



Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees
April 30, 2026 Meeting

MISCELLANEOUS NON-ACTION AGENDA ITEM

Statement of Economic Interest evaluations of members pursuant to the Ethics Act §138A-15(c).

The following packet contains a Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) evaluation issue by the State Ethics Commission. This is being provided for Board members' review and for recording in the meeting minutes pursuant to the requirements of the State Government Ethics Act. Members are encouraged to review the updated evaluations to inform and remind them of the identified actual or potential conflict of interest.

The SEI Evaluation for the following is being provided for review:

- Allen Joines
- Corey Mercer



STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

POST OFFICE BOX 27685
RALEIGH, NC 27611
PHONE: 919-814-3600

Via Email

March 18, 2026

The Honorable Joshua H. Stein
Governor of North Carolina
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-0301

**Re: Evaluation of Statement of Economic Interest Filed by Mr. James Joines
Prospective Appointee to the Board of Trustees of the Local Governmental Employees'
Retirement System**

Dear Governor Stein:

Our office has received **Mr. James Joines'** 2026 Statement of Economic Interest as a prospective appointee to the **Board of Trustees of the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System (the "Board")**. We have reviewed it for actual and potential conflicts of interest pursuant to Chapter 138A of the North Carolina General Statutes ("N.C.G.S."), also known as the State Government Ethics Act (the "Act").

Compliance with the Act and avoidance of conflicts of interest in the performance of public duties are the responsibilities of every covered person, regardless of this letter's contents. This letter, meanwhile, is not meant to impugn the integrity of the covered person in any way. This letter is required by N.C.G.S. § 138A-28(a) and is designed to educate the covered person as to potential issues that could merit particular attention. Advice on compliance with the Act is available to certain public servants and legislative employees under N.C.G.S. § 138A-13.

We did not find an actual conflict of interest but found the potential for a conflict of interest. The potential conflict identified does not prohibit service on this entity.

The Board of Trustees ("Board") of the Local Governmental Employees Retirement System ("LGERS") is responsible for the administration of retirement allowances and other benefits for employees of counties, cities and towns or other eligible employers participating in the System. The Board serves as trustee for LGERS funds, while the State Treasurer serves as custodian and makes investments of such funds.

The Act establishes ethical standards for certain public servants and prohibits public servants from: (1) using their positions for their financial benefit or for the benefit of their extended family or business, N.C.G.S. § 138A-31; and (2) participating in official actions from which they or certain associated persons might receive a reasonably foreseeable financial benefit, N.C.G.S. § 138A-36(a). The Act also requires public servants to take appropriate steps to remove themselves from proceedings in which their impartiality might reasonably be questioned due to a familial, personal, or financial relationship with a participant in those proceedings. N.C.G.S. § 138A-36(c).

Mr. Joines would fill the role of a Mayor or member of a governing body participating in the Retirement System. He is the Mayor of Winston-Salem. Because he would serve on the board that oversees retirement allowances and benefits for counties, cities and towns he has the potential for a conflict of interest. Therefore, Mr. Joines should exercise appropriate caution in the performance of his public duties should issues involving his benefits or Winston-Salem come before the Board for official action.

In addition to the conflicts standards noted above, the Act prohibits public servants from accepting gifts from (1) a lobbyist or lobbyist principal, (2) a person or entity that is seeking to do business with the public servant's agency, is regulated or controlled by that agency, or has financial interests that might be affected by their official actions, or (3) anyone in return for being influenced in the discharge of their official responsibilities. N.C.G.S. § 138A-32. Exceptions to the gifts restrictions are set out in N.C.G.S. § 138A-32(e).

When this letter cites an actual or potential conflict of interest under N.C.G.S. § 138A-24(e), the conflict must be recorded in the minutes of the applicable board and brought to the membership's attention by the board's chair as often as necessary to remind all members of the conflict and to help ensure compliance with the Act. N.C.G.S. § 138A-15(c).

Finally, the Act mandates that all public servants attend an ethics and lobbying education presentation. N.C.G.S. § 138A-14. Please review the attached document for additional information concerning this requirement.

