

Living **power**

For all who have made a living **I** and now wish to make a life

Retirement Funds Rebound

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The actuarial reports for the state's retirement systems indicate positive gains in 2003. The reports for the year ending December 31, 2003 show impressive investment returns that offset market losses incurred during 2002 and provided gains that can be used for pension benefit increases in 2005.

The reports were presented on October 28 at the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees for the State Retirement Systems. The Board is expected to adopt recommendations on 2005 pension benefit increases in January. These recommendations will be forwarded to the General Assembly for action during the 2005 Session which begins on January 26. The details of the report are presented below.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (LGEERS)

Undistributed gains in the local government system at the end of 2003 stood at more than \$190.8 million, up from only \$4.3 million at the end of 2002. The market value of assets in the LGEERS exceeded \$12.9 billion as of December 31, 2003.

This reflected an increase of more than \$2.0 billion over the preceding year.

The undistributed gains in the local system would be sufficient to cover as much as a 4% Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) in 2005. Local government retirees did not receive a COLA in 2004 due to the limited gains that were available at the end of 2002.

We expect that the Board of Trustees will take a cautious approach to 2005 COLAs in light of the current fluctuations in the financial markets. There likely will be a strong sentiment to keep a portion of the 2003 gains in reserve as a hedge against a market downturn. Still, it is likely that the Trustees will support a sizable COLA for local retirees.

TEACHERS' AND STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (TSERS)

The system recorded a sizable gain in the market value of its assets which rose from \$40.6 billion in 2002 to more than \$46.3 billion at the end of 2003. The undistributed gains in the TSERS are suffi-

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A Note to our Members who have MetLife Dental Insurance

The Association has received several calls from members in regards to the current enrollment of the North Carolina Retirement System's Delta Dental plan. We thought we should clarify to all of our members information about the two different plans.

The North Carolina Retired Governmental Employees' Association has a group dental plan with MetLife. We are in the middle of a two year plan with MetLife. Members of NCRGEA who enrolled in the MetLife plan have the dental premiums deducted from his/her retirement check each month. The plan began in January of this year and is in effect until December 31, 2005.

The North Carolina Retirement System also has a group dental plan, through Delta Dental. Their plan operates in a yearly cycle, as opposed to the two year cycle of MetLife. Delta Dental had an enrollment period from October 18 through November 19, 2004, for the plan taking effect January 1, 2005.

1.) Some members who have called with MetLife coverage have wondered if the Delta Dental Plan is a better plan than their current plan. The Delta plan is a few dollars a month cheaper than the MetLife

plan, but the MetLife plan pays a higher percentage on some procedures, has no deductible and has a higher annual maximum. NCRGEA does not profit in any way from offering the MetLife plan to our members so we don't want you to think we have a financial gain in our members enrolled in the MetLife plan. It is up to you to decide which plan you think will cover you best.

2.) Please do not assume that if you decide to enroll in the Delta Dental Plan **and** are already currently enrolled in the MetLife Plan, that you will then be automatically canceled in the MetLife Plan. These are two different plans from two different agencies and they are not related to each other in any way.

3.) If you have a question regarding your MetLife dental plan, please call the Association office at 919-834-4652 or 1-800-356-1190.

NCRGEA will hold its next open enrollment in the fall of 2005. All Association members will be eligible to enroll in the group dental plan at that time.

Holiday Hours

The Association Staff would love to wish you a very Happy Holiday Season! The Office will close at one o'clock on Thursday, December 23 and will reopen on Monday, January 3, 2005.

Messages will be checked periodically during the holidays so if you have an urgent matter, please leave a telephone message and we will call you back as soon as we can.

Living Power is published to provide current information for NCRGEA's membership. Newsletters are printed bimonthly and mailed to all members of NCRGEA. Your comments are welcome.

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Retirement Funds Rebound

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cient to cover a 1.33% COLA in 2005 without increasing the state’s employer contribution rate. Currently the state contributes 2.17% of payroll to the system.

The General Assembly would have to increase the contribution rate and appropriate additional funds to provide a COLA above the 1.33% that can be covered by gains

in the system. The estimated inflation rate for 2004 is in the range of 2.3% to 2.7%. The General Assembly would have to appropriate \$40 to \$45 million to cover a 2.5% COLA for retired teachers and state employees.

