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Message-ID: <db.5de90d0.2684ce26@cs.com>
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Subject: PERS robbery of state employee's money
To: governor@governor.state.ms.us
CC: wjennings@mail.lbo.state.ms.us, jmayo@mail.lbo.state.ms.us,
vrobertson@mail.house.state.us
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Dear Governor and Representatives:

Since I know you are all extremely busy people, I will try to keep this e-mail as brief as possible. If you are like me, you probably don't like to read long messages.

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Lynne Talbert. I am married to Mike Talbert, who is a truck driver for Saia Motor Freight. We have two children, Brad - 17 years old and Lauren - 14 years old, who live at home. When I married Mike 20 years ago, he had two children, Andy and Wendy. At the time we married Andy was 6 years old and Wendy was 4 years.

I was able to stay at home with the children and not work outside the home until 1990. At this time Lauren began Kindergarten. In order to be able to make a little "pocket change", I began as a Teacher Assistant and School Bus Driver, for Walls Elementary School in DeSoto County. I absolutely loved my jobs. This was the perfect set up for someone who wanted to be able to stay at home with her children

This summer I began to reflect on my life - take account of how things are going. I have always missed having a time in my married life when Mike and I could be alone. Therefore, I decided to resign from being a Teachers Assistant. I will continue to drive the school bus.

I also began to think about my retirement package. (I must tell you, I am 42 years old. So I guess this sounds like a mid-life crisis.) I began unwillingly contributing to the Mississippi Public Employees Retirement System in 1990. The amount taken for the retirement account has always been withdrawn from both jobs. Several years ago, I was notified, along with other bus drivers, that bus drivers would have a choice about contributing to the retirement fund. I phoned the payroll department to stop the deduction from my bus check and was told that since I was a teacher assistant, I would still have to contribute to the fund from both pay checks.

Now that I will no longer be a teacher assistant, I was looking forward to investing my own money. I spoke with my boss at the Transportation Department and was told it is now mandatory for everyone to contribute to the fund. Since 1990, I have contributed (as of June 30, 2000) \$9,691.45. The interest I have been paid is (are you ready for this?) \$1,317.34.

I realize the need for a retirement plan. Everyone needs one. However, the one I have with PERS will not do. I have been aware of this for sometime. But, because my income was so minute and money was already being taken out for retirement, I couldn't afford to invest any more money.

I invite you to visit the site of PERS (www.pers.state.ms.us) Check the market value of the investments.

I have never had an opportunity to request how my money was invested.

Believe me when I tell you, I am an educated person - very capable of deciding how and when my money should be spent. I am well aware how much money I could make with MY money.

I know this system has been in place for longer than any of you has been in office. I hope and pray you will correct it. It isn't fair. If you really think about it the whole concept of PERS sounds like communism. - We all work for the good of the state. I, for one, am working for the good of Lynne Talbert.

I am going to make a formal request to the Director of PERS - Frank Ready and the Board of Director, for them to turn my contributions over to me minus any income tax. I feel I should owe no penalty.

Sorry for the length of this. PLEASE
HELP!!

Lynne Talbert