

Testimony: Public Hearing Jan. 9, 2023, Change in Administrative Code 12-126

Anne Friedman, Professor Emerita, BMCC and Chapter Chair, PSC Retirees

Good morning Speaker Adams, Chair De la Rosa and Civil Service and Labor Committee Members:

Thank you for your efforts to address the current crisis in NYC Retiree healthcare coverage. As chair of the PSC's 3,000-member retiree chapter, I appreciate the time you have taken as individuals to meet with our union leaders and our members to understand the history and complexity of issues regarding the Health Insurance Premium Stabilization Fund.

Now that your committee has decided to put forth a recommendation for amending Administrative Code 126-26, I implore you to think carefully about changing a law that has been on the books for decades and one that has served well both in-service and retiree city workers. This short-term fix opens the door not to choice of health plans but to tiering of them – reinforcing the already economic, racial, and gendered divides which already exist in our city.

The more highly paid workers, who can afford to pay a premium to keep their traditional Medicare and Senior Care coverage will do so and those at the lower rungs will be provided with a false choice because they can't afford these costs. While we are told that premiums now would be close to \$200/pp given what we know about ever-ballooning costs of medical care this figure will rise year by year. **The Senior Care option for traditional Medicare plans must be kept premium free.**

All city workers will one day become retirees. At PSC we refer to our in-service colleagues as "retirees in training." So, any legal changes that this council makes affects not only today's 250,000 retirees but current and prospective hires.

The crisis in the Health Stabilization Fund is real but short-sighted. Short-term solutions are not the answer. The PSC has put forth a proposal whereby the City Council can exert its potential power and provide leadership in moving our city forward and not backward.

You have heard prior testimony about this proposal, and we have shared it previously with all members of Council. I attach it in my written statement. I look forward to a positive rather than a regressive solution to a real problem that city leaders and voters can begin to solve together.

The PSC proposal is here: <https://psc-cuny.org/news-events/psc-cuny-proposal-for-nyc-employee-health-benefits-program/>

Sincerely,

Anne Friedman  
Professor Emerita BMCC and Chair, PSC Retiree Chapter

