



# Essex Regional Retirement Board

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*Chairman,  
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June 8, 2005

Senator John F. Kerry  
One Bowdoin Square, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Honorable Kerry,

You have not made clear your standing on Social Security reform. We would like to make you aware of our disapproval of mandatory coverage of state and local employees in the Social Security system. This approach to funding Social Security will destabilize the public pension system and crush Town and City budgets across Massachusetts. In order to come up with the 6.45% employer match to Social Security, Towns and Cities will have to dramatically increase property taxes to cover the estimated \$5 billion in Massachusetts' public employer contributions. The money made in mandatory coverage is projected to solve only one-tenth of Social Security's projected deficit over the next 75 years.

Thanks to sound management at the state and local level, 485,023 Massachusetts' state and local pension system members will receive higher benefits than they would under Social Security. We believe proposals requiring the mandatory participation of state and local employees in Social Security would starve public pension of the continued flow of new participants needed to maintain solvency. Such proposals would disproportionately harm Massachusetts' public employees and place an undue burden on cities, counties, and states.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the interests of public employees are not undermined during the debate on Social Security reform.

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Bassett