

I am writing to ask you to support efforts to restore and maintain the Maryland State employee retiree prescription benefit. (SB 349, HB 670)

Maryland state legislature is following through with legislation which takes away prescription benefits from retired state of Maryland employees.

This is unfair.

Each retiree has different reasons for fighting the change but one that we have in common is that, when we were hired and throughout our employment, we were told and understood that the benefits we had as employees would continue into our retirement, in effect, as deferred compensation.

This was a promise made to us which should be honored on both moral and legal grounds.

No other state has stripped retirees of benefit commitments retroactively.

On top of all that, U.S. Congress is considering reductions in Medicare funding and cutting Social Security benefits. Maryland is abandoning its commitment to retirees in favor of an uncertain program which is continually attacked by the Federal government. As it stands today, prescription costs under Medicare are well above those of the State's existing plan.

Both governments are working against retirees.

The Maryland government has an obligation to pay Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) based on the level of retirement benefits promised to an employee in exchange for his/her services. The DBM has not estimated the impact to retirees in all categories. Costs calculated in Medicare plans is not calculated the same as DBM calculations. Medicare prescription plans are not directly comparable to the state plan. Prescription benefit for Medicare eligible retirees is a small part of the OPEB costs. DBM costs assumptions are incomplete.

Continuing the Prescription benefit will have a negligible and decreasing impact on State budget.

All I know is that a promise was made regarding benefits in retirement and the State of Maryland is backing out of that promise. There is no way this benefit is causing Maryland's budget issues. Cutting this benefit will not affect the ongoing budget issues of the state.

I retired from Maryland Transit Administration in May 2017 with 34 years of service. Upon retirement, I was informed of my rights and obligations when turning 65. One of which was the requirement to apply for Medicare. I was also informed I would have the right to maintain state health and prescription benefits as secondary (wrap around). The Maryland Department of Budget and Management Notice of Creditable coverage also states that I have the right to maintain state health and prescription benefit. In keeping state health and prescription benefits in conjunction with Medicare I would have coverage like the coverage I have prior to becoming 65.

The legislature's actions to take away these rights will cause harm and jeopardize my financial wellbeing by increasing my costs related to my diabetes care. (I am type 1 currently managing with an insulin pump).

Part of the enjoyment of service for Maryland Transit Administration was experiencing the good health and prescription benefits offered.

Don't take that away.