

## ...Knowledge is Power ~ Continue to Remain Vigilant



After attending District I 2012 Fall Convention, we learned there are several influential groups that want to tap into our TRS “Defined Benefit” pension plan. Tim Lee says that they are still at it, targeting legislators and TRS administration into believing that our current system is not the best way for TRS retirees to benefit from. They are lobbying for change into a “Defined Contribution” pension plan (resembling a 401K-type pension plan) that will affect active public school personnel in their future. Just take a look at this long list of greed.

### TRTA’s Top 10 Most Wanted Enemies

advocating for pension reform:

- #1: Charles and David Koch
- #2: American Legislative Exchange Council
- #3: Texas Public Policy Foundation
- #4: Bill King
- #5: Josh B. McGee
- #6: Michael C. Nichols
- #7: Jason Richwine
- #8: Andrew Biggs
- #9 : Laura and John Arnold Foundation
- #10: John Arnold and Laura Arnold (individually)

“Now you have a list of TRTA’s Ten Most Wanted Enemies. Be aware of their influence and remember that they are a very big threat!” said our TRTA President Maridell Fryar.

- As you speak to your legislators, to active personnel, and to the general public, our message needs to be loud, clear and consistent. TRS is not broken. It is a solid, well-managed fund, and can provide benefits without any changes until 2075.
- Defined Benefit plans that are held up as “bad examples” have not been well managed, have been underfunded and have built-in COLAS. NONE of these is true of the Texas Retirement System, but other states.
- The Texas Constitution guarantees public school employees a pension. Research shows that the best value for the taxpayer and the retiree is a “Defined Benefit” Plan.
- 95% of Texas teachers receive no Social Security benefit and would have no safety net in a “Defined Contribution” plan.

**So, now you know!**

Tita E. Tamez  
BARSEA President, 2013

1. **Talk to each other.** Sharing what you know with other TRS Retirees and active school employees, who may be family and/or friends, is essential.
2. **Talk to your legislators** and the best time is when they are not in session. Let them know about the information. They need to continue to protect it from these greedy, “financial investors.”
3. **Join TRTA & BARSEA.** We do make a difference! Even a little effort makes a big impact. Lucio exclaimed, “BARSEA is a large, influential group.”
4. **VOTE!** Ask candidates if they are committed/supporting TRS Retirees hard-earned money. If they are not, they should be our candidate.
5. **Ask others to join TRTA.** We have 80,000 members out of 300,000 TRS Retirees so the more members we have, the stronger we are!
6. **TRS cannot lobby:** It is up to US to fight this fight!

