

## **URGENT ACTION NEEDED NOW TO BLOCK HJRCA0005 (AMENDMENT #5)**

[HJRCA0005](#) (Amendment #5 - Click the link to read the full text of the bill) is a Constitutional amendment that will require that the Chicago City Council approve ANY CTPF 'pension benefit increase' by a three-fifths vote (30 of the 50 aldermen). Wording seems to be very ambiguous and open to interpretation, which will probably lead to considerable litigation. This amendment will not affect your current pension payments but may require the Chicago City Council to vote to allow your 3% automatic annual increase (since the Constitution trumps the provision in the pension law). This may also affect future retirees as it is unclear whether a salary increase provided through CTU and CPS contract negotiations (thus raising your potential pension benefits) falls into the category of a 'pension benefit increase'. Note that the House Committee Amendment #1 does provide some specifics as to the type of things that would trigger a legislative vote.

The [current status of HJRCA0005](#) is that it has been approved by the Illinois House Committee on Personnel and Pensions and can be called for a full House vote as soon as January 31, 2012. If it receives at least 71 'Aye' votes it will go to the Illinois Senate. A vote in the Senate would probably take place sometime between March 20 (the primary election) and May 6 (the deadline for legislative approval of Constitutional amendments). If it gets 36 'Aye' votes it will be placed on the November ballot. If it receives a majority of the total votes cast or a three-fifths vote of those voting on this issue it will become part of the Constitution.

Please watch the RTAC website as this develops. Join the RTAC Alert Network to get breaking news about any pension changing proposals.

**This amendment will be a way of controlling, i.e. reducing, pension costs for ALL public employees, including police and firefighters. It is expected to pass the House, so attention is being focused on the Senate. Call, visit, email and/or snailmail your state senator. This amendment will change the Illinois Constitution FOREVER. Remember, it is only the 1970 Constitution that protects our pension; this amendment opens the door to revising our benefits. For example, the City Council would be able to cap our COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) if this amendment is ratified.**

**If the referendum proposing Amendment #5 gets on the November 2012 ballot, there is a huge likelihood, that, given the economic tenor of the times, it will pass easily. We must not let this happen. "Don't assume this 'bad' constitutional amendment will be defeated," said Lobbyist Dick Lockhart. "Don't be complacent on this issue. You need to have a personal visit with your State Senator between now and May. This issue is vital in terms of your future."**

**We CAN do this. Remember how we turned back HB3827 last spring. We can't let them deprive us of our hard-earned pension benefits now!**

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