some of us prefer to kick back and relax. Our cruises are the perfect answer. Our partners include Carnival Cruise Line, Royal Caribbean International, Disney Cruises, and more. All promise to give you rest and relaxation on the high seas with plenty of entertainment, nightlife, ad stops to explore new lands!

Prefer an all-inclusive resort or a family vacation package? We've got those too. You've earned the right to relax your way – and we're committed to helping you do it! And what about discounts on the means to get to your destinations? We've got discounts for you on airfare, rental cars, and hotels.

There are so many more savings available to you through your Passport membership. Once you start exploring, you won't be able to stop! Dining? Check! Entertainment? Check! Electronics? Check! And here's the best part – your AMBA Passport membership is absolutely FREE! Start taking advantage of all the savings available through your association and AMBA. Just go to myAMBAdiscounts.com, enter your email, activation code, and basic information, and sign up for email alerts. To learn more, call AMBA at 866-979-0497 or visit myAMBAdiscounts.com.



OGB UPDATE

Medicare – It's Complicated

For a retiree who is currently insured through the Office of Group Benefits (OGB), it is never too early to start learning about Medicare and the options available. In this article, we will provide an overview of what Medicare is, how to apply for it, and available options provided through OGB. The following is intended to serve as a guide only. Each person should consult his or her local Social Security Office for more detailed information.

As you or your spouse near the age of 65, you will be inundated with marketing material relative to Medicare options. Please be mindful that you should always consult with OGB to insure that the option you are considering will not negatively impact your OGB health insurance.

What is Medicare?

Medicare is the federal health insurance program, administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), for people who are retired and 65 or older, people under 65 with certain disabilities, and people with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). Medicare provides basic coverage specific to medical or pharmacy care, subject to Medicare rules, as follows:

- **Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance)** – Part A helps to cover inpatient care in hospitals, care in a skilled nursing facility, hospice care, and some home health care.
- **Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance)** – Part B helps to cover certain doctors' services, outpatient care, medical supplies, and preventive services.
- **Medicare Part C (Medicare Advantage Plans)** - A Medicare Advantage plan includes both Part A and Part B. Most Medicare Advantage Plans offer prescription drug coverage. OGB sponsors several Medicare Advantage Plan options for members. **If you enroll in a Medicare Advantage Plan not sponsored by OGB, you will lose OGB coverage and you cannot reenroll in OGB coverage.**
- **Medicare Part D (Prescription Drug Coverage)** – Part D helps to cover the cost of prescription drugs.** *
*****If you are enrolled in one of the following plans, your prescription drug coverage is included and becomes a Part D plan and you do not need to purchase a separate Medicare Part D plan: Magnolia Local, Magnolia Local Plus, Magnolia Open Access, or Pelican HRA1000. Part D coverage may also be provided as part of an OGB-sponsored Medicare Advantage plan. Please review the specific plan for more information. You may not be enrolled in more than one Medicare Part D Plan at a time. If you enroll in a non-OGB Medicare Part D Plan while enrolled in one of the OGB plans listed above, your health coverage with OGB will terminate.**

How do you apply for Medicare?

It is suggested that you and/or your covered spouse visit the nearest Social Security Administration office **90 days before your 65th birthday** to find out if you are eligible for Medicare. It is important to note that OGB rules provide that if you are eligible for **premium-free Medicare Part A**, you **must also enroll in Medicare Part B**. Once you are enrolled in Medicare, OGB must be provided with a copy of your Medicare card. If it is determined that you are not eligible to enroll in the Medicare A (premium-free), OGB will need a letter from the Social Security Administration advising of that.

You can enroll for both Medicare Parts A and B any time in the 3 months before your 65th birthday month, during the month of your 65th birthday, or in the 3 months after your 65th birthday. However, applying for Medicare **before you or your covered spouse reaches age 65** allows sufficient time for premium and benefit adjustments.

There are a few things you should keep in mind to ensure continuous coverage with Medicare as primary and OGB as secondary.

- You (or your spouse, if he or she is covered by your OGB plan) **must enroll in Medicare**, if eligible, to continue receiving secondary benefits from your OGB health plan if:

- You are retired and have no other group health plan coverage through present (active) employment; and
- You turned 65 on or after July 1, 2005; and
- You are eligible for Medicare individually or as a dependent of your current or previous spouse.
- You do not have to enroll in Medicare to continue your OGB coverage if:
 - You are not retired; or
 - You turned 65 before July 1, 2005; or
 - You are not eligible for premium free Medicare Part A.

