



# TEXAS STATE EMPLOYEES UNION UPDATE



VOL 35, No.2 COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA, LOCAL 6186 / AFL-CIO JUNE 2016

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## IT'S TIME TO MAKE TSEU UNBREAKABLE!

Don't let them silence our voice! Fill out the form on page 4



# It's time to ORGANIZE!



# Time to Organize!

**“O**rganized” doesn’t mean that all of our papers are in neat piles. “Organized” means that a strong majority of the employees are members of an organization that is their collective voice. It means that the organization has the strength through membership to influence decision-making at every level. For Texas state workers, “organized” means that TSEU has the power in the state Capitol to push through adequate funding for quality services, fair pay for state workers and retirees, a secure retirement, and affordable health care. It means TSEU has the power in state agencies and universities to give frontline workers a real voice in policy issues and to assure fair treatment on the job. Organized means that more employees are taking part in building solutions to the problems than are standing on the sidelines waiting to see what happens, not the other way around.

**“ORGANIZED” MEANS THAT TSEU BECOMES THE VOICE OF STATE EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES IN TEXAS!**

## Organizing paying off at Pickwell DFPS in San Antonio!



*Welcome Sandra Scott, a union ‘double threat’ - she joined TSEU and COPE!*



*Michael Stallworth joins the union during a recent information table. Contact any TSEU office for details about doing an info table at your location!*



*TSEU/FPS activist Sonia Samples pictured here with new member Samatha Long.*



**W**e know the fights that are coming our way, and we know the best way to win is to organize our coworkers and colleagues into the union. But how do we organize? Organizing is asking, whether we’re asking a coworker to join the union, asking a fellow member to come to Lobby Day or to sign a petition.

**WE BUILD TSEU BY ASKING!**

## TJJD facilities adding more and more TSEU members!



*Sandra Flores, JCO Supervisor at Evins TJJD, joins COPE and signs her Unbreakable form. Six new members joined the union that day!*



*Glenn and Crystal Easterly join TSEU and sign Unbreakable forms at a sign-up table at the Mart TJJD facility.*

## Putting our backs into organizing at Foster Road FPS in Laredo!



Velma Luna, DFPS



Labrada Rojas, DFPS  
CVS Specialist III



Nora Garcia, DFPS-Administrative Assistant joins the union during a recent agency event.

# Organizing for Justice!

## 'Charting' the organizing course!

[L-R] Laredo HHSC members Jacquelyn Palizo and Maria Connie Sneed go over organizing targets with TSEU staff member. Jacquelyn is a union 'double threat' having joined TSEU AND COPE!



TSEU members Angelo Ochoa, Cynthia Guerra, Natali Gonzalez, Imelda Ramirez, and Katherine Arredondo at a recent union pizza lunch at the Arkansas office in Laredo.

## Getting recognized!



Waco Center for Youth Activist Betty Byrd earned a TSEU t-shirt for signing up THREE new members. Her advice to every TSEU member: "Sign up a co-worker TODAY!"



Contact your organizer or any TSEU office about planning an organizing event at your office or facility.



## Spring Picnics

TSEU Spring picnics at our State Supported Living Centers and other facilities are great ways to show appreciation for staff, to share information and conversation about the union and to enjoy some good food and fun.

[TOP] At Lufkin SSLC, TSEU activist and Executive Board member Yolanda White (far left) organized an especially successful picnic resulting in 38 new members joining the union and dozens more committing to make TSEU 'Unbreakable'. Similar results were recorded at [MIDDLE] Richmond SSLC, where more than 20 joined TSEU, and at [BOTTOM LEFT] Wichita Falls where organizing momentum is building! [BOTTOM] At Denton nearly all current TSEU members have now signed the 'Unbreakable' form!



# TSEU members win key victories in primary elections

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, Republicans and Democrats held primary elections across Texas. The relentless attacks that state employees and state services endured during the 2015 legislative session made this year's primary election critical for state workers and retirees. The goal for TSEU this primary season was to stop the election of anti-state worker/state services candidates, while electing those legislators who will actually stand up and fight for state employees.

Going into the 2016 primary election, the stage was set for another electoral showdown between the traditional Republicans and Tea Party extremists backed by anti-state employee interest groups like Empower Texans. There were more than 30 contested races between traditional Republicans and Tea Party candidates. Traditional Republican House Speaker Joe Straus (San Antonio) and his allied legislators which included Republican House leaders Byron Cook (Corsicana) and Charlie Geren (Forth Worth) defeated numerous Tea Party candidates around the state.

