

**Of interest to public school educators and retirees—State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) board governance structure underwent a hostile takeover in an 11<sup>th</sup> hour dead of the night state budget maneuver.**

The leadership of the General Assembly loathes democracy. This is demonstrated by the hostile takeover of the State Board of Education, gerrymandered legislative districts, etc. Now the majority of the STRS board membership will be political appointees. At 1:00 AM and contrary to the “one subject per bill” rule, as the state budget deliberations were being wrapped up, teacher/former teacher membership on STRS was reduced from 7 to 3 and political appointees increased from 4 to 8.

Representative Sean Brennan had this to say about this chicanery:

*“The move to strip directly elected teacher and retiree representation from the STRS Board is deeply troubling—both in its substance and the way it was pushed forward. This structural overhaul was introduced without meaningful transparency, without stakeholder input, and without the careful vetting a change of this magnitude demands....Rather than strengthening the system, this proposal diminishes the voice of working educators and retirees—those who pay into and rely on STRS every day. Reducing the number of elected contributing and retired members and stacking the board with political appointees not only silences the voices of frontline educators, but risks turning this vital system into a tool for partisan control....*

*Any change to the STRS Board structure should be developed in the open, with robust public dialogue and participation from the people most affected. This is not reform—it’s a power grab.”*

A review of the chronology of this takeover is in the June 27 [Pepperspectives](#).