



OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Gary L. Alien, President
Patricia Frost-Brooks, Vice President
William Leibensperger, Secretary-Treasurer
Dennis M. Reardon, Executive Director

The OEA will lead the way for continuous improvement of public education while advocating for members and the learners they serve

November 15, 2004

Patricia A. Tule
8775 Clio Road
Dayton, OH 45458

Dear Ms. Tule:

I am responding to your letter to me, dated October 28, 2004, regarding the OEA's decision to terminate additional health care coverage that had been provided to some OEA retired employees of the Ohio Education Association.

During the late summer of 2003, the OEA's Executive Director requested an audit of the administration of the OEA's retirement benefit programs. The review indicated that although neither staff union contract required the OEA to provide additional health care benefits beyond Medicare Part B reimbursement for retired OEA employees who were 65 years or older, some - - but not all - - retirees continued to receive additional health care coverage after they reached age 65. While some retirees were paying a nominal fee for this additional coverage, others were paying nothing for it. Given that the additional coverage was not authorized under any labor agreement, and recognizing that the Executive Director is bound by OEA policy and state and federal law to direct the affairs of the OEA in accordance with the governing policies and statutes, he took the action that both he and I believed was necessary and appropriate. Specifically, in early March, 2004, the OEA notified affected OEA retirees that the additional health care coverage would be terminated on August 31, 2004. On August 31, 2004, that additional coverage was terminated.

I can assure you that the termination of the additional coverage did not change, reduce or eliminate any negotiated benefit or otherwise deprive any retiree or dependent of a retiree of any benefit to which he or she was entitled by contracts the OEA has negotiated with its staff unions. Claims to the contrary are simply inaccurate.

Moreover, as we have clearly stated in every communication about this matter, the OEA will continue to provide health care coverage to retirees as required by its contracts with its staff unions. In fact, in order to assist the retirees and dependents who were affected by the termination of the additional coverage, the OEA:

- Established hardship guidelines by which it would provide financial assistance to those retirees who could demonstrate that the termination of the additional health care coverage created undue financial hardship.