In 2004, retired teachers and state employees received a 1.7% COLA. This benefit enhancement was covered by gains in the system and by additional appropriations of \$10 million by the General Assembly to increase the employer contribution rate. Members of the Consolidated Judicial Retirement System also received a 1.7% Cost-of-Living Adjustment.

The Legislative Committee of the N.C. Retired Governmental Employees’ Association will meet on December 6 to formulate recommendations on our goals for the 2005 Session of the General Assembly.

The committee’s primary aim is to seek Cost-of-Living Adjustments that keep retiree pension payments abreast of the rate of inflation. The table below presents a comparison of changes in the Consumer Price Index with retiree COLAs during the most recent three years. - *Ed Regan*

Year	Consumer Price Index	State Retiree COLAs	Local Retiree COLAs
2002	2.0%	1.28%	3.5%
2003	1.9%	1.70%	0
2004	2.5% (est.)	*	*
Three Year Total	6.4%		

* Note: The following Cost-of-Living Adjustments would be needed in 2004 to equalize the pension payment increases with changes in the Consumer Price Index during the past three years:

State Retirees	3.42%
Local Retirees	2.90%

**CLARIFICATION:
TRICARE Supplemental
Insurance**

We have received a number of calls regarding the TRICARE supplemental insurance option that was approved by the General Assembly this year. The option **ONLY** applies to active and retired state employees who also are retired from the U.S. Military with 20+ years of service. In order to be eligible for the state-paid TRICARE supplement, you must meet **all three** of the following conditions:

- 1.) Be less than 65 years old, **and**
- 2.) have 20 or more years of military services **and**
- 3.) opt out of the State Health Plan.

You can obtain additional information on the TRICARE supplemental insurance option by calling 1-800-638-2610.

NC 401(k) Plan News: Favorable Update for Bailey Vested Accounts

[Editor's Note: The September/October issue of Living Power included an article on a new Policy Directive recently issued by the N.C. Department of Revenue that affects the taxability of monies rolled over to a "Bailey Qualified" supplemental retirement plan. The following article provides additional information on the specifics of roll-overs to the State 401k Plan. This article was provided at our request by Tim Bryan, the 401k Plan Director.]

WHAT IS THE BAILEY SETTLEMENT?

Under the previous Bailey Settlement, certain state, local and federal governmental employees and retirees who were "vested" in a qualifying retirement system as of August 12, 1989 are not required to pay North Carolina income tax on their retirement benefits. The NC 401(k) Plan was identified by the Court as one of the qualifying retirement systems, and if you are Bailey vested, your entire balance in the NC 401(k) Plan is exempt from North Carolina income tax upon distribution.

Keep in mind, however, these two important points:

- If you are an eligible employee or retiree and roll over any of your tax-exempt NC 401(k) Plan assets into another retirement plan, the assets will lose their state tax-exempt status unless, and only if, the retirement plan into which the assets are rolled over is also a qualifying Bailey retirement account in which you were vested as of August 12, 1989.

- Rollovers to IRAs will **always** result

in a loss of the tax-exempt status since IRAs do not qualify under the Bailey settlement.

RECENT DIRECTIVE

In August 2004, the NC Department of Revenue modified its position regarding the taxability of distributions from a qualifying tax-exempt Bailey retirement account that contains rollover distributions from IRAs or other retirement accounts. The directive states that all distributions from a qualifying Bailey retirement account, like the NC 401(k), are exempt from State income taxes regardless of the source of the funds in the account.

For example, if you are a Bailey vested participant in the NC 401(k) Plan and roll monies over from an IRA or another eligible retirement plan into your NC 401(k) Plan account, all of your NC 401(k) Plan assets will be considered Bailey exempt upon distribution. As a result, you will not have to pay NC income tax on the entire amount.

LOOK FOR AN UPCOMING COMMUNICATION

If your NC 401(k) Plan is identified as Bailey vested, you will receive a personalized communication from the NC 401(k) Plan in late November notifying you of your unique exempt status. This communication will also provide important information about how your account is affected and ways that you might experience greater benefits from your unique status.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding the Bailey vested status of your NC 401(k) Plan account, call Prudential Retirement at 1-866-NC401K1 (1-866-624-0151).

Association Saddened by Death of Longtime Staff Member

Sandra Palmer Hontz, 63, died Thursday, October 21, 2004 after a long and courageous battle with cancer. She was a devoted wife, mother, daughter, grandmother and sister. She recently retired from the North Carolina Retired Governmental Employees Association after 25 years of service.

