

## RHODES SAYS “END DOUBLE-DIPPING”

County Auditor Dusty Rhodes has asked area legislators to expand their review of current and proposed state public employees’ retirement rules in the new legislative term.

“The first objective is to end the ability and the incentives to ‘double dip’”, said Rhodes. “For example, further service will not increase my state retirement benefits and I’m eligible to begin receiving them next year if I’m re-elected to a new term.

“Good public officials both here and across the state are collecting a second income from their retirement savings and while it is presently legal it is not the best situation,” he said.

“I’m sure many have been reluctant to do it but the system promotes it and encourages it.

“I can’t fault them for accepting a benefit which has been offered for many years. People plan for that. The blame lies with past Legislatures which have failed to address the issue”, he added, noting that he has opposed the practice “for years”.

Rhodes also said some proposed changes in benefits will almost force experienced employees to retire early next year. One of those possible changes limits the annual three percent (3%) cost-of-living adjustment for those who retire after the new legislation is effective.

“This change could create a serious ‘brain drain’ in public offices across the state, add a large number of new retirees receiving benefits, and simultaneously dramatically decrease the number of those paying into the system,” he said.

He has written local legislators with his concerns.

August 30, 2010

MEMO

TO: State Senators, State Representatives  
FROM: Dusty Rhodes, Hamilton County Auditor  
RE: State Retirement Issues  
DATE: August 30, 2010

I ask your help in and support for expanding the Legislature's review of current and proposed state public employees' retirement rules in the new term.

The first objective is to end the ability and the incentives to 'double dip'. For example, further service will not increase my state retirement benefits and I'm eligible to begin receiving them next year if I'm re-elected to a new term.

Good public officials both here and across the state are collecting a second income from their retirement savings and while it is presently legal it is not the best situation. I'm sure many have been reluctant to do this but the system allows it and encourages it.

Some of the proposed changes in benefits will almost force experienced employees to retire early next year. One of those possible changes limits the annual three percent (3%) cost-of-living adjustment for those who retire after the new legislation is effective.

This change could create a serious 'brain drain' in public offices across the state, add a large number of new retirees receiving benefits, and simultaneously dramatically decrease the number of those paying into the system.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns.