

Survivor Benefits for Domestic Partners SB 245 (Steans-Koehler)

IEA Position: SUPPORT

Analysis:

Amends the Downstate Teacher and Chicago Teacher Articles of the Illinois Pension Code to allow a designated domestic partner to qualify as a surviving spouse for purposes of survivor and death benefits.

- 1.) An unmarried teacher may designate a domestic partner by filing a written designation with TRS and CTPF in the manner prescribed by the retirement system. The fund may require reasonable evidence that the person designated meets the qualifications.
- 2.) The designated domestic partner of a teacher shall be eligible to receive survivor and death benefits under this Article in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as surviving spouse.
- 3.) Such a designation is revocable at any time, but may not be made or changed more than once in any 24-month period.

Currently, every teacher that participates in either the Downstate Teachers Retirement System or the Chicago Teachers Pension Fund contributes 1% of their salary during their entire career to fund survivor benefits. If these benefits are not utilized the teacher has the right to request a refund of their contributions.