She was the daughter of Helen Palmer and the late Ronald Palmer of Raleigh. She was a devoted Christian member of Trinity United Methodist Church, where she attended her entire lifetime. Sandra is survived by her husband, Bob; her daughters, Julia St. Louis and husband, David of Raleigh, and Jennifer Hontz and husband, Jeff Schroeter of Cary; and three grandchildren, Madeline and Michael St. Louis of Raleigh, and Kristen Schroeter of Cary.

She adored her husband, Bob, often saying how lucky she was to have such a great man as her husband. The feeling was mutual I believe.

She also loved to talk about “her girls”. She was so proud of both of her daughters, Jennifer and Julia, and of their very impressive professional accomplishments. She believed in raising her girls to be strong women and she succeeded.

What she was most proud of, one might argue, would be her grandchildren. She used to say, back before they were born, that she wasn’t going to be one of those grandmothers who dropped everything to

babysit or run around talking about her grandchildren all the time. That idea went out the window with the birth of her first grandchild, Madeline, and continued with the birth of Michael and then Kristen. I am sure her one of main regrets at the time of her passing was not having more time to spend with and spoil the grandchildren.

Sandra also enjoyed playing bridge with her longtime bridge friends and tending to her many, many beautiful orchids.

She was a dedicated employee of NCRGEA. She was the Association’s historian, able to tell us the

“hows” and “whys” and “whens” of our past. She worked diligently, happily, answering our phones with a smile, never showing impatience or frustration. Her laugh could of-

ten be heard way down the hall.

Sandra was such a delight to work with every day. She always had a smile on her face and a twinkle in her eyes. She walked our hallways humming to herself and was one of those rare people who never seemed to have a bad day.

We will miss her dearly, as she was also, among so many other things, our friend.

- Tina McCormick

STEPS TO TAKE WHEN YOUR IDENTITY HAS BEEN STOLEN

1. File a report with your local police or the police in the community where the identity theft took place. Be sure to ask for a copy of the police report.

Example: You live in Raleigh and a

charge for ABC Company in Charlotte, NC, appears on your credit card statement. You did not make this charge. You will need to file a report with the Charlotte Police Department.

2. Contact the fraud departments of each of the three major credit bureaus.

- Flag your accounts with a fraud alert by phone and in writing.

- A credit report will be sent to you at no cost. Review

it carefully for accuracy.

- Notify each credit bureau of any discrepancies by phone and in writing.

- The credit bureaus will be required to call you before opening any new accounts or changing current accounts.

- Wait several months, then order a new credit report to verify that no new fraudulent activity has occurred and that disputed items have been removed.

3. Close any accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently.

- **Credit Accounts** (banks, credit cards & other lenders, cellular phone, utilities, etc.): Contact by phone and have a fraud alert placed on your account(s). Close existing account(s) and open new account(s) with new personal identification numbers (PINs) and passwords. Avoid using easily available information such as mother's maiden name, birth date, last four digits of SSN or phone number, or a series of consecutive numbers for your PIN. Inquire about forms for disputing fraudulent transactions and follow up in writing.

- **Bank Account(s):** Close existing account(s) and open new account(s) with password-only access. Inquire about state laws that protect you and ask your bank to notify appropriate check verification service. Stop payment on stolen or misused checks. Call SCAN (1-800-262-7771) to find out if the identity thief has been passing bad checks in your name. Contact check verification companies and ask that retailers who use their databases not accept your checks.

TeleCheck: 1-800-710-9898 or 927-0188

Certegy, Inc: 1-800-437-5120

International Check Services: 1-800-631-9656

- **ATM Card(s):** Report immediately and cancel your card. Get a new ATM card and account number with new password

Credit Bureaus

Equifax

PO Box 740241

Atlanta, GA 30374-0241

www.equifax.com

1-800-685-1111 (to order a credit report)

1-800-525-6283 (to report fraud)

Trans Union

Fraud Victim Assistance Division

PO Box 6790

Fullerton, CA 92834-6790

www.tuc.com

1-800-916-8800 (to order a credit report)

1-800-680-7289 (to report fraud)

Experian

PO Box 9532

Allen, TX 75013

www.experian.com

1-888-397-3742

and PIN.

- **Driver's License:** If you suspect that your name or SSN is being used to get a driver's license, report it to the NC Division of Motor Vehicles.

4. File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338), TDD 202-326-2502 or online complaint form at www.ftc.gov.

