

ROCK CAPITAL

The Pay Raise Nine Years Later *Base Pay Has Increased by \$14,364*

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(Harrisburg, Pa) - Rock The Capital released a review of current and former state legislators who accepted an increase in their pay through “unvouchered expenses” and refused to pay the money back.

Legislators who refused to return “unvouchered expenses,” or donated the unconstitutional income to charities, have benefitted through increased wages, “pension bounces” in 2006 and 2008, and job promotions in 2009-2010.

In 2007, five “pay-jackers” were appointed to the Speaker’s Reform Commission.

Initially, 131 House members and 27 Senators signed up for “unvouchered expenses.” Payments were received between July 7 and November 16, 2005, and ranged from \$1,288 to \$14,553.32 (before taxes). The repealed pay raises would have boosted lawmakers’ salaries from 16% to 54%, depending on seniority, rank, title and leadership.

By 2014 - 54 current and former members of the House of Representatives and eight current and former members of the Senate - have benefitted by refusing to return the “unvouchered expenses” they accepted in 2005.

The base salary in July, 2005 for the rank and file legislators - excluding per diems, perks, public service announcements, pensions and paid health insurance - was **\$69,648**. The pay raise increased legislators' base pay to **\$81,050**, and many lawmakers received more money because of increased stipends for leadership or committee posts.

From 2005 to 2014, a legislator's minimum wage increased by **\$14,364**. Rank and file legislators currently make **\$84,012**.

In addition to their annual salary, legislators receive the following generous benefits: free parking, per diems, perks, public service announcements, pensions and subsidized health insurance.

- Sixty two current and former House and Senate “pay-jackers” profited by keeping “unvouchered expenses.”
- Fifty current and former House “pay-jackers” voted for the pension spike in 2001.
- Eight current and former Senate “pay-jackers” voted for the pension spike in 2001.
- Twenty nine former House “pay-jackers” currently receive monthly pensions totaling \$133,673.42. (1)
- Twenty former House “pay-jackers” - who receive monthly pensions - also took advantage of a “pension bounce.”
- Upon retiring or being voted out of office, thirty one former House “pay-jackers” received a total \$3,993,960.50 in lump sum pension payments.

- There are no former Senate “pay-jackers” who receive monthly pensions. (2)
- One former Senate “pay-jacker” - Mr. Mellow - opted for a lump sum withdrawal of \$331,025.14 in four installment payments.
- Four former House members have forfeited their pensions due to criminal convictions. (2)
- One former Senate member forfeited his pension due to criminal convictions. (3)
- Twelve current and former “pay-jackers” in the House of Representatives have been convicted of breaking the law, indicted, “presented” or investigated by state and/or federal law enforcement agencies.
- Four current and former “pay-jackers” in the Senate have been convicted of breaking the law, indicted, “presented” or investigated by state and/or federal law enforcement agencies.

Notes

1 The following House members have passed away:

- Former Rep. Linda Bebko-Jones, (D-Erie)
- Former Rep. Robert Donatucci, (D-Philadelphia)
- Former Rep. William W. Rieger, (D-Philadelphia)
- Former Rep. James Shaner, (D-Fayette)
- Former Rep. Elinor Z. Taylor, (R-Chester)

2 Act 140: Forfeiture of pensions:

- Former Rep. Bill DeWeese, (D-Greene)
- Former Rep. John Perzel, (R-Philadelphia)
- Former Rep. Stephen Stetler, (D-York)
- Former Rep. Mike Veon, (D-Beaver)

3 Summary of the Senate:

- Former Senator Charles Lemmond retired with a “pension bounce.” He passed away on May 30, 2012.
- Former Senator Robert Mellow’s pension was terminated by the SERS. on May 9, 2012. He is appealing the decision.
- Former Senator Raphael Musto passed away on April 24, 2014.