



March 1, 2017

Dear Members, Retirees, and Employers:


After almost four decades in service to the members, retirees, and employers of the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) and to the people of the state of Mississippi, I am announcing my retirement as executive director of PERS, which will take place in mid-to-late 2018 following the selection of a new executive director by the Board of Trustees (Board). With that objective in mind, the Board has created an Ad Hoc Committee to begin the search for the new executive director, and I have every confidence that they will find the right person to take the reins.

I began with PERS in 1980 after earning my degree in accounting from Mississippi State University and working briefly in both the private and public sectors. When I started at PERS, the agency had a little more than \$1 billion in assets and a staff of less than 60 serving a membership of 143,000. Over my years, I have seen many changes, including moving from a mainframe, manual-type computing environment to a workforce that is driven by technology, providing more comprehensive services to our members. Our assets are invested in a more diversified manner and have grown to nearly \$26 billion. PERS staff size is now more than 160, and the members we serve total almost 400,000. These members are why we are here, and I am proud of the work we do.

In 2005, I was honored to become the fifth executive director of PERS, a role that has proven both challenging and rewarding. During my tenure as executive director, I have endeavored to lead this agency with honesty and integrity, keeping in mind my role as a public servant, a representative of Mississippi, and a leader to my staff. As a public servant, I have given my heart, time, and mind to doing the best job I could during my career and, while there have been challenges and a few missteps, I hope, overall, I have made a positive difference. Navigating this retirement system through the aftereffects of the Great Recession and tackling the responsibility of elevating our funded status have been—and will continue to be—arduous tasks; but, I am confident that PERS will continue to consistently pay promised benefits to a growing population of retirees and that the leadership will continue planning and preparing for the future. On the national level, I have diligently worked to represent PERS and our state with professionalism and dignity while gaining personal perspective and understanding of the pension industry by serving on boards like the National Association of State Retirement Administrators and the Government Finance Officers Association. And within the walls of the PERS building, I have been steadfast in my desire to expand opportunities for my staff, which led to PERS establishing career ladders and implementing new training opportunities.

As I have said many times, I have a passion for the work we do at PERS and have been humbled to have had the opportunity to serve our membership for almost 40 years. My retirement will be bittersweet as it will be difficult to leave something I care about so much; however, I am ready to enjoy a new chapter in my life and welcome new leadership to this agency. I thank each of you for the faith you put in me over the years and look forward to what the future brings for us all.

Sincerely,


Pat Robertson
Executive Director

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