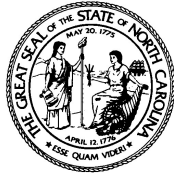
Please contact our office if you have any questions concerning our evaluation or the ethical standards governing public servants under the Act.

Sincerely,



Jane Steffens, SEI Unit
State Ethics Commission

cc: James Joines
Attachment: Ethics Education Guide



STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

POST OFFICE BOX 27685

RALEIGH, NC 27611

PHONE: 919-814-3600

Via Email

March 20, 2026

The Honorable Joshua H. Stein
Governor of North Carolina
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-0301

**Re: Evaluation of Statement of Economic Interest Filed by Mr. Corey Mercer, Sr.
Prospective Appointee to the Board of Trustees of the Local Governmental Employees'
Retirement System**

Dear Governor Stein:

Our office has received **Mr. Corey Mercer's** 2026 Statement of Economic Interest as a prospective appointee to the **Board of Trustees of the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System (the "Board")**. We have reviewed it for actual and potential conflicts of interest pursuant to Chapter 138A of the North Carolina General Statutes ("N.C.G.S."), also known as the State Government Ethics Act (the "Act").

Compliance with the Act and avoidance of conflicts of interest in the performance of public duties are the responsibilities of every covered person, regardless of this letter's contents. This letter, meanwhile, is not meant to impugn the integrity of the covered person in any way. This letter is required by N.C.G.S. § 138A-28(a) and is designed to educate the covered person as to potential issues that could merit particular attention. Advice on compliance with the Act is available to certain public servants and legislative employees under N.C.G.S. § 138A-13.

We did not find an actual conflict of interest but found the potential for a conflict of interest. The potential conflict identified does not prohibit service on this entity.

The Board of Trustees ("Board") of the Local Governmental Employees Retirement System ("LGERS") is responsible for the administration of retirement allowances and other benefits for employees of counties, cities and towns or other eligible employers participating in the System. The Board serves as trustee for LGERS funds, while the State Treasurer serves as custodian and makes investments of such funds.

The Act establishes ethical standards for certain public servants and prohibits public servants from: (1) using their positions for their financial benefit or for the benefit of their extended family or business, N.C.G.S. § 138A-31; and (2) participating in official actions from which they or certain associated persons might receive a reasonably foreseeable financial benefit, N.C.G.S. § 138A-36(a). The Act also requires public servants to take appropriate steps to remove themselves from proceedings in which their impartiality might reasonably be questioned due to a familial, personal, or financial relationship with a participant in those proceedings. N.C.G.S. § 138A-36(c).

Mr. Mercer would fill the role of a member on the Board who is retired, Fair Labor Standards Act nonexempt, local governmental employee. Because he is a beneficiary of the retirement system, he has the potential for a conflict of interest. Therefore, Mr. Morse should exercise appropriate caution in the performance of his public duties should issues involving his retirement or other benefits come before the Board for official action.

In addition to the conflicts standards noted above, the Act prohibits public servants from accepting gifts from (1) a lobbyist or lobbyist principal, (2) a person or entity that is seeking to do business with the public servant's agency, is regulated or controlled by that agency, or has financial interests that might be affected by their official actions, or (3) anyone in return for being influenced in the discharge of their official responsibilities. N.C.G.S. § 138A-32. Exceptions to the gifts restrictions are set out in N.C.G.S. § 138A-32(e).

When this letter cites an actual or potential conflict of interest under N.C.G.S. § 138A-24(e), the conflict must be recorded in the minutes of the applicable board and brought to the membership's attention by the board's chair as often as necessary to remind all members of the conflict and to help ensure compliance with the Act. N.C.G.S. § 138A-15(c).

Finally, the Act mandates that all public servants attend an ethics and lobbying education presentation. N.C.G.S. § 138A-14. Please review the attached document for additional information concerning this requirement.

Please contact our office if you have any questions concerning our evaluation or the ethical standards governing public servants under the Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jane Steffens', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jane Steffens, SEI Unit
State Ethics Commission

cc: Corey Mercer, Sr.
Attachment: Ethics Education Guide