



# ACE Action Alert

**April 10, 2023**

The Governor's budget includes funding for modernizing the Information Technology systems and enhancing the customer service support of the Department of Employee Trust Funds. ACE supports both initiatives.

The Governor's Budget proposes an additional \$3.6 million in State Fiscal Year 2024 and an additional \$8.1 million in SFY 25, along with 7 additional positions in each year, to begin the modernization of ETF's IT systems. The Governor also proposed \$437,800 in SFY 24 and \$551,800 in SFY 25, along with 7 additional positions, to improve customer service to public employees/retirees and to

employers such as municipalities, counties, and school districts.

The legislature is currently deciding which of the Governor's Budget items to include in its own budget and which to eliminate. Legislators need to hear from constituents who care about specific proposals.

Because both proposals are critical to state employees and retirees, ***ACE urges you to contact your Assembly representatives and Senators.*** If you live outside Dane and Milwaukee Counties, your voice will be especially critical on these items.

Enter your address in the field to find email and phone numbers for your legislators here:

<https://maps.legis.wisconsin.gov>

These are talking points you could use in talking to or emailing your legislators:

Information Technology Modernization:

- ETF's systems serve more than 1,500 public employers such as counties and municipalities and more than 660,600 current and former state and local government employees.
- The systems range in age from 9 to 36 years old. The technical knowledge and support infrastructure to maintain such old systems is increasingly complex and difficult to obtain.
- There are legal and financial risks to the state if confidential information is exposed due to aging systems.
- The cost of improvements is from segregated funds generated by the benefit plans ETF administers, not from taxpayer revenues.

Customer Service Maintenance:

- 147 new public employers joined the WI Retirement System since 2010, and now ETF serves more than 1,500 school districts and local governments. They need support and training to provide retirement and benefit information to their employees/retirees.
- The public retiree population increased by nearly 42%, and the total members of ETF increased by more than 14%, since 2010. ETF now serves more than 660,000 current and former local and state government employees.
- ETF is essentially the payroll center for the fast-growing retiree population and must process retirement applications and changes to tax withholding, addresses, and ACH.
- The current staffing level is inadequate to keep up with the growing call volume and complexity.
- The additional staff would not be taxpayer funded, but instead would be paid by segregated funds generated by the benefit plans ETF administers.

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