Unfortunately, in two of those contests, the traditional Republicans lost their seats to Tea Party challengers. In House District 73 (New Braunfels), incumbent Doug Miller was defeated by Kyle Biedermann. While in House District 128 (Baytown), incumbent Wayne Smith lost to challenger Briscoe Cain.



Rep. Toni Rose (far left) meets with Dallas area TSEU/COPE members

stopping the closures of State Supported Living Centers during last year's legislative session. Her absence in the House next year will make our fight for SSLC's more difficult.

A notable Republican victory for TSEU was challenger Lance Gooden narrowly winning over current State Rep. Stuart Spitzer in House District 4 where the Terrell State Hospital is located. The attempted privatization of Terrell State Hospital was at the center of this election. Lance Gooden met with TSEU members in Terrell and pledged to fight any future attempt to privatize the state hospital.



Blockwalking for Gina Hinojosa (3rd from left)

All in all, TSEU was successful in nearly all its endorsed primary races. Across the state, over 100 TSEU members participated in election work, knocking on more than 3400 doors and making some 2600 phone calls.

On the Democratic Party side, committed TSEU ally State Rep. May Gonzalez (El Paso) was victorious in a hard fought campaign against challenger Chente Quintanilla. TSEU members in El Paso played a big role in getting out the vote. In Austin, TSEU-endorsed State House candidate Gina Hinojosa defeated a field of 6 candidates while avoiding a run-off election. This is another of the many high profile races where TSEU played a significant role in getting out the vote. Gina Hinojosa has a strong background in working with public employees and public employee unions.

Other Democratic TSEU allies, such as State Representatives Toni Rose (Dallas), Ina Minjarez (San Antonio), and Gene Wu (Houston) easily won each of their re-election bids. TSEU-endorsed Jarvis Johnson defeated Kimberly Willis in House District 139 (Houston) while TSEU-endorsed Mario Salas lost to Barbara Gervin-Hawkins in House District 120 (San Antonio). Incumbent State Representative Ron Reynolds was also successful against challenger Angelique Bartholomew in House District 27 (Missouri City).

Other Democratic TSEU allies, such as State Representatives Toni Rose (Dallas), Ina Minjarez (San Antonio), and Gene Wu (Houston) easily won each of their re-election

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Rep. Ina Minjarez joins the union at a TSEU-San Antonio potluck dinner.

## What the elections mean for state employees and retirees in the 2017 legislative session

The state budget will be the central focus of next year's legislative session. The aftermath of tax cuts passed in 2015, combined with a reduction in state revenue from declining oil prices, will likely lead to a smaller state budget compared to the last session. Lawmakers in the House have acknowledged the need for an increase in funding to repair state programs in crisis, such as Child Protective Services, even though a tighter budget is to be expected. On the Senate side however, lawmakers are calling for more aggressive measures to reduce spending for state services while pushing for more tax cuts.

With prospects of a smaller state budget, we should expect tougher fights over across-the-board pay raises and hiring more staff to reduce state employee workloads. In addition to challenges resulting from a tighter state budget, we should also expect more attacks on payroll dues deductions from anti-state employee legislators and interest groups. Addressing the crisis in Child Protective Services, increasing access to state mental health services, and reigning in the rising cost of tuition will also be priority issues for lawmakers in the next session.

Asking our coworkers to join TSEU and COPE, along with participating in election work, is vital to increasing our political muscle to take on the challenges of the 2017 legislative session and to win on our issues.



# Doing my part to make TSEU:



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY / STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

AGENCY/UNIVERSITY \_\_\_\_\_

FACILITY / LOCATION / DEPT \_\_\_\_\_

*If dues deduction from my salary or wages becomes prohibited by law, I authorize Texas State Employees Union / CWA (TSEU) to commence and continue deducting my monthly TSEU dues from the bank or credit union account identified immediately below, in the same monthly dues amount as then on file with TSEU. (initial box at right)*

INITIAL

BANK NAME \_\_\_\_\_

BANK ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

ROUTING # \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

CHECKING [ ] SAVINGS [ ]

*YES, I want to help build our political power by joining CWA COPE. I authorize TSEU to draft the account listed above monthly for the amount that I have indicated and to forward these funds to CWA COPE.*

