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January
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A Quarterly Publication of the Retired Peace Officers Association of California



Bi-Annual Members Meeting >>>

Our Bi-Annual meeting is scheduled to be held in April or May but the final date has not yet been determined.

Check the RPOAC.ORG website for details as they become available.

All members are invited to attend the meeting.

We hope to see you there!

President's Message *by Alex Bernard* **A Look at 2023**



2023 had legislation that affected retired peace officers. I will focus in on two bills that in my opinion, will have the greatest effect on retirees. H.R. 82/S. 597, the Social Security Fairness Act, will affect government retirees who are eligible to receive Social Security. It will eliminate the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset (WEP/GPO) provisions of the Social Security Act should it pass. The other bill is SB 2, the CCW bill. This bill limits where persons who have a CCW can carry their concealed weapons in the State of California. This is an attempt by Governor and Legislature to go around the Bruen Decision and the 2nd Amendment to deny citizens the right to carry their weapons. It will probably be found to be unconstitutional.

H.R. 82/S. 597, the Social Security Fairness Act, is a remedy to WEP/GPO provisions of the Social Security Act. These provisions penalize public employees who receive a government pension. They only receive a portion of the Social Security payments they are entitled because of these provisions. It is unfair because the affected employee has paid the Social

Security taxes to get the benefit and they should receive their full benefit. This bill is currently working its way through Congress. It has gone further in the process than any time in the past. The Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) is working very hard to get this legislation passed. FOP President Patrick Yoes has testified in Congress in support of this bill. We will keep you informed on the progress of this bill.

SB 2, the CCW bill is an end run by the Governor and the Legislature to limit where you can carry your weapon in public. It is in violation of the Bruen Decision and the 2nd Amendment. Though the bill limits where you carry a concealed weapon, there are two exceptions for retired peace officers with a CCW. You can carry in a public transit facility and a school zone. This bill is being challenged by a number of gun groups including the California Rifle and Pistol Association. I personally think SB 2 is unconstitutional and will be rescinded.

At this writing, the Department of Justice is issuing emergency regulations relating to SB 2 as to who can teach a CCW training course. In

Continued on next page

Important Dates in 2024

[Law Enforcement Day](#)..... Jan. 9

[Police Unity Tour](#) May 8-14

[Police Week](#)..... May 12-18

[Peace Officer Memorial Day](#) .. May 15

Real ID Act Enforcement Date is Now May 7, 2025

If you haven't already received your "Real" driver's license or ID, you have until May 7, 2025 before DHS will begin enforcing it's requirements.

What is a "REAL" ID?

The federal REAL ID Act places new rules on which forms of identification may be used to board flights within the United States and enter secure federal facilities, such as military bases, federal courthouses, and other federal facilities. A California issued REAL ID driver's license or identification card meets these new requirements and is marked with a golden bear and star.

Passed by Congress in 2005 following a 9/11 Commission recommendation, the REAL ID Act



establishes minimum security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards. Security standards include incorporating anti-counterfeiting technology, preventing insider fraud, and using documentary evidence and record checks to ensure a person is who they claim to be. Under the new regulations, beginning May 7, 2025, every traveler 18 years of age or older will need a REAL ID-compliant driver's license or identification card, state-issued enhanced driver's license, or another TSA-acceptable form of identification at airport security checkpoints for domestic air travel.

President's Message (cont. from pg. 1)

short, it is being proposed to exclude NRA instructors from teaching the course. It would appear that the DOJ is trying to make it more difficult for people to get the training they need to get a CCW. These regulations are in its comment period, so there may be a period of time before the regulations are legally challenged. This also appears to be an attack on the NRA. I hate to tell the Governor and the Legislature that the NRA trains more police and citizens in the use of firearms than any other group. We will have to see how this issue plays out.

In 2024 these issues may be resolved. I am hoping that the Social Security Act will pass Congress and the President will sign the bill. As far as SB 2 goes, I hope it is found unconstitutional by the courts. I have a hunch; it may end up in the U.S. Supreme Court.

Stay safe out there.
Alex Bernard, RPOAC President



President's Annual Report by Alex Bernard

Inflation hit RPOAC hard in 2023. It was getting difficult to meet our financial obligations. We hadn't had dues increase in over eight years. I called a special Board of Directors meeting to find a solution to the problem. After much discussion, the Board voted to increase the dues. We really don't like increasing the dues because of the impact it may have on our members. But we felt we had no choice. We have a fiduciary responsibility to keep the organization financially sound, and we will meet that responsibility. I hope you see the need for the dues increase. I know that inflation has had an effect on the membership. I thank you for your understanding.

