



Florida Sheriffs Association Position on Changes to FRS for Special Risk Members

The Florida Sheriffs Association supports the proposed change to the Florida Retirement System (FRS), which will return the length of service to 25 years and the retirement age to 55 years for Special Risk Class employees. Members enrolled in the FRS after July 1, 2011 should also be retroactively included.

Why?

- New data demonstrates that the life span of special Risk Class members (including law enforcement and corrections officers) is *nearly 12 years shorter* than the general population.
- Service in Florida is especially risky: the state is ranked fourth in the nation for line-of-duty deaths of law enforcement officers.

Background

Last year, the Legislature significantly changed the FRS in an attempt to make public sector employees' retirement similar to that of the private sector, including employee contributions and changes to the retirement age. These changes resulted in savings for the state and local governments. However, the changes to increase the retirement age and length of service by five years did not take into consideration the unique circumstances of the 70,000 law-enforcement and corrections officers in our state.

Being a Florida law enforcement officer is more than just a job; it's a 24-hour a day, seven day a week, 365 days a year commitment to a lifestyle that lasts a lifetime in a state that is ranked fourth nationally in line-of-duty deaths of law enforcement officers. Recent data reveals that the life span of Special Risk Class members is significantly lower compared to the general population. Sadly, the average age at death for Law Enforcement and Corrections Officers is 62.4 years. This is nearly 12 years *shorter* than the general population of Floridians, whose average age of death is 74.2 years.

Florida's Law Enforcement and Correctional Officers put their lives on the line for public safety every day. Their **shortened lifespan is proof** of the stress experienced from serving in this profession, as compared to the average Floridian. Therefore their Special Risk Class should be given consideration when setting the retirement age and length of service.

Based on the reduced life span data and factors unique to their jobs, the Florida Sheriffs Association supports changes to the FRS that **return** retirement age to 55 years and length of service to 25 years for Special Risk Members.

