



# **WAYNE COUNTY RETIREES ASSOCIATION**

## *Watching Over Your Benefits.....*

**NEWS RELEASE JANUARY 9, 2017**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Eugene Wright, President of the Wayne County Retirees Association and its Executive Board Chairman, Hugh Macdonald, announced today that the Wayne County Retirees Association is sponsoring a statewide meeting of Public Employee and Retiree organizations, for the purpose of developing a strategy against legislative action that will drastically change or eliminate all Public Employee and Retiree medical insurance benefits.

The meeting, **scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on Friday, January 13, 2017 at Local 182 UAW Hall, 35603 Plymouth Rd. in Livonia** is anticipated to draw over 100 Leaders of municipal employee and retiree's groups across the State of Michigan, who are determined to unite against the growing trend among lawmakers, to resolve their fiscal incompetence on the backs of the dedicated public servants, that have rightfully earned and now depend on the benefits and pensions they worked for and were promised by the Legislature when it enacted the Public Employee Relation Act.

The agenda begins with a panel discussion that includes a cross section of Retiree Leadership and prominent individuals directly involved with public employee healthcare and benefits. The WCRA has also invited the Wayne County Commission, members of both the House and Senate, and local officials in several municipalities.

**WCRA President Eugene Wright states;**

*"many of us were blindsided by the recent attacks against retirees at all levels of government. The WCRA was established early in 2016 out of the need to draw together all Wayne County Retiree groups, to protect and preserve the draconian benefit cuts proposed by Wayne County Executive Warren Evans. A short time later we learned that the State of Michigan tried to pass THIRTEEN BILLS aimed at reducing or eliminating employee and retiree benefits in the latest*

*lame duck session, without providing the public with adequate notice or an opportunity to be heard. That's just wrong! And our first indication maybe, that drawing Wayne County retirees together would not be enough."*

**Chairman of the WCRA board Hugh Macdonald agrees;**

*"We may have won a short reprieve on the very cold steps of the capital building in Lansing on December 6<sup>th</sup>, but we anticipate that the State House and Senate will reintroduce this legislation when they reconvene in February. The bills, as proposed, will strip 95% of all retired public employees of their medical benefits and the House and Senate are demanding that Governor Snyder be prepared to sign this legislation into law when it is re-introduced next month.*

**Dale Covert President of the Allen Park Retirees, also stated;**

*"the Public Employee post-retirement medical benefits were approved by the Michigan Legislature when it adopted the Public Employment Relations Act (PERA). This Act gave collective bargaining rights to public employees and our employees bargained these benefits in good faith and at the same time giving up others benefits and pay increases to have some sense of security for our futures. We lived up to our promises. We only want to make sure our local, county and state representatives live up to theirs. As public employees, we did not abandon our responsibilities to protect and serve. We cannot allow political leaders to abandon us now."*

The outcome of this first State-Wide Leadership meeting is to insure a larger voice as we identify our common ground and develop a unified strategy moving forward at all levels of government the first of February.

**For further information contact:**

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