
The legislative instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Lauren B. Bailey.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT DIGEST

Senate Bill No. 594 by Senator B. Gautreaux

Keyword and summary of the bill as proposed by the Conference Committee

RETIREMENT SYSTEMS. Relative to public retirement systems, provides for employee contribution rates, definitions, computation of benefits and eligibility; provides relative to investments. (7/1/10)

Report adopts House amendments to:

Make technical amendments.

Report rejects House amendments which would have:

Required each system, plan, or fund to provide to the House and Senate Committees on retirement quarterly investment reports no later than 60 days after the end of the quarter containing investment returns net of investment fees and expenses and net of the system, plan, or fund's administrative expenses.

Report amends the bill to:

1. Require each system, plan, or fund to provide to the House and Senate Committees on retirement and to each other quarterly investment reports no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the quarter containing investment returns net of investment fees and expenses and net of the system, plan, or fund's administrative expenses and the asset allocation of the system portfolios.
2. Provide for contribution rates and computation of benefits for certain public retirement system members.

Digest of the bill as proposed by the Conference Committee

Present law (R.S. 11:267) requires certain La. public retirement or pension systems, plans, or funds to invest 10% of the equity portfolio, regardless of the amount of the system's allocation to such equities, in one or more index funds which seek to replicate the performance of the chosen index or indices. Allows the systems to invest up to 65% of the total portfolio in equities. Present law provides that, for purposes of present law, the term "equity" shall mean ownership of a corporation represented by shares that are publicly traded on a recognized exchange, including the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotation (NASDAQ). Present law applies to:

- (1) Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System
- (2) Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana
- (3) Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System
- (4) Assessors' Retirement Fund

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law (R.S. 11:263(D)) authorizes certain La. public retirement or pension systems, plans, or funds to invest up to 55% of the individual system's total portfolio in equities. Specifies that these plans may invest more than 55% of the total portfolio in equities, so long as not more than 65% of the total portfolio is invested in equities and at least 10% of the total equity portfolio is invested in one or more index funds which seek to replicate the performance of the chosen index or indices.

Present law applies to:

- (1) Clerks' of Court Retirement and Relief Fund
- (2) District Attorneys' Retirement System
- (3) Firefighters' Retirement System
- (4) Municipal Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana
- (5) Municipal Police Employees' Retirement System
- (6) Parochial Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana
- (7) Registrars of Voters Employees' Retirement System
- (8) Sheriffs' Pension and Relief Fund
- (9) State Police Pension and Retirement System
- (10) Harbor Police Retirement System

Proposed law provides for a single standard. Authorizes each of the 14 listed public retirement or pension systems, plans, or funds to invest up to 55% of the individual system's total portfolio in equities. Specifies that these plans may invest more than 55% of the total portfolio in equities, so long as not more than 65% of the total portfolio is invested in equities and at least 10% of the total equity portfolio is invested in one or more index funds which seek to replicate the performance of the chosen index or indices.

Present law (R.S. 11:263(B)) provides that the prudent-man rule shall require each fiduciary of a retirement or pension system, plan or fund and each board of trustees acting collectively on behalf of each system, plan, or fund to act with the care, skill, prudence, and diligence under the circumstances prevailing that a prudent institutional investor acting in a like capacity and familiar with such matters would use in the conduct of an enterprise of a like character and with like aims.

Present law further provides that this standard requires the exercise of reasonable care, skill, and caution, and is to be applied to investments not in isolation, but in the context of the trust portfolio, and as part of an overall investment strategy, which shall include an asset allocation study and plan for implementation thereof, incorporating risk and return objectives reasonably suitable to that trust.

Proposed law (R.S. 11:263(D)) retains present law and adds to the prudent-man rule that the asset allocation study and implementation plan shall include an examination of market value risk, credit risk, interest rate risk, inflation risk, counterparty risk, and concentration risk. Further adds that the investment policy of each system shall preserve and enhance principal over the long term and provide adequate liquidity and cash flow for the payment of benefits.

Proposed law also provides that the investments shall be diversified to minimize the risk of significant losses unless it is clearly prudent not to do so. Includes a list of considerations to be taken into account before any investment decision is made. These considerations include: pricing, liquidity, transparency, legal jurisdiction, currency fluctuations, experience of professional managers, financial soundness of money management companies, diversification, leverage, and expected returns.

Proposed law requires each system, plan, or fund to provide to the House and Senate Committees on retirement and to each other quarterly investment reports no later than 20 days after the end of the quarter containing investment returns net of investment fees and expenses and net of the system, plan, or fund's administrative expenses and the asset allocation of the system portfolios.

Proposed law provides for contribution rates and computation of benefits relative to judges, court officers, the governor, lieutenant governor and legislators.

Proposed law repeals obsolete provisions of present law.

Effective July 1, 2010.

(Amends R.S. 11:62(5)(a), 263(C) and (D), 444(A)(1), and the introductory paragraph of R.S. 11:553; adds 11:263(G) and 551(B); repeals R.S. 11:62(5)(h), 263(E), 267, and 268)