

Dear Representative/Senator,

I am writing to express my support for our state and local public employees. I urge you to OPPOSE any bill to cut their pension, including any legislation that would offer a false “choice” of a reduced pension plan.

Fire fighters and police, teachers and child protection workers and other public employees provide essential services, and the modest pension they count on is a promise that should be kept.

As you know, Illinois public pensions are modest, on average just \$32,000 a year. Most public employees are not eligible for Social Security—they rely solely on their pension for security in retirement. And the state's pension debt is not the fault of public workers but of lawmakers who failed for decades to make required payments to the retirement systems. All that time, public employees paid their share faithfully and in full. Teachers and nurses, disability caregivers and other public employees should not be punished for politicians' mistakes.

A modest pension is a promise our state makes to those who serve. Breaking the pension promise is wrong—and it's unconstitutional. Any lawmaker voting to cut pensions for current employees, or force them to “choose” a reduced plan, is inviting a wasteful legal battle that will take years and millions of taxpayer dollars.

Do the right thing. Stand up for the police and firefighters who keep us safe, teachers who educate our children, nurses and caregivers who serve the sick and disabled, and all the other state and local public employees who are counting on the modest pension promised them. Don't cut their pension.

Sincerely,