MONTHLY DEDUCTION AMOUNT:      COPE CLUB      PLATINUM QUORUM      TRIPLE QUORUM      OTHER

[ ] \$5.00 [ ] \$10.00      [ ] \$20.00      [ ] \$30.00      [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**This authorization is voluntarily made based on my specific understanding that: The signing of this authorization card and the making of contributions to CWA COPE PC are not conditions of membership in the union nor of employment with the company that I may refuse to do so without fear of reprisal.**



## Ilesa Daniels takes seat on ERS Board

**A**fter an historic election victory last year, TSEU member Ilesa Daniels (Houston HHSC) has taken her seat on the Board of Trustees of the Employees Retirement System. TSEU members across the state mobilized to turn out the vote in her election. With a margin of victory of only 41 votes out of the 30,000 cast, every vote really mattered. Daniels filled the seat vacated by another TSEU member, Yoly Griego, who decided not to run for reelection after 12 years of outstanding service on the Board.

The six-person Board of Trustees makes decisions regarding investments and the benefit structure for the ERS retirement and health care plans. Having a front-line state employee and union member on the board is a critical part of TSEU's fight to protect our retirement and health care benefits. Daniels has vowed to push back against attempts to convert our pension plans to 401(k)'s or reduce our health care benefits.

## SEEKING VOLUNTEERS to be TSEU's candidate in the 2017 ERS Board of Trustees election

### If you are interested in being TSEU's ERS candidate:

- Write a letter stating why you would be a good candidate. Please detail any organizing or mobilizing campaigns you have participated in, including past ERS campaigns. List your agency, location, job title, years of services, and years as a TSEU member.
- Send your letter to:  
TSEU ERS Campaign Committee  
1700 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Austin, TX 78704
- Letter must be received no later than July 8.

**T**he Employees Retirement System maintains and controls the retirement plan for all state agency employees and the health care plan that covers all agency AND university employees (except those in the UT and A&M systems). The ERS is governed by a six-person Board of Trustees. Three trustees are elected by agency employees and retirees while the other three are appointed. Candidates for the ERS Board elected positions must be active employees of a Texas state agency that is NOT already represented on the ERS Board. The Board already includes representatives from TxDOT and HHSC (includes DFPS, DARS, DSHS, and DADS).

After the successful election last year of TSEU member Ilesa Daniels to the board (see more above), we now have the ability to double the voice of frontline state workers with a win in the 2017 election. We have power in our numbers and influence among co-workers at our jobs - our union turned out the vote for Ilesa, and we can do it again!

TSEU has run a candidate in every election since 1989, and next year will be no different. The TSEU candidate will be selected by the General Assembly. The Executive Board will recommend a candidate after screening by the TSEU ERS screening committee.



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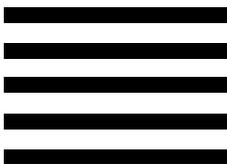
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# Federal court, legislators, public attention on DFPS

In 2016, numerous developments have brought increased scrutiny to the systemic problems in the Department of Family and Protective Services. From the federal court ruling requiring improvements, to increased media attention following yet another tragedy, to a shake-up of agency leadership - our agency is clearly in need of repairs. The interrelated obstacles of high caseloads and high turnover rates must be addressed to fix our agency.

Despite volumes of reports and the ruling from a federal court, the initial budget proposals for DFPS' appropriation request indicate that the agency seeks to "maintain current caseload levels." This will result in a continuation of the current caseload crisis and prevent the agency from slowing down skyrocketing turnover. Maintaining current caseload levels will ensure that more vulnerable Texans will fall through the cracks, as caseloads and turnover rates continue feeding into each other in a vicious cycle.

Union members aren't on the sidelines, waiting for the state leaders to do the right thing. We're organizing and mobilizing across the state, and we are making our voice heard! Below are summaries of what TSEU members have done so far, and ways you can get involved too. By working with our allies in the community and getting more of our coworkers to join their union, we will fix our agency.

- **March 9<sup>th</sup> Day of Action** TSEU activists from across Texas met at the Capitol for meetings to educate legislative offices about the federal court ruling and the need for comprehensive improvements in our agency. Members encouraged legislators and their staff to move to fix our agency instead of blocking progress through the appeals process.



- **May 14<sup>th</sup> Statewide Caucus Leadership Meeting** Activists met in Austin to discuss and strategize how to win meaningful reform in DFPS. Members discussed recent developments, and made plans for getting our message out to our coworkers, legislators, and our communities.



