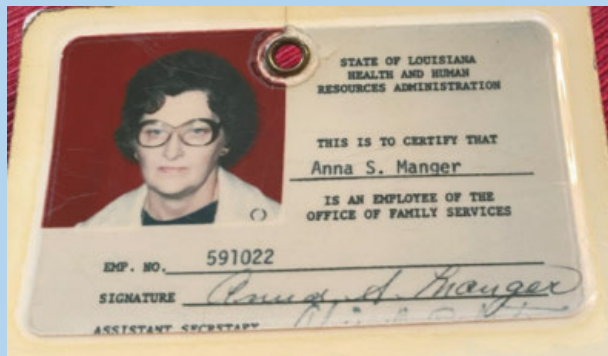


The New LOUISIANA VOICE

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF RSEA

FALL 2025 | VOLUME 34 • NUMBER 4

Member Spotlight



In this issue we are spotlighting a great RSEA member, Anna Manger. Anna turned 100 last November and has been a member since 2006 without missing a year. She was a dedicated State employee for over 25 years. Anna worked in the Office of Family Services in New Orleans and retired in 1981. Before State employment Anna worked in Washington D C as a Statistical Draftsman with the U. S. Naval Dept., where she met her husband William, a WWII sailor. Anna and William had three children, Dianne, Robert and William. Anna has two grandchildren and three great grandchildren and currently lives in Carriere, Mississippi. Anna has been an active volunteer in her community, church and hospital. She also was a member of the local garden club

Anna, we wish you a very happy 101st birthday this November 3rd and many more.



Anna Manger



Thank you Anna for being such a great RSEA member. Your support all of these years has helped RSEA's mission to make the lives of our dedicated and hard working state retirees better. It is our pleasure to award you a free, lifetime membership.

02 RSEA Administration Update

RSEA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Sunshines

My now, everyone should be aware that after 40+ years of fighting, we were finally successful in overturning the Federal WEP and GPO reductions of Social Security. The fight was by no means fought strictly by **RSEA**, but, rather by the combined forces of many people, agencies and organizations.

One of our next major goals of **RSEA** is to fight to strengthen the Social Security Trust Fund so that retirees can continue to receive the much-needed benefits given to them by the WEP/GPO repeal.

A second goal of **RSEA** is to fight a constitutional amendment that will go before the voters on April 18, 2026. This amendment will essentially do away with the State's Classified Service as we know it today.

I'm sure many of you will say "I'm retired, that doesn't affect me". But, what if a majority of employees become un-classified and what if agencies start laying off older, higher paid, eligible for retirement/health benefits employees, in order to save money (much like the private sector). With the possibility of fewer employees paying into the retirement system, stability could be compromised.

Our legislative liaison, Frank Jobert, will give a much more detailed explanation of both the Social Security Trust Fund as well as the constitutional

amendment (if not in this newsletter, then in upcoming ones). Stay tuned!

Rest assured, we are up for these challenges and hopefully we all can come away victorious.

PLEASE encourage every current active employee and retiree that you know to join forces with **RSEA** by becoming a member and helping us continue to advance the quality of life for current and future retired state employees.

It is my pleasure to serve as your 2025/2026 **RSEA** President. Please contact me if I can assist you.

Sincerely,

Dean Moberley



Governmental Affairs Update 03

Frank Jobert, Jr., Legislative Affairs Message, September 1, 2025

The 2025 Regular Louisiana Legislative Session has ended, as reported in the last edition of the RSEA “Louisiana Voice” newsletter. The 2025 Regular Session concluded at or about 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 12th, 2025. The session ended with legislative passage of a proposed constitutional amendment (Senate Bill 8 by Senator Jay Morris) as it passed on the House Floor by a final vote of (70-28) with no votes to spare. And it becomes Act 223 Of 2025. It had already passed the Senate (28-9). NOTE: Constitutional Amendments require a “super-majority” or two-thirds vote of both chambers of the legislature. Since SB 8 passed both chambers of the legislature, it will now go to the

voters of Louisiana in a statewide general election on Saturday, April 18, 2026. The ballot language will be as follows: **“Do you support an amendment to allow the legislature to remove or add officers, positions, and employees to the unclassified civil service?” (Amends Article X, Section 2(B)).**

This proposed measure (SB 8) is of major importance to state classified civil servants/employees. Classified status for civil servants assures employees of due process for employment actions against them, protects their “property-rights” (after successful completion of probationary status—up to two years), and “locks in” their benefits, which include group insurance and LASERS pension benefits (upon vesting—five years). (Continued on Page 4)



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04 Governmental Affairs (Cont.)

