

January 4, 2023  
News Tribune -- Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Missouri taxpayers deserve a strong state government that operates efficiently and effectively. Making good use of tax funds requires attraction and retention of a skilled state workforce.

So as our state representatives return to business at the State Capitol, we encourage them to begin work immediately on securing additional salary benefits for state employees. While we applaud the actions of recent years, we must push ahead, so Missouri state employees no longer rank as the nation's lowest paid public servants.

It's important to provide a pay plan that meets or exceeds the recent 8.7% increase in Social Security. The salary study completed several years ago recommended that the state start closing the gap.

In addition, we should begin to address other survey recommendations – bringing employees to at least the minimum pay rate for the job, providing within-grade pay increases to reduce compression, and providing pay increases for selected classes of positions where low salaries are significantly affecting recruitment and retention.

To continue acting in the best interest of the state's workforce and its retired constituency, it's also important to fully fund the necessary base needs for the retirement systems and the health care insurance plans as the FY 2024 budget is approved.

The Association of Active and Retired Missouri State Employees is a non-partisan association working to keep active and retired state employees informed about the state's administration of health care and retirement programs. We work with all legislative leaders to ensure benefits that are earned by state employees are protected. If you're a state employee or a state retiree, you can help us help you!

1. Contact your elected officials and those running for office to make sure they understand your position and expectations of their leadership regarding your retirement system and health insurance.
2. Join ARMSE and know that **your membership helps fight the fight**. Check us out on Facebook and also visit our website where you can join online at [www.armse.org](http://www.armse.org).

Roger Schwartze, ARMSE president