

FROM THE OFFICE OF
STATE REPRESENTATIVE RUTH JONES MCCLENDON

For Immediate Release

Friday, October 19, 2007

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**Representative McClendon Announces
Great News for Retirees on
Teacher Retirement System 13th Check**

(Austin / San Antonio) – State Representative Ruth Jones McClendon (D-House District 120) announced today that the actuaries for the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) have confirmed that the 13th check can be paid to eligible retired members of the TRS, without increasing the rate of contributions paid by active members of the TRS. As stated by Representative McClendon, "This is *fabulous* news: I received word from Mr. Ronnie Jung, TRS Executive Director, and from Representative Vicki Truitt, Chair of the House Pensions & Investments Committee, that the latest actuarial results show a 14.4% gain for the TRS in 2007! This will allow the TRS to pay the 13th check that was approved by the Legislature in May, without needing to increase the amount contributed by current teachers and school personnel."

The 13th check is possible because of this rate of return, amounting to \$14 billion, and because the 80th Session of the Legislature increased the contribution rate paid by the state from 6.0% to 6.58%. The additional check will be capped at \$2,400, according to the legislative authorization, and the supplemental checks would be paid in January, 2008. TRS members who had retired by December 31, 2006, will be eligible for the supplemental benefit according to criteria stated in the law enabling TRS to provide the 13th check.

Formal action approving the distribution of the supplemental check is scheduled for the November 9 meeting of the TRS Board of Trustees. As retired teachers and other school personnel are aware, the 13th check would mark the first increase in benefits that retirees have had in six years. According to Representative McClendon, "This is one of the reasons I find it so satisfying to serve the people -- Chair Truitt, Representative Lois Kolkhorst, and I worked diligently with other members of the House to assure our retired school personnel they would receive this long-delayed help. That hard work did pay off."

Representative McClendon serves as Chief of Budget and Oversight for the House Committee on Pensions & Investments, as well as on the Appropriations and Sunset Advisory Committees. She also chairs the House Committee on Rules & Resolutions.