What are my Medicare options through OGB when Medicare is primary?

Once you are enrolled in Medicare, your plan options increase. Your OGB coverage through the OGB self-insured plans (currently Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana (BCBS)) or the fully-insured Vantage Medical Home HMO will become your secondary insurance. In addition to the BCBS and Vantage plans, OGB offers several Medicare Advantage options to its members who are on Medicare. Most of the Medicare Advantage plans offered by OGB have low monthly premiums. To enroll in any of these plans you as well as your spouse must also be enrolled with Medicare Parts A & B.

The Medicare Advantage options currently available through OGB are as follows:

- **Blue Advantage HMO** – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana has been protecting Louisianans for 85 years. With Blue Advantage (HMO), you have a local choice for your Medicare coverage. Enjoy the ease of medical, hospital and prescription drug coverage along with dental, vision, hearing and fitness in one simple plan. Plus, you'll get extras like an over-the-counter allowance, no-cost on-line primary care provider visits, meal delivery following an acute-care stay and member rewards for completing select wellness activities.
- **Humana Medicare Employer HMO** - Humana is pleased to offer several enhanced benefits for OGB Medicare retirees! Humana offers medical, hospital and pharmacy coverage with added benefits such as dental, vision, hearing, fitness meal delivery and more. Humana's HMO service area includes all parishes in Louisiana.
- **Peoples Health Medicare Advantage** – Peoples Health Medicare Advantage plans offer much more than Medicare, with extra benefits like vision and dental coverage, free health club membership and prescription drug coverage. As a Peoples Health Group Medicare member, you pay a premium in addition to paying your Medicare Part B premium; you receive 100 percent coverage for many services with NO Medicare deductibles. Peoples Health was founded and is based in Louisiana and serves more than 85,000 members. Their plans offer coordinated, personalized service.
- **Vantage Health Plan Medicare Advantage** – Vantage Health Plan offers three Medicare Advantage plan options to OGB members: Vantage Premium HMO-POS, Vantage Standard HMO-POS, and Vantage Basic HMO-POS. One benefit to Vantage's Medicare Advantage plan is that a network of providers is already contracted with the plan throughout Louisiana.
- **Via Benefits** - Towers Watson's Via Benefits is an Individual Medicare Market Exchange offered to OGB retirees and their spouses who have Medicare Parts A and B. Via Benefits offers a variety of medical, prescription drug, and dental plans based on an individual's provider preferences, prescription drug needs, geographic location, and medical conditions. These plans also include a health reimbursement arrangement (HRA), paid by your former employer, with the member receiving \$200 per month for retiree only coverage and \$300 per month for retiree and spousal coverage. The HRA funds can be used to reimburse qualifying medical expenses, even Medicare Part B monthly premiums.

You can learn more about the Medicare Advantage options available to you by visiting the OGB website at <http://info.groupbenefits.org/health-plans/>. If you have any questions concerning Medicare and the options available through OGB, please call 1-800-272-8451 and select option 5.



PUBLIC EMPLOYEES DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN

Meet with your local retirement plan advisor

Empower is the service provider for several Louisiana retirement plans including the Louisiana Deferred Compensation 457(b) and the LASERS Self-Directed 401(a) DROP plans and offers ongoing support as your career and life change.

Throughout your retirement, you have the option to keep your assets in your plan(s) and can continue to take advantage of the financial guidance and resources provided. Local retirement plan advisors are available to meet with you one-on-one to review your savings, investing strategy and income sources, and can

provide personalized advice based on your complete financial circumstances with actionable next steps to take toward your goals. They can also help answer any questions you may have, including:

- Have I saved enough for my future?
- When do I begin and how much should I be withdrawing?
- How do I minimize the impact taxes have on my savings?
- Does my investment strategy align with my withdrawal strategy?

These meetings are part of the service you receive from the Louisiana Deferred Compensation 457(b) and LASERS Self-Directed 401(a) DROP Plans and are complimentary to all eligible, participating and retired members of the plan.

