



◆◆**CALL TO ACTION**◆◆
Letters of Support

**Get Involved
Make a Difference**

In order for the SCSEA to promote and maintain benefits on behalf of state employees and retirees, several moving parts must function simultaneously. In order to accomplish this objective, moving forward, your participation is needed to achieve a number of specific goals and objectives.

Included in this section you will find two (2) correspondences. The first correspondence is a cover letter to local businesses and explains the interrelationship between “mom and pop” businesses and state employees and retirees. The alignment of interests and demonstration of support between both groups is a critical component of our campaign to protect benefits for state employees and retirees. Small, local businesses do not receive the same or comparable tax breaks and other incentives afforded to corporate giants like Amazon and BMW. Local businesses depend on the purchase power of the surrounding community which includes state employees and retirees.

The second correspondence is the actual Letter of Support we need local businesses to complete and sign. We will compile the Letters of Support received from local businesses and use them during the 2012-13 Legislative Session of the General Assembly to demonstrate a strong base of support to protect benefits for state employees and retirees. Local businesses generally tend to be somewhat conservative. If we can demonstrate a conservative base of support for our efforts, it will go a long way to influence conservative legislators.

We will also publish the Letters of Support on our website and through press releases to the media. A complex and significant base of support strengthens the SCSEA’s position and encourages legislators to give state employees and retirees every consideration with regard to proposed benefit changes. Publicizing the Letters of Support also benefits participating businesses by encouraging local communities to patronize businesses that support state employees and retirees.

Please email, fax, mail or drop-off all signed letters of support from local businesses to the SCSEA office:

Street Address:	SCSEA 1325 Park Street Columbia, SC 29201	Mailing Address:	SCSEA P.O. Box 8447 Columbia, SC 29202-8447
Email:	cwashington@scsea.com	Fax #:	(803) 779-6558

Please share this information with other state employees and retirees whether they are members of the SCSEA or not. Our strength is in our numbers, which includes everyone that supports our efforts and may be impacted by decisions related to state employees and retirees. To that end, we are counting on every state employee and retiree to secure at least three (3) Letters of Support. Local businesses include: hair salons, barber shops, gas stations, dry cleaners, boutiques, hardware stores, pet groomers, physician offices, home-based businesses, etc. Basically, any business in your community that is locally owned and operated.

If you have any questions, please call the SCSEA office at (803) 765-0680.

THE SCSEA WHERE MEMBERSHIP COUNTS



MEMORANDUM

TO: Locally Owned and Operated Businesses
FROM: SOUTH CAROLINA STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
DATE: January 6, 2012
RE: Letters of Support

Over the last ten (10) years, state employees have fallen at least 20% behind the rate of inflation related to pay. Or put another way, state employees have at least 20% less to spend in goods and services. This has occurred because employees have not received a Cost of Living Adjustment, COLA, since 2007 or a merit increase since 2001.

Traditionally state employees have always been behind the private sector in relationship to salary and bonus pay with 62% of state employees earning between \$15,000 and \$35,000 a year. The average retirement benefit for state retirees is roughly \$19,000 a year. Until recently, retirees received a 2% COLA annually which helped subsidize the difference in pay and enabled retirees to maintain financial independence, without for the most part, any reliance on social services.

These facts are important to you as a business owner because state employees and retirees spend the majority of their income locally. Ninety-four percent, 94%, of retirees remain in South Carolina spending their pensions in local communities. Of course, state employees live in local communities and like retirees spend their income locally with mom and pop businesses they know and trust. Therefore, it is beneficial to your business for state employees and retirees to be treated fairly because it affects your bottom line. If state employees and retirees do not have income to spend with you, it impacts your business and ability to deliver goods and services in the marketplace.

To be clear, it does not require a tax increase. We are only asking the General Assembly to allocate revenue in such a way as to make state employees and retirees a priority.

As a small business, you do not benefit from the huge tax breaks and incentives given to big box corporate giants like Amazon and BMW. But you do benefit from state employees and retirees coming in and spending their limited income with mom and pop businesses like yours.

We plan to publicize the support of local businesses through our website, our members, and media press releases. We will encourage local communities to patronize businesses that support the State treating state employees and retirees fairly with regard to pay and benefits.

Thank you in advance for your participation and support of state employees and retirees.

Office: 1325 Park Street • Columbia, SC 29201
Website: www.scsea.com
Phone: (803) 765-0680

Mailing: P.O. Box 8447 • Columbia, SC 29202
Email: scsea@scsea.com
Toll Free: (877) 882-4025

Business Name

Business Address

City, State, Zip

Date

Dear Members of the General Assembly:

As a local business owner, I am concerned about the absence of reasonable pay increases commensurate with the rate of inflation for state employees and the discontinuance of the 2% Cost of Living Adjustments, COLA, for state retirees. The COLAs for active employees and retirees help reduce the gap between pay and the rate of inflation. Obviously, state employees who work in my community also live here and 94% of retirees remain in South Carolina. Their income is spent locally with businesses like mine. The revenue helps create jobs and spur economic activity.

Small businesses do not benefit from major corporate tax breaks and/or incentives given to companies, many whose corporate offices are located outside of South Carolina, like Amazon and BMW. But small businesses, like mine, do benefit from state employees and retirees spending their hard earned income in locally owned and operated businesses across South Carolina.

Sixty-two percent, 62%, of state employees earn between \$15,000 and \$35,000 annually. State employees are at least 20% behind the rate of inflation and the average state retiree income is \$19,000. If these good folks don't have the income to purchase basic goods and services, it affects everything in the marketplace. We are asking them to do important jobs on behalf of the citizens of this state. We owe it to them to pay them fairly and maintain the integrity of the South Carolina Retirement Systems.

Thank you in advance for your full consideration of this matter.

Best Regards,

Owner Signature

Phone Number

Print Name

Email Address