

**Report to the A/P Staff Council from the University Joint Benefits Committee  
May 17, 2006**

**Reports From Human Resources**

- 1) SURS counselors were on campus March 21-23 for retirement counseling sessions.
- 2) Benefits Choice books have been mailed. There will be increases in medical co-pays for employees and dependents for the coming year, as well as prescription co-pays. The choice period is May 1-31, and all changes will be effective July 1.
- 3) Benefits Fair was held on May 3-4. Some information from the Benefits Fair will be in *Southern Spotlight* and some will be posted on the website.
- 4) Social Security and Medicare were both represented at the fair, although Vicki suggested that people with specific questions should contact Social Security or Medicare directly.

**Subcommittee on Health Benefits**

Question and Answer sheets are currently being prepared to address concerns about the possible reduction or loss of health benefits for current workers and for retirees, as health benefits do not have the same constitutional protections as retirement benefits. Research on this is currently being done by members of the subcommittee and we will keep you posted. It is feared that the state's budget problems will also bring these under scrutiny.

**Subcommittee on Retirement Benefits and Annuities**

This subcommittee has worked to research, product and distribute information about our pension system in easy to access Question and Answer format. In addition, sample letters to the Governor and Illinois State Legislators were also produced and distributed. All of you should have received these some time ago. This remains an ongoing concern, as the state is still raiding the pension system to balance the budget and pay for other items.

I spoke with Dan Slack (Executive Director of SURS) last week and he hopes to work with us and other allies in the coming year, in an effort to get State Funding of the pension system on a reasonable course. He offered to share information with us in an ongoing way towards that end. This subcommittee hopes to continue providing constituents with accessible information.

**Additional Issues**

Senate Bill 49 was recently approved by a 58-0 vote in the Illinois Senate. SB49 modifies Senate Bill 27 - the 2005 pension legislation - to correct the unintended consequences of exemptions to the 6% salary increase limit for pension purposes. SB49 will now be sent to the Governor for his signature.

Respectfully submitted,

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