Find your local retirement plan advisor at LouisianaDCP.com > Contact us or visit louisiana_default.empowermytime.com to schedule a meeting online. You can also email LouisianaDCP@empower.com or call the participant services center at 800-937-7604 for additional information.

RSEA and the WEP/GPO Rally in Washington DC

We began on Tuesday afternoon (May 17th) meeting in the Lutheran church in the Capitol Hill district. As we gathered and greeted one another, it was a happy occasion since most had been meeting remotely for the past two years. We shared personal stories of how WEP-GPO affects either us or the people we support.

On the rally day we began gathering around 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday in the church, for coffee and nutrition bars, distributed visors, repeal buttons, maps of the Senate and House buildings and outlined plans for the day. A brief overview of plans for Wednesday was reviewed. Then we went on our way to lobby visits. Appointments had been made ahead of time, so it was relatively easy to get to appointments on time.

The Rally from 12:00-1:00 was the highlight of the day. The spot was in a shady outdoor space near the Capitol. About 50 people were gathered. Suzie Dixon (CA) and Bette Marafino shared the introductions, while Roger Boudreau (RI) interspersed repeal WEP-GPO chants between speakers.

Senator Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Congressmen Larson, (D-CT), David Cicilline, (D-R.I.) and Seth Moulton (D-MA) spoke about the necessity to repeal WEP-GPO now. A touching highlight to the Rally were the personal stories of the following people: Suzie Dixon (retired teacher- CA), Jane Roth (current teacher-CT), Patrice Earnest- (federal worker-GA), Dicky Wrufel (retired firefighter- ME), Bonnie Ceidel, (retired teacher, spouse- CA), Penny Whitney Asdourian (government employee- ME), Gene Sokolowski (PSAI- VA). The Rally was live-streamed and photographers took pictures of attendees. Press releases were also sent.

Each of the Congressmen and Senators who spoke made a large point of thanking us for our work and helping to get these bills on committee agenda.

Lobby visits continued after the Rally. Because some congressional offices were not accepting in-person visits, several Zoom meetings were arranged and included participants in D.C. and those back home. Zoom visits to both CT Senators' offices (Blumenthal and Murphy) garnered over 50 participants.

Senior Discounts at Retailers in Louisiana

1. ALBERTSONS

Age for discount: Varies Senior discount is available at select stores throughout the country. Customers are encouraged to reach out to their store to confirm if there's a senior discount.

2. BROOKSHIRE'S FOOD & PHARMACY

Age for discount: 60+ Every Tuesday and Thursday, customers 60 and older can save 5 percent off their grocery purchase when they use their Brookshire's Thank You Card. Eligible adults need to ask for the discount at checkout. The discount doesn't apply to milk and other dairy products and a host of other things including fuel, tobacco and prescription drugs.

3. WALGREENS

Age for discount: 55+ 20% off eligible in-store merchandise on the first Tuesday of each month. Must have a Balance Rewards card.

4. THE SALVATION ARMY THRIFT STORES

Age for Discount: 55+ Up to 50% off on senior discount days (varies by location).

For a complete list of other retailers that offer senior discounts use this link. [2022 Biggest List of Senior Discounts \(Restaurants, Retail, Travel & More\) \(theseniorlist.com\)](http://2022BiggestListofSeniorDiscounts(Restaurants,Retail,Travel&More)(theseniorlist.com))

RSEA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

The RSEA Foundation proudly announces our second scholarship winner, Ethan Deshautelle from Marksville, LA. Ethan will graduate from Avoyelles Public Charter School in May. After graduation, Ethan plans to attend LSU majoring in Biology with a minor in Microbiology. He will then pursue a Doctorate in Orthopedics at either LSU or UNO. Let's all wish him well on his academic journey.

This \$1,000 Scholarship was made possible by the many RSEA members who generously donated money to the Scholarship Fund.

There were six other candidates, all of whom had similarly impressive credentials, which made the decision very difficult. Please donate to the Scholarship fund when you pay your dues next year and just maybe we will be able to make two awards next year. Please pass on information about our scholarship to anyone who might meet the criteria for next year. You can find information on our Scholarship on our website, <https://www.rseala.org> or you can call us at the office at 225/930-0961 or you can email us at janthony.rsea@gmail.com.

