

# Pensions, health benefits under attack in Trenton

We expect four bills calling for sweeping changes in pension and health care benefits for public employees – including current and future NJEA members and retirees – to be unveiled in the Senate on Monday, Feb. 8.

While most of the proposals deal with prospective employees, some – such as a call for all current NJEA members and future retirees to contribute 1.5 percent of their salaries and pensions, respectively, toward health care premiums – would have an immediate impact.

The proposed legislation seeks to implement changes to pensions and benefits that NJEA members successfully organized against in 2007 and 2008.

News of the bills was leaked to the Newark Star-Ledger, which ran a story in Sunday's edition giving primary credit for the bills to Gov. Chris Christie, but they are a bi-partisan effort on behalf of Senate President Sweeney (who led the attack two years ago) and Governor Christie.

NJEA staff has spent the weekend analyzing the four bills, which were obtained late Friday. NJEA will issue a detailed public response on Monday, and we will continue to be in contact with you as additional information becomes available.

We will also be contacting you in the days to come as we build an organizing plan around these legislative proposals that attack the financial security of public educators and retirees.

As materials are released for the general membership, they will be posted on [www.njea.org](http://www.njea.org) in a special section titled: "It's YOUR Pension" .

We, as public employees, are being targeted as the scapegoats for the financial ills of the state. If we, together, do not fight these initiatives, the results will be disastrous for every current staff member, and those who follow us.

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