- **On-Going: Legislative District Meetings** Throughout the year, members will be meeting with legislators to give them the perspective from the frontlines of our agency. These meetings are very necessary, because so many elected officials are unaware of the obstacles we face when attempting to help and protect vulnerable Texans.



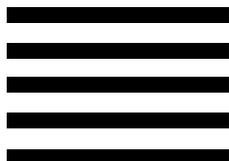
- **Upcoming: County Affairs Committee Hearings** The House Committee on County Affairs will be holding hearings in different parts of the state to gather public input on how to improve CPS. For future meeting dates and locations, please check the TSEU website ([www.cwa-tseu.org](http://www.cwa-tseu.org)). The recommendations from this committee will help shape legislation in 2017, so testimony providing ideas and suggestions will be very valuable.

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# Retirees testify for pension increase

In April, the House Appropriations Subcommittee held a hearing at the Capitol to discuss the issue of providing a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for retired state employees who receive their pensions from the Employee Retirement System (ERS). Late last year, Speaker of the House Joe Straus charged the Appropriations Committee to investigate methods to provide state retirees with a long over-due pension increase. State retirees in ERS have not received a pension increase since 2001 and the average ERS pension is only \$1600 per month.

Eight TSEU members from the Retirees Organizing Committee (ROC) were in attendance with three of them offering public testimony. Mary Esther Escobedo (*retired: OAG, San Antonio*), Anitra Patterson (*retired: HHSC/CPS, Dallas*) and Jerry Wald (*retired, DADS, Houston*) were among the TSEU-ROC members who testified.

In their testimonies, ROC members illustrated the challenges of living in 2016 on a 2001 pension. Mary Esther Escobedo gave examples of fellow state retirees in San Antonio who struggled to afford food and medical prescriptions. While Anitra Patterson offered a detailed account of the day-to-day challenges state employees endure on the job prior to retirement. Jerry Wald concluded public testimony by breaking down the numbers on what it takes for state retirees to live on low and stagnant pensions in the midst of rising cost of living. TSEU-ROC members from around the state also made dozens of phone calls to lawmakers on the House Appropriations Subcommittee, urging them to take action on state retiree pension increases. The mobilization and testimony by TSEU-ROC members garnered statewide attention and sincere responses from lawmakers on the subcommittee.

The Subcommittee also heard testimony from the Legislative Budget Board and ERS. Both agencies discussed the legal barriers on providing retirees with a COLA. According to state law, public pension plans must be considered “actuarially sound” before paying out pension increases. Over the past two decades, lawmakers have consistently underfunded the ERS pension funds, resulting in an \$8 billion deficit. Last year, TSEU worked with lawmakers to pass House Bill 9 that will set the ERS pension fund back on a path to actuarial soundness starting in 2017. State law also says that the legislature cannot contribute more than 10% of payroll costs into public pension funds unless the Governor declares an emergency need for funding.

Regardless of these legal barriers, state lawmakers have a responsibility to ensure that the retirees who dedicated their careers to public service have a pension that keeps up with today’s cost of living. The testimony of TSEU-ROC members at the hearing last week was only part of a broader movement to increase pensions for state retirees in both ERS and TRS. Since January, TSEU-ROC members have been sending personally written letters to lawmakers telling their story on why a pension increase is critically needed. In addition to that, more state retirees have been joining ROC and getting involved in their local committees to help build our movement for better pensions. We must keep organizing and mobilizing until we win a cost of living adjustment for all state retirees in both ERS and TRS.



[L-R] Harrison Hiner, Mary Esther Escobedo, Anitra Patterson, Yolanda Delgado, Will Rogers, Subcommittee member State Rep Borris Miles, Jerry Wald, and Linda Wilson

## Fighting for ‘20’ in TJJJ

In recent months, TSEU activists in TJJJ have been building steam as they get ready for an all-out push to include TJJJ JCO’s and Case Managers in the 20-year LECOS retirement fund. [RIGHT L-R] Union leaders Cora Bennett, Linda Brown and Demetrius Waples met recently with State Rep. Kyle Kacal (*second from left*) to enlist his support for the expansion of retirement benefits.



TSEU members followed that up with testimony before a hearing of the House Pensions Committee on the need to include TJJJ staff in LECOSRF. That testimony led to a meeting with State Rep. Justin Rodriguez (pictured at right, 3rd from the left with [L-R] Seth Hutchinson, Cora Bennett and Harrison Hiner). Rodriguez expressed strong interest in making the push. The legislative visits come on the heels of a meeting union leaders had with TJJJ Executive Director David Reilly, in which the need for a 20-year retirement plan was discussed.