IDENTITY THEFT: STEPS TO TAKE WHEN YOUR IDENTITY HAS BEEN USED CRIMINALLY

WORTHLESS CHECK TYPE CHARGES

- Get a police report.
- In writing, contact the bank upon which the check is drawn to let them know that you may be a victim of Identity Theft. If it is an existing account that you use, contact your bank representative immediately to block future drafts and clear up any drafts that were not yours. If it is a new account in your name, you will need to contact the credit bureaus for a credit report and then contest this and other fraudulent accounts as well as place a fraud alert on your account.

- In writing, contact each known business that has received a worthless check in your name and provide them with a copy of the police report.

- Contact the Assistant District Attorney that is assigned to your worthless check charge to discuss how they wish for you to handle the matter.**

- You may have to submit to a signature

comparison.

- You may have to go to court and defend the charges.

- You may also want to seek private counsel for this problem.

- If you know or suspect the name or address of the actual thief, please provide that information to law enforcement and the Assistant District Attorney.

TRAFFIC TYPE CHARGES

For failure to appear in court:

- Contact the Assistant District Attorney in that county that is assigned to traffic court. Discuss with them how they would like to handle the matter.**

- Contact the charging officer to verify that you were not the person ticketed.

- You may have to attend court to defend the traffic ticket. The failure to appear charge should be dismissed once you show up for court.

- You may need to hire a private attorney for this matter.

- If you know or suspect the name of the actual thief, please provide that information to law enforcement and the Assistant District Attorney.

For guilty pleas:

- Contact the Assistant District Attorney in that county. Discuss with them how they would like to handle the matter.**

- You may be required to go to court to prove that you were not the person. Some courts require that you file a Motion to Set Aside Judgment or Motion for Appropriate Relief where the perpetrator has pled guilty.

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HHS Announces Medicare Premium, Deductibles for 2005

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today announced the Medicare premium, deductible and coinsurance amounts to be paid by Medicare beneficiaries in 2005. The new premiums, approximately the same as the actuarial forecast published in March for the Medicare Trustees Report, reflect general growth in health care costs, higher payments to physicians and Medicare Advantage coordinated care health plans under the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA), and building trust fund reserves.

Under the MMA, Medicare enrollees are benefiting from improved access to physician services, new preventive and health screening benefits, more Medicare Advantage plan choices, and better benefits and/or lower out-of-pocket costs in many Medicare Advantage plans.

The monthly premium paid by beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Part B, which covers physician services, outpatient hospital services, certain home health services, durable medical equipment and other items, will be \$78.20, an increase of \$11.60 over the \$66.60 premium in 2004.

“The new premiums reflect an enhanced Medicare that is providing seniors and people with disabilities with strengthened access to physician services and new preventive benefits, such as the new ‘Welcome to Medicare’ physical and screening exams, as well as improved Medicare Ad-

vantage plan choices that reduce beneficiaries’ health care costs,” said CMS Administrator Dr. Mark B. McClellan.

Medicare deductibles and premiums are updated annually in accordance with formulas set by law. By law, the federal government picks up about 75 percent of the cost of Part B benefits and the Part B premium covers the remaining 25 percent. About three-fourths of the 2005 increase is due to additional costs for Part B, and almost one-fourth for building reserves.

The principal contributing factor to the increased cost of Medicare Part B benefits, accounting for about four-fifths of the higher benefit costs, is higher payments in Medicare’s traditional plan. Most importantly, the recent Medicare law prevented physician payments from falling significantly. In 2005, payment rates for physicians will increase by 1.5 percent, preventing a 4.5 percent reduction that could have threatened access to high-quality physician services.

Another contributing factor to higher benefit costs is improvement in the Medicare Advantage program under the MMA. As a result, many beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Advantage health plans are expected to receive additional benefits including prescription drugs, more preventive care, and even dental and vision care, as well as lower copayments that enable them to reduce their out-of-pocket costs.

On average, the premium changes related to Medicare Advantage are more than offset by reductions in out-of-pocket payments for Medicare Advantage enroll-

ees. Prior to these benefit improvements, beneficiary out-of-pocket costs were already lower than in traditional Medicare. In 2003, beneficiaries without supplemental coverage from employers or Medicaid who enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans had average out-of-pocket payments that were approximately \$700 lower.

A third factor is increasing the reserves held in the Part B account of the Medicare Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund toward a more adequate level. The Medicare law requires adjustments in contributions from general revenues and premium payments in order to maintain financial balance in the Part B account.

