SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

You have all heard Ron Yee and Richard Noelke, while serving as Director and Deputy Director of this retirement system, continually advising the many members that their retirement benefits are protected by the State of Michigan Constitution. Those of you who attend the membership meetings of Wayne County Retirees Sub-Chapter 38 have also heard similar statements from the Sub-Chapter leadership. Specifically, Article X1, Section 24 of the constitution reads “The accrued financial benefits of each pension plan and retirement system of the state and its political subdivisions shall be a contractual obligation thereof which shall not be diminished or impaired thereby”. This portion of the state constitution clearly protects your pension or accrued pension. Unfortunately it does not protect the various associated benefits such as health insurance, optical, life insurance, supplemental life insurance, etc.

There is another portion of the state constitution that is of great concern to Sub-Chapter 38 and hopefully to every member of the Wayne County Employees’ Retirement System. That is Article XII, Section 3 that reads “At the general election to be held in the year 1978, and each 16th year thereafter and at such times as may be provided by law, the question of a general revision of the constitution shall be submitted to the electors of the state”. Therefore, there will be a question on the ballot for the general election on November 9, 2010 asking the Michigan voters if they desire to have a constitutional convention.

By reading the local newspapers or watching the television news you have seen and heard that the Lansing politicians along with local politicians have proposed various attacks on public employees such as mandatory salary reductions, reduced benefits or significant increases to co-pays. Fortunately, as stated above, they cannot do anything to your pension or accrued pension. YET!

If a constitutional convention is approved by the voters in November our limited protection will be in jeopardy. It is reasonable to expect that, since so many of the existing members of the state legislature are term limited, many of them will be candidates for the constitutional convention and bring with them their approach to all public employees and the public employees’ hard earned retirement pensions and associated benefits.

For these reasons we, the Executive Board of Wayne County Retiree Sub-Chapter 38, AFSCME, strongly urge you and yours to vote against the convening of the Michigan constitutional convention at the General Election of November 8, 2010.

Hugh S. Macdonald, Secretary-Treasurer
Wayne County, Michigan, Retiree Sub-Chapter 38, AFSCME