

STATE OF NEW YORK

4523

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 5, 2021

Introduced by Sens. GOUNARDES, BROOKS -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Civil Service and
Pensions

AN ACT to amend the retirement and social security law, in relation to
establishing a twenty year retirement plan for members or officers of
law enforcement

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The retirement and social security law is amended by adding
2 a new section 383-e to read as follows:

3 § 383-e. Retirement of officers of state law enforcement; twenty year
4 retirement plan. a. Membership. Every non-seasonally appointed sworn
5 member or officer of the division of law enforcement in the department
6 of environmental conservation, a forest ranger in the service of the
7 department of environmental conservation, which shall mean a person who
8 serves on a full-time basis in the title of forest ranger I, forest
9 ranger II, forest ranger III, assistant superintendent of forest fire
10 control, superintendent of forest fire control or any successor titles
11 or new titles in the forest ranger title series in the department of
12 environmental conservation, a police officer in the department of envi-
13 ronmental conservation, the regional state park police, and university
14 police officers who enter or re-enter service in any such title shall be
15 covered by the provisions of this section, and every member described in
16 this subdivision in such service on or before one year prior to the
17 effective date of this section may elect to be covered by the provisions
18 of this section by filing an election therefor with the comptroller. To
19 be effective, such election must be duly executed and acknowledged on a
20 form prepared by the comptroller for that purpose.

21 b. Retirement allowance. A member, covered by the provisions of this
22 section at the time of retirement, shall be entitled to retire upon
23 completion of twenty years of total creditable service in such titles,

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 and shall retire upon the attainment of the mandatory retirement age
2 prescribed by this section, by filing an application therefor in a
3 manner similar to that provided in section three hundred seventy of this
4 article.

5 1. Upon completion of twenty years of such service and upon retire-
6 ment, each such member shall receive a pension which, together with an
7 annuity for such years of service as provided in paragraph four of this
8 subdivision, shall be sufficient to provide him with a retirement allow-
9 ance of one-half of his final average salary.

10 2. Upon completion of more than twenty years of such service and upon
11 retirement, each such member shall receive, for each year of service in
12 excess of twenty, an additional pension which, together with an annuity
13 for each such year as provided in paragraph four of this subdivision,
14 shall be equal to one-sixtieth of his final average salary, provided,
15 however, that the pension payable pursuant to this section shall not
16 exceed three-quarters of final average salary.

17 3. Upon attainment of the mandatory retirement age without completion
18 of twenty years of such service, each such member shall receive a
19 pension which, together with an annuity for such years of service as
20 provided in paragraph four of this subdivision, shall be equal to one-
21 fortieth of his final average salary for each year of creditable service
22 in such titles. Every such member shall also be entitled to an addi-
23 tional pension equal to the pension for any creditable service rendered
24 while not an employee in such titles as provided under paragraphs three
25 and four of subdivision a of section three hundred seventy-five of this
26 article. This latter pension shall not increase the total allowance to
27 more than one-half of his final average salary.

28 4. The annuity provided under paragraphs one, two and three of this
29 subdivision shall be the actuarial equivalent, at the time of retire-
30 ment, of the member's accumulated contributions based upon the rate of
31 contribution fixed under section three hundred eighty-three of this
32 title and upon the salaries earned while in such service. Such annuity
33 shall be computed as it would be if it were not reduced by the actuarial
34 equivalent of any outstanding loan nor by reason of the member's
35 election to decrease his contributions toward retirement in order to
36 apply the resulting amount toward payment of contributions for old age
37 and survivor's insurance. Any accumulated contributions in excess of the
38 amount required to provide the annuity computed pursuant to this para-
39 graph shall be used to increase the member's retirement allowance.

