

1-1 By: Pickett, et al. (Senate Sponsor - Lucio) H.B. No. 155
1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House May 1, 2007;
1-3 May 2, 2007, read first time and referred to Committee on State
1-4 Affairs; May 15, 2007, reported favorably by the following vote:
1-5 Yeas 8, Nays 0; May 15, 2007, sent to printer.)

1-6 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-7 AN ACT

1-8 relating to correcting errors in the distribution of benefits by a
1-9 public retirement system.

1-10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-11 SECTION 1. Section 802.1024, Government Code, is amended by
1-12 amending Subsections (a) and (b) and adding Subsections (a-1) and
1-13 (a-2) to read as follows:

1-14 (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), if an error in the
1-15 records of a public retirement system results in a person receiving
1-16 more or less money than the person is entitled to receive under this
1-17 subtitle, the ~~[governing body of the]~~ retirement system shall
1-18 correct the error and so far as practicable adjust any future
1-19 payments so that the actuarial equivalent of the benefit to which
1-20 the person is entitled is paid. If no future payments are due, the
1-21 ~~[governing body of the]~~ retirement system may recover the
1-22 overpayment in any manner that would be permitted for the
1-23 collection of any other debt.

1-24 (a-1) On discovery of an error described by Subsection (a),
1-25 the public retirement system shall as soon as practicable, but not
1-26 later than the 90th day after the date of discovery, give written
1-27 notice of the error to the person receiving an incorrect amount of
1-28 money. The notice must include:

1-29 (1) the amount of the correction in overpayment or
1-30 underpayment;

1-31 (2) how the amount of the correction was calculated;

1-32 (3) a brief explanation of the reason for the
1-33 correction;

1-34 (4) a statement that the notice recipient may file a
1-35 written complaint with the retirement system if the recipient does
1-36 not agree with the correction;

1-37 (5) instructions for filing a written complaint; and

1-38 (6) a payment plan option if no future payments are
1-39 due.

1-40 (a-2) Except as provided by this subsection and Section
1-41 802.1025, the public retirement system shall begin to adjust future
1-42 payments or, if no future payments are due, institute recovery of an
1-43 overpayment of benefits under Subsection (a) not later than the
1-44 90th day after the date the notice required by Subsection (a-1) is
1-45 delivered by certified mail, return receipt requested. If the
1-46 system does not receive a signed receipt evidencing delivery of the
1-47 notice on or before the 30th day after the date the notice is
1-48 mailed, the system shall mail the notice a second time by certified
1-49 mail, return receipt requested. Except as provided by Section
1-50 802.1025, not later than the 90th day after the date the second
1-51 notice is mailed, the system shall begin to adjust future payments
1-52 or, if no future payments are due, institute recovery of an
1-53 overpayment of benefits.

1-54 (b) Except as provided by Subsection (c), a public
1-55 retirement system:

1-56 (1) may correct the overpayment of benefits to a
1-57 person entitled to receive payments from the system by the method
1-58 described by Subsection (a) only for an overpayment made during the
1-59 three years preceding the date the ~~[governing body of the]~~ system
1-60 discovers or discovered the overpayment; ~~[and]~~

1-61 (2) may not recover from the recipient any overpayment
1-62 made more than three years before the discovery of the overpayment;
1-63 and

1-64 (3) may not recover an overpayment if the system did

not adjust future payments or, if no future payments are due, institute recovery of the overpayment within the time prescribed by Subsection (a-2) or Section 802.1025.

SECTION 2. Subchapter B, Chapter 802, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 802.1025 to read as follows:

Sec. 802.1025. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE. (a) Not later than the 20th day after the date of receiving notice under Section 802.1024(a-1) or, if applicable, the second notice under Section 802.1024(a-2), the notice recipient may file a written complaint with the retirement system. The recipient shall include any available supporting documentation with the complaint.

(b) Not later than the 30th day after the date of receiving a complaint under Subsection (a), the retirement system shall respond in writing to the complaint by confirming the amount of the proposed correction or, if the retirement system determines the amount of the proposed correction is incorrect, by modifying the amount of the correction. If the retirement system modifies the amount of the correction, the response must include:

- (1) how the modified correction was calculated;
- (2) a brief explanation of the reason for the modification; and
- (3) a payment plan option if no future payments are due.

(c) Subject to Subsection (d), if a complaint is filed under this section, the retirement system may not adjust future payments or recover an overpayment under Section 802.1024 until:

(1) the 20th day after the date the notice recipient receives the response under Subsection (b), if the recipient does not file an administrative appeal by that date; or

(2) the date a final decision by the retirement system is issued, if the recipient files an administrative appeal before the date described by Subdivision (1).

(d) If the retirement system has begun the adjustment of future payments or the recovery of an overpayment under Section 802.1024(a-2), the system shall discontinue the adjustment of future payments or the recovery of the overpayment beginning with the first pay cycle occurring after the date the complaint is received by the system. The system may not recommence the adjustment of future payments or the recovery of an overpayment until the date described by Subsection (c)(1) or (2), as applicable. If a complaint is resolved in favor of the person filing the complaint, not later than the 30th day after the date of the resolution, the system shall pay the person the appropriate amount.

(e) A person whose complaint is not resolved under this section must exhaust all administrative procedures provided by the retirement system. Not later than the 30th day after the date a final administrative decision is issued by the retirement system, a person aggrieved by the decision may appeal the decision to an appropriate district court.

SECTION 3. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) of this section, the change in law made by this Act applies to an underpayment or overpayment of benefits by a public retirement system regardless of whether the underpayment or overpayment was made before, on, or after the effective date of this Act.

(b) The change in law made by this Act does not apply to a correction, adjustment, or recovery of an overpayment that commenced before the effective date of this Act or an overpayment that was resolved by an agreement made before the effective date of this Act between a public retirement system and the recipient of the overpayment. A correction, adjustment, or recovery of an overpayment that commenced before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law as it existed immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this

3-1 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

3-2 * * * * *