

**REPORT OF OCHER MEETING
MARCH 20, 2012**

The March 20, 2012, meeting of the Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees (OCHER) in Columbus featured two speakers, Maria Bump from STRS and Gordon Gatien from OPERS, who updated us on the status of the legislation each retirement group has presented to the State legislature. Although nothing tangible has been done yet, the one bit of good news is that the Pension Trustee Advisors (PTA), a group the Senate insisted that the Ohio Retirement Study Council (ORSC) engage to study other state retirement plans, made an interim presentation on pension reform to the ORSC that largely supported defined benefit plans. PTA is conducting a review of pension reform plans that the five Ohio retirement systems have proposed. The PTA representative, Flick Fornia, covered general issues rather than items specific to any one system. PTA is expected to complete its study and report to the ORSC in June or July. Curiously, Ms. Bump said that at a meeting with some of the legislators, ostensibly to talk about the interim report, some said they might be ready to act before the report is completed.

Needless to say, we are all anxious to have the legislature pass the reform plans presented by STRS and OPERS because as each month goes by these plans must be adjusted. Indeed, the problems become more acute the longer it takes to implement the reforms. Mr. Gatien reported that it appears the Senate seems to favor five separate bills, whereas the House wants just one bill--sort of an omnibus bill that covers all five pension plans. To date, OPERS will need to make fewer changes than STRS. Among other comments made by Bump and Gatien--no employer increase is envisioned, and there is some talk about giving STRS, OPERS, etc. more authority.

Respectfully submitted,

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OCHER Representative