



LEOFF I COALITION

Law Enforcement Officers & Fire Fighters

**Representing Retired and
Active Members of the
LEOFF I Retirement System**

2012-2013 Annual Report

*The mission of the LEOFF I Coalition
is to protect the integrity of the
LEOFF I Law and LEOFF I
Retirement Trust Fund.
LEOFF I Coalition members are law
enforcement
officers and fire fighters.*



Annual Report

LEOFF I COALITION

Law Enforcement Officers & Fire Fighters

LEOFF I Coalition Board

President - Don Daniels
Ret. Seattle Police Department
WA State Law Enforcement
Association

Vice President - Andy Wilson
Ret. King Co Sheriff's Office
WA State Ret. Deputy Sheriff's &
Police Officers Association

Secretary - Dave Peery
Retired Seattle Fire Department
Member At-Large

Treasurer - Jerry Birt
Ret. Seattle Fire Department
Member At-Large

Lobbyist - Mark Curtis
Ret. Thurston Co. Sheriff's Office
WA State Ret. Deputy Sheriff's &
Police Officers Association
mwcurtiscraft@comcast.net

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Ret. Klickitat Co. Deputy Sheriff
Member At-Large

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Member At-Large

Rick McComas
Klickitat Co. Sheriff Office
Member At-Large

**There are
8,000 LEOFF I
Beneficiaries!**



President's Message

By Don Daniels, LEOFF I Coalition President

During the past two years, we have had to fight attempts to merge the LEOFF I and LEOFF 2 pension plans. Although this issue was not raised again this year, we still believe that it may be resurrected.

What did occur this year was the (late) introduction of SB 5916. This bill appears to be a knee jerk response to a couple of Seattle Times articles on the process of "spiking" (hefty salary increases just prior to retirement) which results in a higher monthly benefit for the recipient. The articles focused on worst-case scenarios – primarily high-ranking department members who were taking a LEOFF I retirement. Missing from these articles was an explanation that "spiking" was often encouraged by city managers who wanted to push top paid LEOFF I members into retirement so they could be replaced with younger officers subject to benefit packages which did not include medical coverage. SB 5916 was changed several times with several additions.

The one we were most concerned with was in section 4 of the current bill – which authorizes DRS to have responsibilities not allocated in the LEOFF I pension system. We believe that the language in this bill would open the door to usurp control of LEOFF I disability boards – and is illegal.

SB 5916 is strongly opposed by the LEOFF I community in general – and particularly by the LEOFF I Coalition. Although his bill never made it to the floor this year, we fully expect it to be reintroduced next year. This is a bad bill – and we must do everything that we can to defeat it; even DRS opposes this bill. 🦅

The LEOFF I Coalition 2012-2013 Annual Report is for retired and active members of the LEOFF I Retirement System (Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters). LEOFF I Coalition is a 501 c 5 non profit organization.

Mailing Address:

LEOFF I Coalition, 855 Trospen Rd. SW Ste. 108
PMB 127 • Tumwater, WA 98512

Phone Number: 360-570-1035

Toll Free: 877-553-6631

Website: www.leoff1coalition.org

Office Email: information@leoff1coalition.org

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Vice President's Message

By Andy Wilson, LEOFF I Coalition Vice President

We need to be thankful for the benefits we have. Your LEOFF I Coalition officers and Board continue to monitor our state legislature and work to insure that we do not lose any of these benefits. Your donations to support our efforts are needed – and appreciated. We thank you for your continued support! 🐾

We Must Be Grateful For the Benefits We Have!



My Two Cents...

By Mark Curtis, Lobbyist

LEOFF I Coalition has been working with partners and will continue to work to defeat SB 5916, a bad bill that could badly damage our constitutional contract law that protects our disability boards.

Please do a few things: Contact your legislators and oppose the bill. Also, allow us to communicate through emails, because too many people have given up land line communication.

SB 5916 even hurts LEOFF 2 people if they lose collective bargaining.

Let's kill BAD BILL SB 5916! 🐾

Dear LEOFF I Members:

We need your continued monetary support. We fully expect that we will have to fight either merger attempts or SB 5916 – or both – next year. We do have a war chest to use for future lawsuits, but we would prefer not touching that fund for day-to-day operating expenses.

Your support will pay for lobbying expenses, attorney fees, legislative research, website updates, correspondence with members and legislators, office expenses including our phone bill, printing, mail prep, and postage, and travel expenses.

These tasks all cost money. Our only source of funding comes from people such as you. None of our officers or board members are paid, we only reimburse them for out-of-pocket expenses.

At this time we would appreciate a small contribution of \$10, \$20, \$50, or whatever you can afford – to help defray these operating costs. Please complete the attached envelope and form and send it to us as quickly as you can.

We do thank you or your continued support.

Donald G. Daniels

Don Daniels
LEOFF I Coalition President

LEOFF I Coalition Needs Your Current Contact Information!

Email Address, Home Phone Number, Cell Phone Number, & Mailing Address

Please send an email to Jerry Birt at jabirt@verizon.net or call (206) 542-4193 so we can update our member database and send legislative alerts. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Thank you!



LEOFF I COALITION

Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters

PMB 127

855 Trosper RD SW STE 108

Tumwater, WA 98512

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Check the website for latest information. Visit us at: www.leoff1coalition.org.
Update your contact information: contact Jerry Birt at 206-542-4193 or jabirt@verizon.net.



Twelve Long Years...

By Dave Peery, Secretary

Twelve Years! Twelve long, harrowing years our Coalition has stood steadfastly by while repeated attempts have been made to open up LEOFF pension law with the intent to access and capture alleged surpluses in our members LEOFF I pensions. With the funding, support and determination of our active and retired members we have prevailed; thus far. The financial support from our members allowed us to employ legal help when appropriate to defend our system and to ensure that member's benefits were not unilaterally denied or reduced. The Coalition traveled the state during the early years to help rally members and educate one and all about the threats LEOFF I faced. That effort was much appreciated and much needed. Sadly, some of the people who were instrumental in that effort have passed on. Others have succumbed to the illnesses of old age, rendering them unable to continue the struggle. They are sorely missed. They will not be forgotten.

During those long dark years, we held fast to the value of LEOFF laws that we live under and that were designed to provide contractually agreed upon benefits to our members. Some of those benefits were challenged in courts and were found to be legally binding and appropriate. We do not look forward to having to be "reborn" as LEOFF 3 and having, once again, to defend hard-won benefits in the courts.

Nor do we look forward to ill-designed proposals to merge our system with any others. We feel those efforts

held little but increased risks with no safe protections and without representation within the leadership of those controlling systems. Legislators considering such legislative changes should have the common decency to deal directly with our LEOFF I members, not those wishing to force unwanted change upon us.

Which brings us to the "here and now." It appears we have survived another legislative session. This publication does not provide adequate space to revisit the long, tortured history of our LEOFF system. Suffice it to say that it has been challenged from the outset by legislative failure to provide agreed upon contributions during the early years. That failure to provide actuarially recommended contributions by the State led directly to the formation of LEOFF 2 and the closure of LEOFF I to new members. Regrettably, that failure by the state was predicted to lead to our financial collapse.

Twenty short years later our system was alleged to be so over-funded that an enormous battle was fought to access that alleged surplus. What was predicted to bankrupt the state has instead become a target for other state organizations and legislatures seeking funding for other uses.

We stand ready to meet challenges to our system and to deal appropriately within legal channels to threats we perceive to our member's contractual benefits. And, please, remember this: we...are...not...dead...yet! Any who wish to deal with our members' LEOFF I benefits will deal with a determined and energized membership. 