Two other MMA changes will help lower beneficiaries' out-of-pocket costs. The new Medicare law provides additional savings for Medicare beneficiaries by paying more appropriately for Medicare covered drugs and the administration of those covered drugs. Second, the new preventive benefits in Medicare will help beneficiaries cover the cost of screening tests for heart disease and diabetes, and will provide a "Welcome to Medicare" exam (including coverage for associated services) for beneficiaries entering the program.

The Part B premium increase may not exceed any beneficiary's cost of living adjustment in their Social Security check. For the great majority of beneficiaries, the Social Security cost of living increase is likely to be significantly greater than the premium change.

About 93% of Medicare's 41.8 million beneficiaries are enrolled in Part B, which

helps pay for physician services, hospital outpatient care, durable medical equipment and other services, including some home health care. These beneficiaries generally pay the monthly premium, or have it paid on their behalf by Medicaid (including Medicare Savings Program) if they have limited incomes. Medicaid currently pays some or all of the Part B premium for about 6.3 million Medicare beneficiaries. Many beneficiaries with retiree coverage and some beneficiaries in Medicare Advantage plans also have some or all of these premiums paid on their behalf.

For Medicare Part A, which pays for inpatient hospital, skilled nursing facility, and some home health care, the deductible paid by the beneficiary when admitted as a hospital inpatient will be \$912 in 2005, an increase of \$36 from this year's \$876 deductible. The Part A deductible is the beneficiary's only cost for up to 60 days of Medicare-covered inpatient hospital care in a benefit period. Beneficiaries must pay an additional \$228 per day for days 61 through 90 in 2005, and \$456 per day for hospital stays beyond the 90th day in a benefit period. For 2004, per day payment for days 61 through 90 was \$219, and \$438 for beyond 90 days.

For beneficiaries in skilled nursing facilities, the daily co-insurance for days 21-100 in a benefit period will be \$114 in 2005, compared to \$109.50 in 2004. Those who enroll in Medicare Advantage plans may not be affected by the Part A increase, and may receive additional benefits

(Continued on next page)

HHS Announces Medicare Premium, Deductibles for 2005

(Continued from page 9)

with different cost-sharing arrangements. All of these Part A payment changes are determined by a statutory formula.

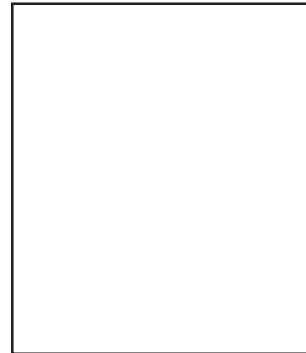
About 99 percent of Medicare beneficiaries do not pay a premium for Part A services since they have at least 40 quarters of Medicare-covered employment. However, other seniors and certain persons under age 65 with disabilities who have fewer than 30 quarters of coverage may obtain Part A coverage by paying a monthly premium set according to a statutory formula. This premium will be \$375 for 2005, an increase of \$32 from 2004. In addition, seniors with 30 to 39 quarters of coverage, and certain disabled persons with 30 or more quarters of coverage, pay a reduced premium of \$206.

Section 629 of the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 requires raising the Part B deductible in 2005 and indexing it thereafter. In 2005, the Part B deductible will be \$110. Beginning January 1, 2006, the deductible will be indexed to the increase in the average cost of Part B services for aged beneficiaries.

As noted above, states have programs that pay some or all of beneficiaries' premiums and coinsurance for certain people who have Medicare and a limited income. Information is available at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) and, for hearing and speech impaired, at TTY/TDD: 1-877-486-2048.

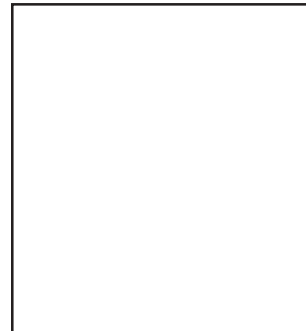
NCRGEA Board of Directors

In our September-October issue of *Living Power*, we included photos of our current NCRGEA Board of Directors. Three of our Board member's photos were available at press time but are now included.