It also ensures that the civil service system is based on merit and not the “spoils system”. Thereby, eliminating cronyism, favoritism, and nepotism and the “good ole boy” system, and creates healthy competition for promotions: utilizing education, experience and job performance as selection/promotion criteria. It also prevents political activity and forced campaign contributions “donations” by civil servants. As reported elsewhere in this newsletter by RSEA President Dean Moberley, ***defeat of this proposed amendment remains one of RSEA’s top goals.***

One can only conclude that the main reason for this proposed amendment is to make it easier to fire or terminate state classified employees by making them “At-Will” employees. Two good government “Think Tanks”: Public Affairs Research Council (PAR) and Leaders for a Better Louisiana testified (and paraphrasing their testimony) they supported “reforms” of the Civil Service System. But neither felt a need to eliminate it completely! They both suggested converting SB 8 from a Senate Bill to a Study Resolution. Unfortunately, we were not successful in defeating the measure in the Senate or House of Representatives and now it goes to the voters of Louisiana for a final vote on Saturday, April 18, 2026.

RSEA testified **in opposition to SB 8** in both the Senate and House and Governmental Affairs Committees. We opened by stating RSEA was not there to protect current retirees who have already insured their jobs/careers and benefits (healthcare and pensions)! RSEA’s mission is to protect and enhance healthcare and retirement benefits for current retirees, and notably, for future retirees/current employees too. It is important that RSEA (Retired State Employees Association of Louisiana) recognizes the work our predecessors did to protect our benefits and our mission now entails protecting the employees/retirees who are coming after us!

Two legislators on the House and Governmental Affairs Committee, Rep. Candace Newell (District 99-New Orleans) and Rep. Denise Marcelle (District 61-Baton Rouge) both commended RSEA for taking the time and effort to testify on behalf of our future retirees in opposing SB 8. Unfortunately, we were unable to stall the bill in the House and Governmental Affairs Committee and it passed by a vote of 9-4.

Finally, another good government organization, The League of Women Voters of Louisiana’s President, Christian “Christie” Green penned a letter to the Editor of The New Orleans Advocate/The Times- Picayune on Monday, May 19, 2025 in opposition to SB 8 for all the reasons listed above. Furthermore, she reminded us of the days of Governor Huey P. Long in the 1930s when he decreased civil service by nearly 1/3 and it led to scandal, fraud, embezzlement and mandatory political contributions by state workers! She further stated that the statute of Governor Huey P. Long still stands outside of the Louisiana Capitol to remind us (that we don’t wish to go back to those days again). Can all of these good government champions and public policy experts possibly be wrong? I think not! That’s why RSEA thinks SB 8 is a bad bill.

I wish to thank all the RSEA Board and staff members, along with our RSEA membership, and state retirees/employees, who responded to our calls to action throughout the session. And contacted their Representatives and Senators by telephone and emails or personal visits during the Session and in some cases testified before the House and Senate Governmental Affairs Committees. Although we opposed SB 8 as discussed above, we were not successful in stopping the bill in Committee.

(Continued on Page 5)

Governmental Affairs (Cont.) 05

It is noteworthy that the bill passed both chambers of the legislature by the slimmest of margins: It passed by two votes in the Senate and as noted earlier, no votes to spare in the House. Not exactly an overwhelming vote of support!

