



NCRGEA *Government Relations* Update

A Message from Your NCRGEA Executive Director – August 2020

We are an association charged with serving more than 320,000 North Carolina state and local retirees, as well as future retirees. This makes planning, whether it be the short or long term, imperative to our success.

However, in this season of paradoxes, planning of any sort seems futile. Watching the days melt away makes us feel like we're living in a world of endless today's. Short-term planning must almost be done on daily or weekly basis as charting a course among this combined cultural, financial, and public health crisis remains incomprehensible.

Yet here we are living through this period of fear, destruction, and dissonance. We are often grasping at anything to help us heal our respective and collective traumas. Here we are, exhausted and fearful for our children and grandchildren's futures.

Here we are. Many of us, our children, our neighbors, and ourselves, pushed straight to the brink.

For our country, crisis situations most often serve as a cauldron from which innovators emerge and leadership philosophies reshape to overcome the dilemma. The world we will live in tomorrow is being shaped by the ceaseless today's of late.

Here's the "yet" of the planning paradox: We are unknowing of the future, yet we must keep planning.

This is what we are doing at NCRGEA. It's a two-pronged approach. We're not losing sight of who we are. The importance of public service and public servants has resurfaced onto the rocky cultural landscape of our country's psyche. How we protect public servants' benefits in retirement will become an amplified discussion in the years to come.

The events of the last six months, and the months, to come have irrevocably changed how we will have that discussion. We are not only planning for that discussion; we are proactively taking actions to be prepared. We're currently in the process of modernizing our technology in order to serve you better. We're looking at teleconferencing district meetings. We're in the process of significantly increasing our external communications through email, social media, and our website.

While we aren't tone-deaf to the State's bleak financial outlook, we also are mindful that retirees will continue to lose pension value unless impactful adjustments are made. We're in constant

conversation with legislative members and leaders. We're talking more than we ever have.
Today might not be the day—but the day is coming.

Stay tuned.

Richard Rogers
Executive Director