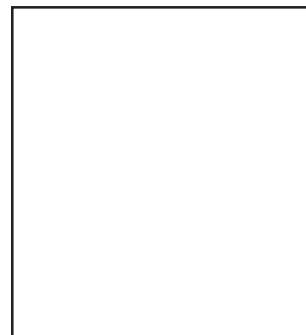
Raleigh, NC
District 8
Elected to Board
in 2001
Retired as Chief
of the Raleigh Police Department

Mitchell W. Brown



Butner, NC
District 4
Elected to Board
in 2002
Retired from
HR Office of John
Umstead Hospital

Virginia A. Moore



Manteo, NC
District 5
Elected to Board
in 2002
Retired from
Elizabeth City-
Pasquotank
School Systems

Marjalene M. Thomas

**STEPS TO TAKE WHEN YOUR
IDENTITY HAS BEEN USED
CRIMINALLY** *(Continued from page 7)*

- It is recommended that you consult a private attorney.

- If you know or suspect the name of the actual thief, please provide that information to law enforcement and the Assistant District Attorney.

OTHER CRIMINAL CHARGES

- Contact the Charging Officer. You will need to verify that you were not the person charged. If you live near by, meet with the officer; if not, you may have to get your local law enforcement agency to take your picture and fingerprints and mail them to the charging officer or Assistant District Attorney.**

- The Officer or the Assistant District Attorney, depending upon the county, should investigate the matter and let you know if the charges or conviction will be dismissed. They may request additional certified documents.

- If the Officer or Assistant District Attorney is not willing to drop the charges, you may have to go to court and defend the charge or have a guilty charge set aside.

- It is recommended that you consult a private attorney.

- If you know or suspect the name of the actual thief, please provide that information to law enforcement and the Assistant District Attorney.

EXPUNGEMENT

- Simply put, as an identity theft victim whose charges were dismissed or you

were found not guilty or the conviction was set aside, you may apply for an expungement of those charges or convictions.

- N.C. Gen. Stat. § **15A-147(a)** (2003) states “If any person is named in a charge for an infraction or a crime, either a misdemeanor or a felony, as a result of another person using the identifying information of the named person to commit an infraction or crime and the charge against the named person is dismissed, a finding of not guilty is entered, or the conviction is set aside, the named person may apply by petition or written motion to the court where the charge was last pending on a form approved by the Administrative Office of the Courts supplied by the clerk of court for an order to expunge from all official records any entries relating to the person’s apprehension, charge, or trial.

The court, after notice to the district attorney, shall hold a hearing on the motion or petition and, upon finding that the person’s identity was used without permission and the charges were dismissed or the person was found not guilty, the court shall order the expunction.”

- The Petition and Order of Expunction/Identity Fraud Form can be acquired from the website of the Administrative Office of the Courts at www.nccourts.org/Forms/Documents/733.pdf.

*** Generally, District Attorneys cannot dismiss the charge based on a telephone call without the officer requesting a dismissal or proof in the form of reliable documents.*



North Carolina

**Retired
Governmental
Employees'**
Association

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
RALEIGH, NC
PERMIT #2223

PO Box 10561

Raleigh, North Carolina 27605-0561

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

State Chooses Prudential for Long Term Care Insurance

The State Health Plan has announced that beginning January 1, 2005, a new group long term care insurance program will be available through **The Prudential Insurance Company of America**.

The contract with MedAmerica Insurance Company expires December 31, 2004. As a result of this change, coverage for current MedAmerica enrollees under this group long term care insurance certificate will end December 31, 2004. Coverage will be replaced by an individual policy, customized for each enrollee's current benefit under the MedAmerica group product. Under the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) guidelines, current MedAmerica program enrollees are entitled to convert their group plan to a new Individual policy as a direct payment subscriber. Current MedAmerica certificate holders will be able to take advantage of this individual plan at their initial issue age, that is, *the age at which they first purchased their group plan*. In the near future, MedAmerica will be providing all current enrollees with information about their individual policy. If you have questions with regard to this conversion from group to individual plans, please call MedAmerica at 1-800-943-1549.

On another note, there has been some confusion as to which plan is the new State authorized plan. The **ONLY** plan that has been authorized for 2005 by the North Carolina General Assembly and the North Carolina State Health Plan is with the Prudential Insurance Company of America. Be very careful in reviewing the information that you receive in the mail as another insurance agency has recently sent marketing materials insinuating that they are the state-approved plan. **THIS IS NOT TRUE.**

Prudential will begin mailings to retirees in the upcoming months. For more information or to obtain an enrollment kit, please call 1-800-284-9648 Monday through Friday from 8am to 9m ET, or Saturday from 8 am to 2 pm ET.