



April 3, 2013

VIA FACSIMILE: (202) 225-0704

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On behalf of the national organizations listed above—representing state and local governments, officials and public retirement systems—we are writing to express our strong opposition to the *Public Employee Pension Transparency Act* and respectfully urge you **not** to become a cosponsor of this legislation.

This legislation creates a dangerous precedent with regard to federal taxation and regulation of state and local governments. It also represents a fundamental lack of understanding regarding the operations and funding of public pensions and the strong accounting rules and strict legal constraints already in place, which require open and transparent governmental financial reporting and processes.

Further, this legislation paints an inaccurate and misleading picture of the state of public finance and pensions, and ignores the extensive efforts made at the state and local levels to close short-term budget deficits, as well as address longer-term obligations such as pensions. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 44 states have enacted major changes in state retirement plans from 2009-2012. These changes have included increases in employee contributions to pension plans, longer vesting periods, reduced benefit levels, higher retirement ages, and lower cost-of-living adjustments. Some modifications may apply to new workers only, while others affect current employees and/or retirees. Federal intrusion into areas that are the fiscal responsibility of state and local governments is unwarranted. It makes no sense to impose disruptive and costly federal requirements that only serve to interfere with state and local government economic recovery and pension reform efforts.

We would welcome the opportunity to visit with you or your staff in the near future to discuss the many changes taking place in states and local governments around the country to examine benefit levels and financing structures to help ensure the sustainability of public pensions, and to answer any questions you might have.

Please feel free to contact our organizations' legislative representatives to arrange a meeting, answer any questions, or if you would like additional information:

Michael Bird, National Conference of State Legislatures (202) 624-5400

Deseree Gardner, National Association of Counties, (202) 942-4204

Neil Bomberg, National League of Cities, (202) 626-3042

Larry Jones, United States Conference of Mayors, (202) 293-7330

Elizabeth Kellar, International City/County Management Association, (202) 962-3611

Cornelia Chebinou, National Association of State Auditors Comptrollers and Treasurers, (202) 624-5451

Barrie Tabin Berger, Government Finance Officers Association, (202) 393-8467

Tina Chiapetta, International Public Management Association for Human Resources, (703) 549-7100

Leigh Snell, National Council on Teacher Retirement, (540) 333-1015

Jeannine Markoe Raymond, National Association of State Retirement Administrators (202) 624-1417