Acting alone we are virtually powerless. But acting together, there is strength in numbers and we can change the outcome of a situation, if we join together and make our presence known. I like to remind our members when contacting your legislators, always be respectful, polite and courteous! And always thank them for listening to you and for taking your requests into consideration before they make their decisions. Although we could not stop SB-8 in the legislature, we must now take our fight to the

voters of Louisiana in the election noted above for **Saturday, April 18, 2026**. You will be hearing more from RSEA about this election in the coming weeks and months in our newsletter and on “e-blasts” via emails from the RSEA main office in Baton Rouge. When we send out these materials, it’s a call-to-action for you to make phone calls and emails to your legislators, both state and federal in the House and Senate! It also means to ask your friends, co-workers, and families to **vote against the proposed Constitutional Amendment (Senate Bill 8-Act 223 of 2025)**, & for all of us to go to the polls to cast our ballots on **Saturday, April 18, 2026 and vote AGAINST Senate Bill 8—Ballot Amendment Number (To Be Announced)**.

(Continued on Page 6)



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RSEA – Retired State Employees Association of Louisiana



06 Governmental Affairs (Cont.)

President Moberley also points out that another major goal of RSEA is our fight to **strengthen the Social Security Trust Fund**. The latest annual report from the Social Security Trustees estimates that without any further action, the combined Social Security and Disability Insurance Trust Fund reserves will be depleted in 2034 and will be unable to pay “full benefits” after that date without any further action. RSEA and our members worked too hard and for too long to repeal the WEP and GPO Social Security Offsets to see or progress stymied by not having sufficient funds in the Trust Fund Reserves to pay the full amount of future Social Security benefits to our deserving members and their beneficiaries! Of special note are several proposed bills to help Social Security recipients in the 119th Congress (2025-2026). For example: **HR 1040 Senior Citizens Tax Elimination Act** by Rep. Thomas Massie (Kentucky-District 4). It has 34 co-sponsors as of this writing. It’s purpose is to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the inclusion in gross income of Social Security benefits. It’s companion Bill in the Senate with the same title & text is **S. 458** by Senator Tommy Tuberville (R- Alabama). Another proposed measure is **H R 1700** by Rep. Val Hoyle (D-Oregon-District 4) **Social Security Expansion Act**. A bill to enhance Social Security benefits and ensure the long-term solvency of the Social Security program and companion bill **S770** (Sen. Bernie Sanders Ind.-Vermont). Same title & text as **HR1700**.

Frank Jobert, Jr., Legislative & Government Affairs Director



Louisiana, we think you're the best, too.

At Louisiana Blue, being the best means helping members get the most from their health benefits. That's why our goal every day is focused on serving Louisiana. To our members, we say, "Thank you!"

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Smart Health Savings | Health Costs Hints from Louisiana Blue's Clinical Pharmacists

Want to cut your healthcare costs without cutting corners? Louisiana Blue's clinical pharmacists are here to help! In this Smart Health Saving series episode, Clinical Pharmacists Lauren LeBlanc and Madeline Zachary share practical, real-life tips from smart prescription choices to maximizing your insurance benefits,

these practical insights can make a real difference in your health care spending.

Our Care Management department is staffed by doctors, nurses, pharmacists, registered dietitians and a social health coach. We're here to help you make the best possible decisions about your healthcare. If you wish to ask about our programs, please call the Case and Disease Management Unit at 800-363-9159 or visit lablue.com/wellness/member-programs.

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08

Office of Group Benefits

Prepare for Cold & Flu Season with Access2day

As the seasons change and children head back to school, it's time to prepare for cold and flu season. Access2day is here to support your health and well-being with \$0 care for employees and their covered dependents, ensuring you and your family stay protected all season long.

Cold and flu viruses spread quickly in workplaces, classrooms, and communities. While both illnesses share some symptoms, they affect the body differently. Colds tend to come on gradually with milder symptoms like congestion and sore throat. The flu strikes more suddenly and severely, often causing high fever, muscle aches, and significant fatigue.