RSEA Foundation Scholarship winner Ethan Deshautelle with his sponsor and grandmother Jeanette Martin Dodge



2022 RSEA Fall Conference

Save the Date

Be Healthy

Stay Sharp



Get Happy

INFORMATIVE SESSIONS

MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKERS



EMPOWER PRESENTATION

AARP DRIVING PROGRAM

October 11-12, 2022

Paragon Casino and
Resort
Marksville,
Louisiana

RECOGNITION LUNCHEON / CELEBRATION PARTY

DOOR PRIZES / BINGO

For more information visit our website: <https://rseala.org> or call (225) 930-0961



2022 RSEA CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 11th–12th



Come and enjoy a fun-filled and informative conference which includes terrific workshops and topics, giveaways, door prizes, delicious food, music, bingo, and much more!

Tuesday, October 11, 2022

11 am – 5 pm	Conference Registration Desk Open
11 am – 4 pm	Vendor Exhibits
12:30 pm – 4 pm	AARP Driving Safety Program
1:00 pm – 1:30 pm	Welcome and Opening Remarks
1:30 – 2:30 pm	Financial Planning - Empower
2:30 – 2:45 pm	Break
2:45 pm – 3:30 pm	Stay Sharp
5:00 - 6:00 pm	Picnic and Party with DJ (sponsored by AARP)
6:00 - 7:00 pm	“Get Happy Celebration”- Let the Sun Shine On Us! <i>(WEAR BRIGHT & HAPPY COLORS!!)</i>
7:00 pm -	Bingo!

Wednesday, October 12, 2022

7:30 am – 9 am	Conference Registration Desk Open
7:30am – 9 am	Breakfast -On Your Own
8:00 am – 3 pm	Vendor Exhibits
9:00 am– 9:15 am	Welcome Day Two
9:30 am– 10:15 am	Kent Gonsoulin - Humorist
10:15 am– 10:45 am	Break
10:45 am– 12 Noon	Benefits Discussion
12:00 Noon – 1 pm	Luncheon and Recognitions
1:15 pm – 2 pm	Be Healthy – Food for Life
2:00 pm– 2:45 pm	“ <i>Louisiana is a Trip</i> ”–Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser
2:45 pm– 3:00 pm	Closing & GRAND PRIZE DRAWING



711 Paragon Place, Marksville, LA 71351
www.paragoncasinoresort.com

Sessions Include:

- Entertaining Keynote Speaker
- Interesting Topics
- Informative Exhibits
- LASERS/OGB Benefits Update

Activities Include:

- Bingo
- AARP Driving Program (extra fee)
- Recognition Luncheon
- Door Prizes

Lodging Rates (plus taxes & \$1 Resort fee):

- \$99.00 Standard Room (North & South Towers)
- \$129.00 Deluxe Atrium Room

For Reservations Call:

- (800) 642-7777 – Ask for the 2022 RSEA Conference Group Rate—**RET013G**
- To receive this special rate, you must reserve your room by: **September 21, 2022**

Registration Fees:

- RSEA Member—\$40
- Non-Member and Guests—\$50

RSEA 2022 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ Guest Name: _____

Retired From (Agency): _____ Year: _____ Veteran (Yes/No): _____

Address: _____

Email Required*: _____ Telephone: _____

Your email address will be shared with conference vendors. An Agenda at a glance is in this Newsletter. AARP Driving Class Fee is Collected at the Door on the Day of the Class.

REGISTRATION FEES

\$ _____ \$40 Member / \$50 Non-Member Registration Fee

\$ _____ \$50 Guest Registration Fee

\$ _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

Mail Your Completed Registration Form and Check to:
RSEA Foundation, 9412 Common Street, Suite 7, Baton Rouge, LA 70809
Questions? Call (225) 930-0961 or email janthony.rsea@gmail.com
www.RSEALA.org





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The New
Louisiana Voice

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Retired State Employees' Association	Summer 2022 Newsletter	8000

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80# white dull text	8.5 x 11" folds to 8.5 x 5.5" for mailing	2 sides, full color	Various

Your order will be processed with the specs provided in this proof acknowledgement.
Please review them carefully and reply with any edits to be made or approval for production.

We appreciate your business!

NOTES:

Leave 35 flat for RSEA