

RETIREMENT SYSTEM ANNUITY OPTIONS

Phone: (517) 373-8080
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House Bill 4733 as reported from committee
Sponsor: Rep. Terry Sabo

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

House Bill 4734 as reported from committee
Sponsor: Rep. Steve Marino

Committee: Appropriations
Complete to 5-20-21

SUMMARY:

House Bills 4733 and 4734 would respectively amend the State Employees' Retirement Act and the Public School Employees Retirement Act to provide annuity options for employees and retirees in the defined contribution (DC, 401(k)-style) retirement plans provided through either the State Employees Retirement System (SERS) or the Michigan Public School Employees' Retirement System (MPERS).

House Bill 4733 would require SERS to offer DC participants access to at least one fixed annuity option and at least one variable annuity option provided by an annuity provider selected as described below, in addition to currently offered investment options. The options would *have to* allow a DC participant, while employed, to purchase a fixed rate annuity and an annuity with a guaranteed lifetime income option and *could* allow a DC participant, while employed, to purchase a variable rate annuity.

House Bill 4734 would revise the requirements related to annuity options that were added to the Public School Employees Retirement Act by 2017 PA 92. The bill would require that the annuity options allow DC participants, while they are employed, to purchase an annuity provided by an annuity provider selected as described below. The options would *have to* allow a DC participant, while employed, to purchase a fixed rate annuity and an annuity with a guaranteed lifetime option and *could* allow a DC participant, while employed, to purchase a variable rate annuity.

Selection of annuity providers (both bills)

Each bill would require the State of Michigan Investment Board¹ to select two or more annuity providers through a competitive proposal process and to contract with two or more annuity providers to provide the annuity options. The investment board would have to select and contract with an annuity provider that meets all of the following:

- The provider and its subsidiaries and affiliates have the appropriate financial strength and stability. To determine this, the investment board would obtain written representation from the provider of all of the following:
 - That the provider is an insurer duly authorized to transact insurance in this state.

¹ The State of Michigan Investment Board was created within the Department of Treasury under ERO 2018-5:
<http://legislature.mi.gov/documents/2017-2018/executiveorder/pdf/2018-EO-10.pdf>

- That all of the following apply to the provider for each of the immediately preceding seven years:
 - The provider has a current certificate of authority from its home state insurance commissioner.
 - The provider has filed audited financial statements in accordance with its home state laws under applicable statutory accounting principles.
 - The provider maintains statutorily required reserves in each state where it operates.
 - The provider is not operating under an order of supervision, rehabilitation, or liquidation.
- That the provider undergoes a financial examination every five years as required by the insurance commissioner and under the law in its home state.
- That the provider will notify the retirement system of any change in circumstances regarding the above requirements.
- That the provider meets at least two of the following:
 - Has a claims-paying ability rating of at least “A2” insurer financial strength rating from Moody’s rating services.
 - Has a claims-paying ability rating of at least “A” insurer financial strength rating from Standard & Poor’s rating services.
 - Has a claims-paying ability rating of at least “A” insurer financial strength rating from Fitch rating services.
 - Has a claims-paying ability rating of at least “A” insurer financial strength rating from AM Best rating services.
- The provider is able to provide contracted rights and benefits to a DC participant.
- The costs, including fees and commissions, of the annuity options in relation to the benefits and product features are reasonable.
- The administrative services provided under the annuity option are appropriate, which would have to include at least periodic reports to the investment board about the number of annuitants, the types of annuities provided, and any other information the investment board requires.
- The provider is experienced in paying lifetime retirement income through annuities offered to public employee DC retirement plans.
- The provider offers annuity options that meet all of the following conditions:
 - The annuity options are suitable for DC participants, whether employed, retired, or beneficiaries.
 - The contract terms and income benefits are clearly stated and based on reasonable assumptions.
 - The annuity options offer a range of lifetime income options.
 - For a variable annuity, the annuity offers a fixed account option along with its variable account options.
- The provider is able to offer objective and participant-specific education and tools that help participants understand appropriate use as a long-term retirement savings vehicle.

The bills would require the Office of Retirement Services (ORS) in the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget to verify the information in the required provider report and publish the report on its website.

If, after the competitive process, the investment board determines that selecting more than one provider would not be in the interest of the participants or that only one provider meets the conditions described above, the investment board could select and contract with only one annuity provider. In this case, the investment board would have to notify the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House and the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders as to the reasons for selecting only one provider within 30 days after selecting and contracting with an annuity provider.

If, after the competitive process, the investment board determines that no annuity provider meets the conditions described above, the investment board would not select an annuity provider. The ORS would have to issue a new competitive proposal process, as described above, within 60 days after the investment board's determination.

Each bill would take effect 120 days after being enacted. The bills are tie-barred to one another, which means that neither bill could take effect unless both bills were enacted.

MCL 38.58 (HB 4733)

MCL 38.1427 (HB 4734)

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bills would create additional administrative and oversight responsibilities for the Department of Treasury and ORS, which independently would likely be absorbed within current staffing levels, but along with other added responsibilities could require additional staff. Any funds required to accommodate costs that exceeded current appropriation levels would need to be appropriated by the legislature.

The bills would have no fiscal impact on the retirement systems themselves.

POSITIONS:

Representatives of the following entities testified in support of the bills (5-12-21):

- Reason Foundation
- Michigan Corrections Organization

The Life Insurance Association of Michigan indicated support for the bills. (5-12-21)

SEIU 517 indicated support for House Bill 4733. (5-12-21)

Representatives of the Department of Treasury testified in opposition to the bills. (5-19-21)

Legislative Analyst: Rick Yuille

Fiscal Analyst: Ben Gielczyk

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.