These positive signs don’t mean that winning 20-year retirement in the next legislative session will be easy, however. In the last legislative session, TSEU members pushed hard for HB 1821, which would have included some TJJJ staff in LECOSRF. That bill died in committee because of opposition to the additional cost of adding more employees into the fund.

TJJJ employees have the highest injury rates of any state agency, including TDCJ, which has correctional officers, case managers, and even some clerical staff all included in the LECOS retirement fund. The higher injury rate in TJJJ is due to the more hands-on nature of working with incarcerated youths instead of adults. Under the current retirement plan, a JCO could be required to work until they’re 62 or older. The physical requirements of restraining aggressive youths put a great deal of wear and tear on an employee’s body. Under the 20-year plan, an employee can retire after 20 years of service if they are at least 57.

If TSEU members are going to be successful in winning this fight, more TJJJ staff are going to have to join the union and get involved. The strength of our push depends on how many members are in the union. Across the state, more and more TJJJ staff are signing up and getting involved, but we have to keep up our momentum as we head into the 2017 legislative session.



# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TSEU's General Assembly marks the beginning of the mobilization campaign to win specific victories. The enthusiasm and determination that begins HERE allows union members to go back out to our homes ready to take on the organizing and mobilizing required to win!

## OCTOBER 14-16 / AUSTIN / BE THERE!

The TSEU General Assembly is a statewide meeting of elected delegates and other TSEU members and families. Held every even-numbered year, the General Assembly considers and adopts the broad strategic plans that guide decision-making in TSEU for the next two years. These plans are contained in the Organizing Program and Political Program, which also contains specific legislative goals for the upcoming session of the Texas

Legislature. The General Assembly makes decisions and adopts positions on various specific questions, including election of TSEU candidates for the ERS and TRS boards. All members present can participate in debates, discussions, and meetings; the final vote on issues is restricted to elected delegates\*. Finally, the General Assembly is the best opportunity for TSEU members from across Texas to meet one another, renew friendships, and enjoy the companionship of fellow TSEU members and families. Contact your any TSEU office or organizer for details!



### \*GENERAL ASSEMBLY DELEGATES

will be elected on the basis of one per 50 members, based on May 2016 membership. We are accepting nominations for delegate positions. If you would like to be a delegate or wish to nominate a fellow TSEU member, contact your nearest TSEU office



## HELP DESIGN OUR OFFICIAL LOGO: 2016 GENERAL ASSEMBLY LOGO CONTEST

This logo/design will appear on all General Assembly materials, including the event t-shirt, and on a future UPDATE cover. Designs should reflect the theme "UNBREAKABLE". The winner will be recognized during the General Assembly Awards Banquet. Printer-ready artwork is great, but we are looking for (and will acknowledge work of) designs or concepts at any level or ability - no matter how 'rough' your artwork, send it along! **DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, JULY 17.** For more details contact Chris Knapp at the TSEU Austin office (512.448.4225).

- For consideration, provide an 8½ x 11 sample. Mail your design to the Austin TSEU office or email to Chris Knapp at: cknapp@cwa-tseu.org
- It must include the words: 'TSEU General Assembly', 'Austin Texas, October 14-16, 2016', 'UNBREAKABLE'
- Use no more than two colors. It will be printed on a red t-shirt. Designs subject to minor changes.

## SPRING 2016: Two BIG CWA victories!

**MISSOURI STATE WORKERS:** In May, members of TSEU's sister CWA local, the Missouri State Workers Union, successfully defeated an attack on the right of the state employees of Missouri to voluntarily join their union. Similar to what TSEU members successfully defeated in Texas last year, state workers in Missouri had to fight off a bill that would have severely limited state employees' right to be members of their union by paying membership dues through payroll deduction.

To win the fight, MSWU members launched phone call mobilizations, signed up more members into the union, grew their COPE program, met with lawmakers across the state, and campaigned for political candidates who promised to support state workers. They also launched an Unbreakable campaign similar to the one TSEU members are working on, because in both states we know that the extreme anti-state employee groups that are pushing this agenda are not giving up on this fight. They are already preparing for another attack on organizing rights in Missouri. For both Missouri and Texas state employees, our Unbreakable campaigns are our best defense against these attacks.