40 c. Credit for previous service. In computing the years of total cred-
41 itable service for each member described herein, full credit shall be
42 given and full allowance shall be made for service rendered as a police
43 officer or state university peace officer or member of a police force or
44 department of a state park authority or commission or an organized
45 police force or department of a county, city, town, village, police
46 district, authority or other participating employer or member of the
47 capital police force in the office of general services while a member of
48 the New York state and local police and fire retirement system, of the
49 New York state and local employees' retirement system or of the New York
50 city police pension fund and for all service for which full credit has
51 been given and full allowance made pursuant to the provisions of section
52 three hundred seventy-five-h of this article provided, however, that
53 full credit pursuant to the provisions of such section shall mean only
54 such service as would be creditable service pursuant to the provisions
55 of section three hundred eighty-three, three hundred eighty-three-a,
56 three hundred eighty-three-b, as added by chapter six hundred seventy-

1 four of the laws of nineteen hundred eighty-six, three hundred eighty-
2 three-b, as added by chapter six hundred seventy-seven of the laws of
3 nineteen hundred eighty-six, three hundred eighty-three-c or three
4 hundred eighty-three-d of this title or pursuant to the provisions of
5 title thirteen of the administrative code of the city of New York for
6 any member contributing pursuant to this section who transferred to the
7 jurisdiction of the department of environmental conservation including
8 but not limited to environmental conservation officers and forest
9 rangers, regional state park police or state university of New York
10 peace officers.

11 d. Retirement for cause. Upon receipt of a certificate from the head
12 of the entity where such member is employed or his or her designee, a
13 member as described in subdivision a of this section, who has accrued
14 twenty-five or more years of service credit under this section shall be
15 retired on the first day of the second month next succeeding the date
16 such certificate was filed with the comptroller.

17 e. Credit for military service. In computing the years of total cred-
18 itable service full credit shall be given and full allowance shall be
19 made for service of such member in war after world war I as defined in
20 section three hundred two of this article, provided such member at the
21 time of his or her entrance into the armed forces was in police service
22 as defined in subdivision eleven of section three hundred two of this
23 article.

24 f. Transfer of membership to employees' retirement system. Any member
25 currently enrolled pursuant to this section and who previously trans-
26 ferred service credit from the New York state and local employees'
27 retirement system to the New York state and local police and fire
28 retirement system, may elect to transfer such previously transferred
29 service credit back to the New York state and local employees' retire-
30 ment system, and such member shall have the option to retroactively
31 transfer his or her membership into such employees' retirement system.

32 g. The provisions of this section shall be controlling, notwithstand-
33 ing any provision of this article to the contrary.

34 § 2. All past service costs associated with implementing the
35 provisions of this act shall be borne by the state of New York and may
36 be amortized over a period of ten years.

37 § 3. This act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after it shall
38 have become a law.

FISCAL NOTE.-- Pursuant to Legislative Law, Section 50:

This bill would allow any non-seasonally appointed sworn member or officer of the division of law enforcement, a police officer, or forest ranger in the department of environmental conservation; a regional state park police officer; or a university police officer to become covered by the provisions of a special 20-year retirement plan, which will provide a benefit of one-half of final average salary upon retirement, and an additional benefit of one-sixtieth of final average salary for each year of creditable service in excess of 20 years, not to exceed 12 such years.

If this bill is enacted during the 2021 legislative session, we anticipate that there will be an increase of approximately \$4.7 million in the annual contributions of the State of New York for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022.

In addition to the annual contributions discussed above, there will be an immediate past service cost of approximately \$48.2 million which will be borne by the State of New York as a one-time payment. This estimate is based on the assumption that payment will be made on March 1, 2022.

If the State of New York elects to amortize this cost over a 10 year period, the cost for the first year including interest would be \$6.36 million.

These estimated costs are based on 1,217 affected officers, with annual salary of approximately \$101 million as of March 31, 2020.

Summary of relevant resources:

Membership data as of March 31, 2020 was used in measuring the impact of the proposed change, the same data used in the April 1, 2020 actuarial valuation. Distributions and other statistics can be found in the 2020 Report of the Actuary and the 2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

The actuarial assumptions and methods used are described in the 2020 Annual Report to the Comptroller on Actuarial Assumptions, and the Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York: Audit and Control.

The Market Assets and GASB Disclosures are found in the March 31, 2020 New York State and Local Retirement System Financial Statements and Supplementary Information.

I am a member of the American Academy of Actuaries and meet the Qualification Standards to render the actuarial opinion contained herein.

This fiscal note does not constitute a legal opinion on the viability of the proposed change nor is it intended to serve as a substitute for the professional judgment of an attorney.

This estimate, dated January 27, 2021, and intended for use only during the 2021 Legislative Session, is Fiscal Note No. 2021-53, prepared by the Actuary for the New York State and Local Retirement System.