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Happy holidays from the Pension Rights Center!

Here's a brief review of our activities in 2017:

Saving retiree pensions

We have long advocated for solutions to overturn the damage caused by the Multiemployer Pension Reform Act (MPRA), an ill-conceived law passed in 2014 that authorized cuts to retirees' pensions as a way of saving certain underfunded multiemployer plans. After years of advocacy and working with an army of tens of thousands of retirees across the nation we are [closer than ever to achieving our goal](#).

On November 16, Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Congress Richard Neal (D-MA) [introduced comprehensive legislation](#) to address the multiemployer pension crisis. The "Butch Lewis Act of 2017" and its House companion bill, "The Rehabilitation of Multiemployer Pensions Act" provide an innovative way to avoid reductions in retiree pensions by providing relief to financially-troubled pension plans. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi have publicly stated that passing a multiemployer fix – without cuts – is a top priority.

While nothing is certain we are optimistic that a solution will pass soon!

For more information on this issue, [click here to read our multiemployer resources page](#) .

Celebrating Retirement Security Superheroes

Last month, the Pension Rights Center [celebrated our 41st anniversary at our 2017 Retirement Security Superhero event](#) and it was a glorious time for all! We honored as our Superheroes *Washington Post* financial columnist [Michelle Singletary](#) and [retiree activists](#) from across the country who are fighting to save multiemployer plans and protect retirees' pension promises. Karen Friedman, the Center's Executive Vice President, called the activists "some of the most inspirational people we've ever met... They represent democracy-in-action." We had 54 sponsors including our Super Sustainers, AARP, Cohen Milstein, Sellers &Toll PLLC and National Nurses United. [Click here for pictures!](#)

Providing day-to-day legal help

We continued our everyday work of providing legal assistance and training to six federally-funded regional pension counseling and information projects that provide hands-on help to thousands of individuals each year. In addition, Referrals Manager Kyle Garrett and other PRC staff fielded more than 1,600 calls from participants with pension and retirement savings plan problems in 49 states (plus D.C. and Puerto Rico). We made referrals to the [counseling projects](#), attorneys participating in our [National Pension](#)

[Lawyers Network](#), and government agencies. Also, we provided advice to non-pension lawyers and presented an in-depth legal webinar attended by nearly 400 attorneys and experts working in the aging services field.

When people call from states not covered by a pension counseling project, we also provide direct assistance where we can. Our most recent success story, thanks to our Staff Attorney Karen Racowsky, was the recovery for a retired school teacher of \$17,000 in unpaid employer contributions to her retirement plan plus \$7,000 in interest. This made a big difference in her life.

Seeking common ground

The Center's Legal Program is leading an innovative initiative to ensure that retirees are treated fairly when their pension plans miscalculate their retirement benefits, pay them too much money, and then contact the retiree years later to demand the overpayments back plus interest, an action known as [recoupment](#). In these cases retirees typically had no way of knowing they were being overpaid. Nonetheless, plans often threaten a lawsuit or even (a new phenomenon) referral to a debt collection agency. We and the counseling projects continually hear from elderly retirees who call us in a panic after receiving one of these communications. They are terrified that they will lose their houses or have to file for bankruptcy to make the repayments. Our recoupment initiative, led by Legal Program Director Emily Spreiser, PRC Director Karen Ferguson, and Senior Policy Advisor Norman Stein, is bringing together attorneys who represent plans and those who represent retirees to search for common ground on new rules to address this critically important problem.

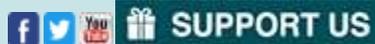
Getting out the facts

Also this year, we published facts sheets and blogs posts on the importance of pensions. One shows that despite the popular reports of doom and gloom, [two-fifths of workers participating in retirement plans are in pension plans](#). And today, we published new fact sheets explaining how retirement [tax expenditures](#) work. In addition, Karen Friedman [gave speeches](#) across the country to retirees and nurses, and she and Emily Spreiser recently made a presentation to a conference organized by the Alliance for Retired Americans and the State University of New York.

And, as always, PRC was quoted throughout the year in newspapers and magazines: <http://www.pensionrights.org/newsroom/in-the-news>

[We hope you will consider making a year-end, tax-deductible contribution to support our activities in the coming year](#)

Connect with Us



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