**VERIZON STRIKE:** Nearly 40,000 CWA members at Verizon have returned to work after a victorious 45-day strike that spanned the East Coast. The strike, the largest in the U.S. in recent history, was focused on stopping the outsourcing of thousands of call center jobs and protecting retirement benefits for both current and future retirees.



## We need Parole Officer caseload information

**T**SEU members are leading the charge for increasing staffing levels and lowering caseloads in TDCJ Parole Division. State lawmakers are the key decision-makers who we must push to increase funding for our agency to make this happen. To convince them that high caseloads are a real problem that is affecting our ability to properly supervise parolees, we need to have accurate caseload information to share with them.

If you're a Parole Officer or supervisor, please send the following information to: [kstenson@cwa-tseu.org](mailto:kstenson@cwa-tseu.org)

- name
- work location
- your current caseload count - including the number and type(s) of cases you have been assigned.

## TWC/TSEU leaders plan organizing, pay raise push

**I**n March, TSEU activists in TWC came together in Austin for a caucus meeting to discuss building the union within our agency, winning real pay raises, and rolling back the "Texas Model" of Employment Services. Present were Samm Almaguer and Evelyn Parnell (Houston); Bob Stewart, Michael Fetonte, and Barbara Fetonte (Austin).

The leaders present developed several strategies to win on these fronts. First, members planned a meeting with newly-appointed TWC Commissioner for Labor Julian Alvarez. Second, the activists at the meeting developed a plan to reach out to incoming DARS employees whose department



would be merging with TWC. By organizing those DARS employees into the union, we can better push to defend DARS services for the disabled and roll back privatization in TWC Employment Services. Lastly, members planned to go directly to TWC Commissioners' hearings to speak publicly and ask the agency to put a request for an across-the-board pay raise in the agency's budget request to the State Legislature.

### TSEU EXECUTIVE BOARD

- **Judy Lugo** (HHSC, El Paso) President
- **Seth Hutchinson** (TSEU Austin) Vice President
- **Joanne Day** (DSHS, Austin) Secretary
- **Anthony Brown** (DADS, Houston) Treasurer
- **Joe Angulo** (UTPA-Retired, Edinburg) Region 1
- **Arthur Valdez** (DSHS, San Antonio) Region 2
- **Yvette Sherman** (FPS-Retired, San Angelo) Reg. 3
- **Micah Haley** (TDCJ, Dallas) Region 4
- **Yolanda White** (DADS, Lufkin) Region 5
- **Debra Coleman** (DADS-Retired, Brenham) Reg. 6
- **Samm Almaguer** (TWC, Houston) Region 7
- **Anne Lewis** (UT-Austin) Region 8

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- Margaret Banks, Organizer

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- Missy Benavidez, Organizer

**WEST TEXAS 806.741-0044**  
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Lubbock, TX 79405

- Santos Hernandez, Organizer
- Keith Stenson, Organizer
- Kevin Paris, Organizer
- Alex Moir, Organizer

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# TEXAS STATE EMPLOYEES UNION

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**STOP! Before changing your health care plan, there are some things to consider!**

## **CDHP's from ERS: a bad deal for state workers, retirees**

**TSEU strongly recommends that state and university employees who receive their health benefits from the ERS, STAY in the ERS and do NOT opt-in to the CDHP!**



*During the 2015 Legislative Session, House Bill 966 was passed requiring the Employees Retirement System (ERS) to offer Consumer Directed Health Care Plans (CDHP) as an option for state employees. CDHP's are high deductible health care plans that are tied to a Health Savings Account (HSA). In February, the ERS Board of Trustees approved the plan structure for the new CDHP. TSEU had opposed CDHP's and HSA's in every legislative session since 2003.*

### **WHY CONSUMER DIRECTED HEALTH PLANS (CDHP) ARE A BAD DEAL FOR STATE EMPLOYEES:**

A CDHP has very high deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums. The in-network deductible for the CDHP will be \$2,100/individual and \$4,200/family. The out-of-network deductible will be \$4,200/individual and \$8,400/family. Employees will be responsible for 100% of health care costs until we have paid the deductibles. These expenses will put critical health care services out of reach for many employees—particularly those with higher need for health care services such as women, employees with families, the elderly, and individuals with chronic medical conditions.

The CDHP will be paired with a Health Savings Account, which is a separate fund used to help cover the costs of this new health plan. The State will contribute \$45 per month (\$540 per year) for member only coverage and \$90/month (\$1,080/year) for family coverage in the employee's HSA – not nearly enough to cover the high deductibles and other expenses related to the CDHP.