



February 13, 2017

Chair Kathleen Taylor
Senate Committee on Workforce
900 Court St. - State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Taylor and members of the Committee:

Chair Taylor, members of the committee, my name is Elke Bruton and I am the Talking Book and Braille Librarian for the State Library. I am here today to testify in opposition to SB 559 and SB 560.

I am a 10 year veteran employee of the state, and someday, after my decades of service come to an end, a pensioner of the Public Employees Retirement System, otherwise known as PERS. The potential proposals to changes in PERS affect my ability to secure my future and are offense to my years of loyalty to the State of Oregon.

In 2009 during the last major budget shortfall I took an average pay cut of \$10K per year in forced furloughs, frozen step increases, and forfeiture of cost of living increases. All of this in the first years of my career which meant that, in 2013 when those cuts were rescinded, as a 6 year veteran of state service, I was making nearly the same amount in compensation that new hires in my field were making. But, I believe in the work I'm doing providing access to library materials for print-disabled Oregonians. I have had faith that the benefits over the course of my career with the State of Oregon would outweigh the bumps in the road.

Now, once again, the question of balancing the State's budget shortfall is potentially being answered with yet more cuts to the Public Employees Retirement System. As state of Oregon employees we care for your most vulnerable citizens, protect your natural resources; keep your citizens safe, educated, and healthy. Balancing budget shortfalls on the backs of your state workers should not ever be an option on the table. We honor our commitment to the people of Oregon. Now honor your commitment to us.

SERVICE EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION
LOCAL 503

PO Box 12159
Salem, OR 97309-1259

1730 Commercial St. SE
Salem, OR 97302

6401 SE Foster Rd.
Portland, OR 97206

1.800.452.2146
www.seiu503.org