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MEMORANDUM

To: The SUAA Membership
From: The State Office of SUAA
Date: November 17, 2008
Subject: CHANGE - Dues Increase beginning January 1, 2010

At the October Board of Directors' Meeting in Urbana, the attendees (directors representing the chapters) voted to increase the State dues by \$4.00 ($\$21 + \$4 = \25) beginning January 1, 2010 or \$.33 a month.

Earlier in the year, President Dick Johnson appointed a finance committee to evaluate the evolving needs of the organization. The committee's findings supported the necessity for additional staff to assist with the growing challenges of SUAA. Many were specifically related to the increased obligations and responsibilities created by the volumes of adverse legislation presently impacting the SUAA membership.

Of course, other budgetary concerns were also included. The lease will need to be renegotiated during 2010; utilities will continue to rise; lobbying registrations will increase; updating of the computer system; postage; staff travel; health insurance for staff; and coalition participation. The committee recognized that these budgetary items are certainly not inclusive of all additional costs required for SUAA to be successful in its proactive mission.

The last dues increase was over six (6) years ago. Unfortunately, there has never been a method put in place that automatically raises the dues for the State Office of SUAA without a vote from the chapters. Therefore, the increase became a necessity and the question was put to the Board of Directors. (This dues increase had previously been discussed at the Annual Meeting held in Springfield on June 24.)

At this writing, not all information is available from the individual chapters reflecting their dues increases. Some chapters have chosen to stay at the same level; others have chosen to increase dues; some have made the decision to absorb the State Office's dues increase for now.

It might be beneficial for some of you to see a 3% COLA applied to the State dues. The increases would have been as follows: year 1 @ \$21; year 2 @ \$21.63; year 3 @ \$22.28; year 4 @ \$22.95; year 5 @ \$23.64; year 6 @ \$24.35; year 7 @ \$25.08. As noted, this actually shows how a \$4.00 increase equates into a reasonable amount. Again, this is \$.33 a month increase not counting the chapters' increases which most likely will not exceed \$.50 total. Not all chapters will increase chapter dues.

For those of you who are on Dues Deduct, SURS will automatically make the correction. Payroll Deductions will be made through campus payroll departments. For those of you who pay by check, the increase will be reflected by an invoice on your individual anniversary date.

The SUAA State Office is constantly looking for ways to improve communication. Unfortunately, if you have an email, but are not sharing it with us, we cannot keep you as informed as you need to be. You can send your email to suaa@suaa.org. We do not sell the list or share with any other organization. We also realize that not everyone has email and we will need to find better, more efficient ways to contact you.

This past legislative session brought the introduction of many adverse bills that could have affected your pensions and health care. SUAA was at the forefront, helping to defeat the legislation during the hearings – not allowing passage on the House of Representatives or the Senate.

From consolidation of the pension systems investments; to defined contributions; to additional pension contributions; to changes in the health care; to the funding of SURS — SUAA was working at the Capitol on your behalf.

SUAA was able to have legislation introduced that would provide health care for the City Colleges of Chicago retirees; increase the contribution to CIP to stabilize the fund. While these bills did not advance, SUAA continued to bring awareness.

SUAA found legislators to sponsor bills that would allow a COLA to be implemented for pre-1980 retirees. While these bills did not advance either, the issue will continue to be recognized as a creditable request.

SUAA monitored the Pension Systems Modernization Task Force throughout its term.

SUAA brought awareness to the Governor's office regarding the exceeding late payments for health care claims – actual meeting at the Capitol and a presentation of testimonies from the membership. SUAA continues to bring awareness by mailing other supporting evidence and proof of the hardships associated with the unpaid claims.

SUAA sent each legislator and others information regarding the pension bonds not being sold to fund the pension systems.

SUAA and SURS co-hosted a forum and dinner for certain legislators during spring legislative session.

SUAA is visible at the Capitol, significant meetings, and at legislative fundraisers.

SUAA was able to keep members with emails updated through the *Mini Briefings*. All *Mini Briefings* can still be found at www.suaa.org.

Look for a newsletter in December wrapping up this past year's activity.

This next legislative session is going to be tough. The Primary will be held on February 2, 2010; candidates and incumbents will be focusing on your pensions and health care up through the election in November. Damaging headlines will continue.

This is not the time to back off; the Illinois Constitution can be changed – even the section that protects your pensions.

IF YOU ARE A PRE-1980 RETIREE PLEASE CONTACT THE SUAA OFFICE.

For additional information – call 217.585.2370 or email suaa@suaa.org.