



COALITION OF RETIRED EMPLOYEES OF THE OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

November 13, 2004

Dear Local Association President,

I write to you as President of the Coalition of Retired Employees of the Ohio Education Association (CORE of OEA). If you are not the current local association president please accept my apology and I would ask that you pass this letter on to the proper person.

In April of this year the Ohio Education Association, under the direction of Executive Director Dennis Reardon and by action of the OEA Executive Committee, decided to terminate post 65 health care benefits for its staff retirees. OEA claims it has no contractual obligation to provide these benefits, which is simply untrue. PSU and OASU contract language in place clearly provides for retiree health coverage to retirees after age 65.

OEA apparently believes it can reinterpret PSU and OASU contract language. OEA has been advised by the union-busting, management side law firm of Baker & Hostetler, LLP (hired with your dues dollars). Past OEA Executive Directors, past managers, the President of the National Staff Organization, and nationally respected attorneys including David Cook of Cincinnati and Leonard Page (former General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board under President Clinton), all support retiree efforts because they know Reardon and Baker & Hostetler are wrong. Each has advised Mr. Reardon he will lose this case for OEA. The OEA Executive Committee seems not to care and has pursued a dangerous path that could seriously impact OEA publicly, at the bargaining table, in the legislature, and financially as dues dollars are spent supporting OEA's egregious violation of its staff contracts.

CORE of OEA made repeated attempts to resolve this issue, but OEA has turned away every effort to reach resolution short of a public lawsuit. The class action lawsuit was filed on Friday November 12, 2004 and the issue will soon become nationally known.

Unfortunately, CORE of OEA is now forced to begin a national campaign to expose the management and governance of OEA/NEA for its illegal termination of retiree benefits. This will be happening while all levels of the Association including local, OEA, and NEA claim they are fighting for education employee retirement benefits. The hypocrisy is obvious. Add the use of the same law firm that is involved in union busting tactics for Boeing Corporation and it becomes even more dangerous for OEA's integrity and ability to "Lead The Way" in protecting you and your members' rights and benefits.

Current OEA staff retirees collectively represent over 2500 years of dedicated service to OEA. Many of these individuals put at risk their families, health and freedom to defend school employees' rights. Some affected individuals are surviving spouses who understand more than most what it means to sacrifice for the organization. To be treated in this manner by the same people to whom they dedicated their careers is inexcusable. For OEA to espouse the defense of school employees' retirement benefits while terminating those of its own retired employees is not only living a lie but violating the very union principles on which OEA was built and continues to say it is defending.

If you are interested in knowing more about the truth, please contact CORE of OEA. A new website, [www.coreofoea.com](http://www.coreofoea.com) is under construction and will be available soon. You may also contact CORE of OEA via email at [COREofOEA@aol.com](mailto:COREofOEA@aol.com). CORE of OEA's informational flyer and contact information is attached. Your efforts to convince OEA that it immediately reinstate the bargained benefits, which they provided for over 25 years, would be in everyone's best interest and critical to a positive future for OEA.

Sincerely,

John L. Wardell, President  
CORE of OEA