



Washington State
Council of Fire Fighters

RETIREES ASSOCIATION

COUNCIL

RE * CONNECTION

**Retirees Edition*

March 2026 Newsletter

Legislative Session Update

We are headed to the end of the 60-day short session. Several of the bills your legislative team has been working on are still moving through the process and are either in committee or headed for the floor.

SB 5847: Concerning access to medical care in workers' compensation.

Bill Sponsors: Saldana, Harris, Trudeau, Bateman, Conway, Hasegawa, Lovelett, Nobles, Orwall, Riccelli, Shemake, Stanford, Valdez, Wilson, C.

It has become increasingly difficult for firefighters to receive prompt and needed care for on-the-job injuries. This bill will allow our members to receive sure and certain care by allowing them to choose their provider and ensuring they can find a provider within their geographic area. This bill allows doctors to provide individualized care to injured firefighters.

SB 5847 has passed the Senate floor and is scheduled for Senate Rules Committee.

HB 2441: Concerning medical insurance premium reimbursements for surviving spouses of line-of-duty deaths.

Bill Sponsors: Low, Bronoske, Bergquist, Davis

Surviving spouses of LEOFF 2 members killed on the job are currently footing the bill for medical premiums during the LODD determination period. Currently, those premiums are not reimbursed even if the death is found to be LODD. HB 2441 corrects this and ensures those survivors are reimbursed for the benefits they deserve.

HB 2441 passed the House unanimously, on February 26, and will be heard in the Senate Rules Committee.

HB 2540: Concerning emergency medical technician recertification.

Sponsors: Bronoske, Griffey, Engell, Leavitt, Donaghy, Fosse, Nance

EMTs in Washington State are required to recertify every three years throughout their career. HB 2540 would allow EMTs with 10 or more years of experience to recertify only every six years, streamlining the process and reducing costs for individuals being recertified.

HB 2540 passed the House unanimously and is currently in the Senate Rules Committee.

SHB 2034: Concerning termination and restatement of Plan 1 of the Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters Retirement System.

or over a year, the WSCFF opposed changes to LEOFF 1. When it became clear a transfer would move forward, we shifted focus to protecting our members. We successfully amended the bill to move governance of LEOFF 1 to the LEOFF Plan 2 Retirement Board, an important safeguard for long-term oversight. This amendment allows us to keep firefighters and police officers together and provides a sounding board for our retirees comprised of members both active and retired. We continue to engage with senate leadership about SHB 2034 in consultation with the WSCFF Retirees Association as well as the Retired Fire Fighters of Washington.

It is important to remember that although SHB 2034 authorizes a \$2.5 billion transfer from the LEOFF 1 fund and reduces the funded status from approximately 160% to 110%, it does not alter member benefits in any way. The bill does not alter pension formulas or cost of living adjustments. The WSCFF will continue to advocate for the retirement security of all our members and seek opportunities to improve pension benefits.

If you have any questions regarding SHB 2034 please refer to the FAQ page.

HB 2034 passed the House and is scheduled for a second reading in the Senate Rules Committee.

WSCFF Retirees Association Advisory Board Nominations

RA Advisory Board nominations open April 1 and close April 24.

The RA Advisory Board consists of six members who each serve two-year terms. Odd-numbered seats are elected in even-numbered years, and even-numbered seats are elected in odd-numbered years.

Seats 1, 3, and 5 are up for election in 2026. The Board includes three LEOFF 1 members and three other WSCFF retirees. This year, two LEOFF 1 seats and one other seat are up for election.

Current RA Board Members by Seat

1. Roy Orlando, LEOFF 1, Local 31, Tacoma*
2. Curt Vandver, LEOFF 1, Local 726, Pierce County
3. George Orr, LEOFF 1, Local 876, Spokane Valley*
4. Mike Cooper, LEOFF 2, Local 1760, Shoreline
5. Pat Hepler, LEOFF 2, Local 1828, South County*6. Steve Hostetter, LEOFF 2, Local 2819, Kitsap County

*Seats up for election in 2026

Nomination Guidelines

Nominations Due: April 24, 2026

Must be nominated by an active RA retiree

Must be seconded by another active retiree

Self-nominations are not permitted

Submit nominations in writing by April 24, 2026 to the WSCFF office

Email wscff@wscff.org or mail to 1069 Adams Street SE, Olympia, WA 98501

Elections will be conducted electronically May 4–18. Paper ballots will be mailed to members without an email on file.

Looking Back at the Early Days of LEOFF 1

When LEOFF 1 was established in 1969, it marked a major shift for firefighters and law enforcement officers across Washington. For many members, it was the first time retirement security, disability coverage, and survivor benefits were formally structured at the state level.

The early years were different from today's fire service. Equipment was heavier, protective gear was limited by modern standards, and training requirements were evolving. Departments were smaller and communities relied heavily on close relationships with the crews serving them.

What has not changed is the commitment shown by those who served under LEOFF 1. The foundation built during those early decades helped shape the fire service across the state and strengthened the union voice that continues today.

That commitment extended beyond the station. WSCFF leaders such as Howard Vietzke and Mike McGovern, along with many others, spent years advocating in Olympia for firefighters' retirement security and improvements to the pension systems that support firefighters and their families.

The WSCFF continues to lead in advocating and protecting fire fighters and their families. Our consistency, professionalism, and presence in Olympia remain the foundation of that success. — George Orr

From the Front Lines to Union Leadership

Dean Shelton retired one year ago after more than three decades in the fire service. His career included EMS work, firefighting, union leadership, and community involvement.

While attending Western Washington University, an internship at Harborview Medical Center introduced him to emergency medical services and shaped his career direction.

After graduating in 1992, he attended paramedic school at Oregon Health & Sciences University. He worked with Skagit County Medic One and Sedro-Woolley Fire before joining Bremerton Fire as a firefighter/paramedic.

In 1997 he lateraled to Marysville Fire District, where his experience in both established and growing departments shaped his career.

Dean eventually stepped into union leadership as Secretary/Treasurer and continues to serve as WSCFF Vice President and 8th District Representative.

Away from the job, Dean found perspective through long-distance hiking including completing the Camino de Santiago twice.

— Dean Shelton, Co-Chair, WSCFF Retiree Association

Just Another March 17 on Shift

A retired LEOFF 1 member recalled a St. Patrick's Day shift from his years with Douglas County 2.

The day began with coffee, stories, and preparations for a traditional St. Patrick's Day dinner. With a light work schedule, the crew focused on apparatus detailing and equipment maintenance.

As the smell of corned beef and cabbage filled the station, the tones sounded for a working fire.

A few hours later, after returning from the call and cleaning the equipment, the crew sat down together to enjoy the meal.

The food was great, but the time spent together as a crew was even better.

Do you remember those days?

In Memoriam

Arvin Mosley

Tacoma Firefighter, Local 31 Tacoma

December 31, 2025

We honor Arvin's service, dedication, and commitment to the fire service and our community.

Stay Connected with the WSCFF Retirees Association

We distribute the Retirees Association newsletter primarily by email so members can receive timely updates and important information throughout the year.

If you are receiving this printed copy, we may not have your email address on file.

Please help us stay connected by sending your email address to:

Laura@wscff.org

Thank you for helping us keep our records up to date and
stay connected with our retirees.

Retirees Association

Roy Orlando

Mike Cooper

Pat Hepler

Steve Hostetter

George Orr



Washington State
Council of Fire Fighters
RETIRES ASSOCIATION