RPOAC continues to reach out to potential members through links on various websites. We are also working with other organizations to promote recruitment for RPOAC. We are utilizing social media to help with recruitment. We have a social media expert to help us with our social media use. Even in these difficult times, we are still recruiting new members. I would like to encourage the membership to help us recruit new members by telling retirees about the benefits of belonging to RPOAC. There is strength in numbers.

Benefits for members have always been a focus for RPOAC. In the past few years, many different insurance programs and other programs have been added for our members. CCW Safe is a legal defense plan

to protect members in self-defense incidents. It not only protects in firearms use incidents; it would cover you if you used some other kind of force to protect yourself. It comes with up to \$1,000,000 bail bond coverage. It is a program I would encourage you to look into. We are constantly exploring what new benefits we can make available to our members. A number of additional programs are on the horizon for the near future. Some of the insurance programs we currently have include group dental insurance, group vision insurance, group AD&D, term life insurance, long term care insurance, and supplemental insurance programs. For more information on these programs, go to <http://www.rpoac.org>.

As you know, RPOAC publishes the RPOAC Newsletter. It is an e-newsletter that is published quarterly. It will be sent to the email address we have on record for you. Please make sure RPOAC has your correct email address. It will contain information on what RPOAC is doing, pension news, available insurance products, and etc. RPOAC wants to pass on information that is important to the membership.

Let's all work together to move RPOAC forward in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,
Alex Bernard

2023 Executive Director's Annual Report

by Dennis Wright



Recruitment Challenges Continue

Recruitment is still the most challenging aspect of our continued quest to remain a viable organization. Our credit card payment program has been a great success again this year.

I know that some of you have been actively recruiting new members. Having said that, we still will always need to be very active in the recruitment area. So keep up the good work! With that said it was necessary to increase dues for 2024 as we have not had an increase in 8 years. I have also taken steps to reduce our monthly phone bill from \$200 to \$300 monthly to \$55.00...big savings!



Our insurance programs are going strong with more members taking advantage of the excellent programs available through Pacific Financial Designs. Our newest program, CCW SAFE is very desirable and appears to be still drawing membership. Check it out on our web site. Remember, the brotherhood is alive!

So, until the next meeting, stay well and enjoy your retirement.

Fraternally,

Dennis Wright
Executive Director RPOAC



Social Security COLA's for the past ten years:

- 2014 – 1.5%
- 2015 – 1.7%
- 2016 – 0.0%
- 2017 – 0.3%
- 2018 – 2.0%
- 2019 – 2.8%
- 2020 – 1.6%
- 2021 – 1.3%
- 2022 – 5.9%
- 2023 – 8.7%

CCW Safe...

Now More Than Ever!

With the increase of lawlessness in our nation and the lack of judicial enforcement, crime and criminals are on the rise. The likelihood of you encountering criminal activity or, God forbid being the target of it, is growing. If you still carry, you need to be covered! Start the new year off right. Sign up for our CCW Safe program before you need to act!

Hear In America was founded by hearing instrument dispensers in 1995 to help people get the best possible combination of hearing technology, price, and service. The response has been tremendous, and Hear In America now represents millions of members, and facilitates thousands of hearing aid purchases every year.

Currently serving more than 10 million members nationwide, **Hear In America** brings quality hearing care services to professional groups. We provide hearing benefit solutions to Associations, Employer Groups, and Insurance Carriers with the highest level of care. We are a leader in providing quality customer service, starting with the member's registration call.

To find out more about this, or any of our other benefits, contact our Benefits Manager Shane Cobb at (800) 733-4487 or by email at shane@thepfdgroup.com

Benefits
Spotlight



Life can get busy, but don't forget to keep RPOAC updated with your current information. If you have moved, changed your phone or email, let us know.

[Click here to update your info](#)



The Director's Chair



Randall Blayney
L.A. Chapter Director

California continues to enact legislation that could jeopardize the quality and reputation of professional law enforcement agencies and the safety of its citizens throughout the state.

In 2022, SB960 (Public employment: peace officers: citizenship) was placed into law removing the requirement to be a U.S. citizen from the hiring of peace officers in California. It now requires that the applicant only be “legally authorized to work in the United States under federal law.”

