



MARCH 28, 2025
SENATE GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
HEARING ON SB 418
TERRI LAIRD PUBLIC COMMENT

Good afternoon, Chair Flores, Vice Chair Ohrenschall and fellow Committee Members.

My name for the record is Terri Laird (TERRI LAIRD) and I am the Executive Director of RPEN, the Retired Public Employees of Nevada. For nearly 50 years RPEN has lobbied to protect the pensions and health care benefits EARNED by ALL public employees throughout Nevada. We have nearly 7-thousand members in 17 chapters statewide.

RPEN has gone on the record this session, and previous sessions about the escalating contribution rates the Nevada Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) has had to impose in order to sustain a plan of paying off the unfunded liability PERS incurs due to retirement benefits paid to all retirees who earned those benefits during their working years. These increases hit active employees particularly hard, especially new employees who are paying their contributions while not earning the larger salaries.

SB 418, if passed, could soften the blow of higher contribution rates by helping PERS collect these contributions from delinquent charter schools by tapping their funding apportionment through the Superintendent of Public Schools. These delinquent schools may have payment plans, but why should PERS have to wait for the money that's due. Since 2023, we've seen news reports of at least five charter schools in Southern Nevada who were delinquent. Another problem that comes with charter schools is that they can simply close at a moment's notice, with NO notice to students, parents or even PERS, leaving PERS no option other than a costly legal battle. This is something our public schools can't and don't do! It just isn't fair that charter schools continue to be delinquent while continuing to stay open.

We support the passage of SB 418 and ask for your support of it as well.

Thank you.

Terri Laird, RPEN Executive Director