Wellness Tips to Help Prevent the Flu:

- **Get your flu shot early.** Immunity takes about two weeks to build, so don't wait until flu season peaks.
- **Wash your hands often.** Regularly washing your hands with soap and water is one of the most effective methods to prevent the spread of germs.
- **Avoid touching your face.** Viruses commonly enter through the eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **Disinfect high-touch surfaces.** Clean your phone, doorknobs, keyboards, and other frequently touched surfaces regularly.
- **Stay home if you're sick.** Rest, recover, and reduce the risk of spreading illness to others.
- **Boost your immune system.** Eat nutrient-rich foods, stay hydrated, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.

Your Access2day membership, fully prepaid by the Office of Group Benefits, gives you fast access to \$0 care when you need it most. Stay proactive, stay healthy, and take care this cold and flu season.

Stay Ahead of Seasonal Sickness with A2D: <https://access2dayhealth.com/>

Director's Message

09

Free Hearing Aids Program - The La. Commission for the Deaf has a free hearing aids program and distributes loaner equipment for people with hearing loss. You must be a resident of La., 50 years old or older for the hearing aids program and it is subject to household income, starting at \$39,125 for one and increases by \$13,750 for each additional person. New Horizons Independent Living Center in Alexandria coordinates Region 6 (318-484-3596). Google the LCD website for your regional service center or to register your name on the hearing aids list.

Thanks go out to all of our members who donated to our Scholarship Fund. Renewal postcards will be mailed out soon. When you send your dues in, please include a little extra to donate to the Funds. Thanks in advance.

Theresa A. Gresham (in memory of William G. Gresham)

Victor Dennis (In memorial to Victor Dennis from RSEA)

Karyn Andrews

Lorena Williams

Mary Mahoney

Tammy Brown



LASERS Achieves 12.4% Investment Return

LASERS reported a **12.4% investment return** for the 12-month period that ended June 30, 2025. The System's total market value of investment assets stands at **\$16.3 billion**.

"I would like to recognize the excellent guidance provided by our Board of Trustees and our investments team, who skillfully manage over one-third of our portfolio internally. Achieving a 12.4% return in a complex market environment is a testament to our rigorous investment process and forward-thinking strategies." LASERS Executive Director Trey Boudreaux said. "Our priority is always to secure the retirement benefits for our members."

Please note that the DROP rate of return has not been determined at this time. The Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee (PRSAC) will approve the DROP interest rate, based on a five-year actuarially smoothed return. LASERS will share that information as soon as it becomes available.



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LASERS Retiree Workshop Resources Available Online

The LASERS Retiree Workshop, held on July 31, offered a great opportunity for retirees to gain valuable information and updates from the Executive and Member Services staff and connect with state agency and community partners. Topics covered at the workshop included myLASERS, investments, legislation, rehired retirees, Medicare, and more.

If you missed the workshop or would like to revisit the presentations, please go to www.lasersonline.org/retirees/retiree-workshop/.

November 1 Benefit Payments Fall on a Saturday

Please note that the November 1 benefit payment falls on a Saturday, which could affect the receipt of your funds.

Direct deposits are guaranteed to be in your bank or credit union on the first day of the month. Be aware that if the first falls on a weekend or holiday, funds may not be available until the following business day. In these cases, contact your financial institution directly for information on when your funds will be made available to you. That decision is made by your financial institution, **not** LASERS. If you have not received your monthly benefit payment by the first

business day of the month, contact LASERS at 225-922-0600 or 800-256-3000.

2025 LASERS Board of Trustees Election Update

The nomination period for the 2025 LASERS Board of Trustees Election closed in July. This year, three seats were open for active members and one seat for a retired member.

The number of qualified nominees matched the number of available positions; therefore, no voting process will be held.

The following active members have been re-elected by acclamation and will continue to serve as Trustees:

Amy A. Mathews, Chief Investment Officer, Department of Treasury

Byron Decoteau, Jr., Director, State Civil Service

Ternisa Hutchinson, State Director of Planning and Budget, Division of Administration

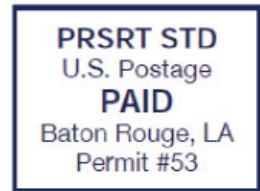
The retired member elected by acclamation is:

Shannon Templet, retired from the Louisiana House of Representatives

Congratulations to these members on their continued service to the LASERS Board of Trustees!



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