In October of 2023 Governor Newsom signed into law SB-700 which prohibits an employer from questioning or considering an applicant’s use of cannabis in their personal life. In December of 2023 POST issued a notice (see attached) that they were revising several of their forms to remove inquiries about a candidates prior cannabis use.

It is well known that law enforcement agencies across the country are dealing with staffing shortages due to early retirements and a lack of interest in a law enforcement career. The “Defund” movement and an unsubstantiated claim of systemic racism running rampant throughout most agencies have been major causes prohibiting those

California, Home of Peace Officers Sub-Standards & Training

agencies form finding qualified candidates.

The relatively few voices screaming for the defunding, disbanding and dissolving of law enforcement departments has taken a huge toll on the ability of those departments to fill their vacancies. It is only after these types of policies are enacted by short-sighted government officials that they realize; *Oh, wait a minute, crime seems to be increasing! Maybe we should “refund” instead of “defund” the police!*

It’s time for this state to get into the business of protecting its citizens. From politicians who pass laws incentivizing criminal activities, to prosecutors who won’t file charges against criminals, to the lowering of hiring standards for police officers, we are headed in the wrong direction! Our elected officials bow down to the angry mob, proving they are more concerned about **keeping** their jobs than they are about **doing** their jobs, and the welfare of the people they are supposedly serving is suffering for it.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
ROB BONTA, Attorney General



Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training
860 Stillwater Road
West Sacramento, CA 95605-1603
www.post.ca.gov

Date: December 7, 2023

Bulletin: No. 2023-67

Subject: Legislative Changes Effecting Selection Standards – Cannabis Use

In October 2023, Governor Newsom signed [Senate Bill \(SB\) 700](#) (2023) into law, amending [Government Code \(GC\) section 12954](#), which prohibits discrimination against a person in hiring, termination, or term or condition of employment, or otherwise penalizing the person for their use of cannabis off the job and away from their workplace. It specifically makes it unlawful for an employer to request information from an applicant relating to their prior use of cannabis. SB 700 does not, however, affect an employer’s ability to obtain and consider an applicant’s criminal conviction history pursuant to [GC § 12952](#) or other state or federal law. In general, the provisions of GC § 12952 apply to applicants seeking employment with criminal justice agencies, as defined by Penal Code section 13101, or for a position with a state or local agency for which the agency is required by law to conduct a conviction history background check.

To meet the provisions of GC § 12954, the [POST Personal History Statement – Peace Officer \(2-251\)](#) and [Personal History Statement – Public Safety Dispatcher \(2-255\)](#) forms have been modified to remove inquiries about a candidate’s prior cannabis use. Specifically, questions 80- 83 (pp. 28 and 29, POST form 2-251) and questions 79-82 (pp. 20 and 21, POST form 2-255) have been modified. General inquiries about an applicant’s prior criminal history will remain unchanged. The revised forms are available on the [POST Website](#).

Other provisions of GC § 12954, which was initially added to the Government Code by [Assembly Bill 2188](#) (2022), pertain to drug screening tests. The Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training does not require drug testing nor provide guidance in establishing drug use policies. Hiring agencies will need to determine how to adjust their drug testing and/or policies to meet this new law.

This law becomes effective January 1, 2024.

Questions regarding this bulletin may be directed to [Melani Singley](#), Selection Standards Program Manager with the Strategic Communication Bureau, at [\(916\) 227-4258](tel:9162274258).

MANUEL ALVAREZ, JR.
Executive Director

MA:mls

Benefits Corner...

Claiming the Home Energy Audit Tax Credit

By Shane Cobb – RPOAC Benefits Manager



When considering making energy-saving home improvements, it may be helpful to have a home energy audit done. Fortunately, there is a federal income tax credit available equal to 30% of the amount paid for home energy audits, up to \$150 per tax year. (There are also credits available for many other energy-saving expenditures.) The IRS has now provided some guidance on what is required to claim the credit for a home energy audit.

Background

The credit for home energy audits is part of the energy efficient home improvement credit, which allows up to 30% of the sum of amounts paid for certain qualified expenditures. There are a couple of aggregate dollar limits for certain categories of expenses as well as specific dollar limits for certain types of costs. An annual \$1,200 aggregate credit limit applies to all building envelope components, energy property, and home energy audits. Building envelope components include exterior doors, windows, and skylights, and insulation or air sealing materials or systems. Energy property includes certain central air conditioners, water heaters, furnaces, and hot water boilers. A separate annual \$2,000 aggregate credit limit applies to electric or natural gas heat pump water heaters; electric or natural gas heat pumps; and biomass stoves and boilers.

There is also a residential clean energy property credit available for 30% of expenditures (with no overall dollar limit) for solar panels, solar water heaters, fuel cell property,

wind turbines, geothermal heat pump property, and battery storage technology.

Home energy audit tax credit

As noted, the credit for home energy audits is limited to 30% of the cost of a home energy audit, up to \$150 per year (30% of \$500 would equal \$150). It is also subject, along with building envelope components and energy property, to the annual \$1,200 aggregate limit for certain items. If you claim the credit, the home energy audit should be kept as part of your tax records.

A home energy audit is an inspection and written report for a dwelling located in the United States. The home must be owned and used by the taxpayer as a principal residence and the audit must meet certain requirements.

- The audit must identify the most significant and cost-effective energy efficiency improvements, including an estimate of the energy and cost savings for each improvement.
- The inspection must be conducted or supervised by a qualified home energy auditor.*
- The written report must be prepared and signed by a qualified home energy auditor.

- The audit must be consistent with certain Department of Energy and industry guidelines.

The Department of Energy maintains a list of home energy auditor qualified certification programs at energy.gov.

**A home energy auditor is not required to be a qualified home energy auditor for audits conducted before January 1, 2024. For now, the credit can be claimed even if the auditor was not a qualified home energy auditor if the other requirements are met. The home energy audit tax credit cannot be claimed for home energy audits conducted after December 31, 2023, unless the audit is conducted by a qualified home energy auditor.*

Check out our benefits >>>



...plus many more!

Contact our benefits manager, Shane Cobb for more details at (800) 733-4487

briefing Board...

Links to articles of interest to our members involving legislative actions and information that could affect your retirement and/or benefits. STAY AWARE!



- [Federal judge blocks California law that would have banned carrying firearms in most public places](#) - 12/21/23
- [California police must tell drivers why they're being stopped starting next year under new law](#) - 12/20/23
- [LAPD moves to accommodate new DACA officers who can't personally own guns](#) - 12/18/23
- [Drop pension tax for all, not only those getting military pensions](#) - 12/4/23
- [CalPERS Announces \\$100 Billion Net Zero Pledge and New Climate Accountability Measures](#) - 11/13/23
- [Despite new pension law, thousands of retired California teachers are still paying for others' mistakes](#) - 10/23/23
- [LAPD grapples with officer safety concerns as DACA recruits face firearms restrictions](#) - 10/8/23
- [San Diego pension debt back over \\$3B thanks to higher long-term projections for salaries, retiree benefits](#) - 9/18/23
- [A California city offered a \\$75,000 bonus to new cops. These departments are trying to keep up](#) - 9/6/23
- [Police Work Isn't a Tea Party](#) - 8/14/23
- [New Bill Would End California Military Pension Tax](#) - 8/14/23
- [CalPERS walks tightrope on ESG principles](#) - 7/30/23
- [CalPERS Reports Preliminary 5.8% Investment Return for 2022-23 Fiscal Year](#) - 7/19/23
- [CalPERS Announces Health Plan Premiums for 2024 Along With Expanded Cost-Saving Options for Members](#) - 7/19/23
- [CA police watchdog will soon receive wave of misconduct records, and recent reprimands spell trouble for impugned Antioch cops](#) - 6/29/23
- [Will California's largest pensions, CalPERS and CalSTRS, divest from fossil fuels?](#) - 6/29/23
- [Police in California aren't immune from certain misconduct lawsuits, high court rules](#) - 6/24/23
- [CalPERS Takes Action in Response to Third-Party Breach of Retiree Information](#) - 6/22/23
- [California governor proposes rolling back access to police misconduct records](#) - 6/19/23
- [California pension fund looks to boost venture capital investments despite startup market turmoil](#) - 6/19/23
- [Thousands of CA police officers could be stripped of their badges under new law](#) - 6/15/23
- [LA City Council takes a small step toward creating 'Office of Unarmed Response'](#) - 6/7/23
- [Thousands of Ventura County retirees face pension cuts](#) - 5/22/23
- [The state legislature shouldn't politicize or micromanage public pension investments](#) - 5/3/23
- [Teacher Pension Fund Betrays Its Mission](#) - 5/2/23

Did you know? >>>

You can access all of our newsletters and Job Opportunities through the RPOAC website by clicking on the "Members Only" link at rpoac.org. If you don't yet have access to the members area, contact our Executive Director at rpoac1@yahoo.com or (800) 743-7622.