STATE OF WISCONSIN
Legislative Audit Bureau
NONPARTISAN • INDEPENDENT • ACCURATE

Report 22-16
September 2022

State Retiree Life Insurance Reporting for the State of Wisconsin

Calendar Year 2021

Joint Legislative Audit Committee Members

Senate Members:	Assembly Members:
Robert Cowles, Co-chairperson	Vacant, Co-chairperson
Dale Kooyenga	John Macco
Howard Marklein	Mark Born
Melissa Agard	Dianne Hesselbein
Tim Carpenter	Francesca Hong

State Retiree Life Insurance Reporting for the State of Wisconsin

Calendar Year 2021

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Legislative Audit Bureau

NONPARTISAN • INDEPENDENT • ACCURATE

Report 22-16
September 2022

Report 22-16
September 2022

Legislative Audit Bureau

State Auditor
Joe Chrisman

Financial Audit Director
Erin Scharlau

Assistant Financial Audit Director
Brian Geib

Team Leader
Nicole Kulcyk

Auditors
Sherry Colstad
Zachary Johnson
Mai Chong Lee
BreeAnn Schlenske

Publications Designer and Editor
Susan Skowronski

The Legislative Audit Bureau supports the Legislature in its oversight of Wisconsin government and its promotion of efficient and effective state operations by providing nonpartisan, independent, accurate, and timely audits and evaluations of public finances and the management of public programs. Bureau reports typically contain reviews of financial transactions, analyses of agency performance or public policy issues, conclusions regarding the causes of problems found, and recommendations for improvement.

Reports are submitted to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee and made available to other committees of the Legislature and to the public. The Audit Committee may arrange public hearings on the issues identified in a report and may introduce legislation in response to the audit recommendations. However, the findings, conclusions, and recommendations in the report are those of the Legislative Audit Bureau.

The Bureau accepts confidential tips about fraud, waste, and mismanagement in any Wisconsin state agency or program through its hotline at 1-877-FRAUD-17.

For more information, visit *www.legis.wisconsin.gov/lab.*

Contact the Bureau at 22 East Mifflin Street, Suite 500, Madison, Wisconsin 53703; *AskLAB@legis.wisconsin.gov;* or (608) 266-2818.

Contents

Letter of Transmittal 1

Auditor's Report 3

Opinions Published Separately

The schedules and our opinions on them are available on the Department of Employee Trust Funds' website.

STATE OF WISCONSIN
Legislative Audit Bureau

Joe Chrisman
State Auditor

22 East Mifflin Street, Suite 500
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

Main: (608) 266-2818
Hotline: 1-877-FRAUD-17

www.legis.wisconsin.gov/lab
AskLAB@legis.wisconsin.gov

September 28, 2022

Senator Robert Cowles, Co-chairperson
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Dear Senator Cowles:

As requested by the Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF), we have completed an audit of the Schedule of Employer Allocations of the State Retiree Life Insurance program, the Schedule of Collective OPEB Amounts of the State Retiree Life Insurance program, and the related notes to these schedules as of and for the year ended December 31, 2021. These schedules, and our unmodified opinions on them, may be found on ETF's website.

We also audited the financial statements and related notes of the State Retiree Life Insurance program as of and for the year ended December 31, 2021, and provided our unmodified opinion on them, as detailed in report 22-15, which we also published today. The fiduciary net position of the State Retiree Life Insurance program, which represents resources available to pay benefits, decreased from $333.8 million as of December 31, 2020, to $319.6 million as of December 31, 2021.

Other postemployment benefits (OPEB) refer to the benefits, other than pensions, that a state or local government employee may receive after they have left employment, generally upon retirement. An OPEB plan may include medical, prescription drug, dental, vision, and other health-related benefits, whether provided separately or through a pension plan. An OPEB plan may also include death benefits, life insurance, and long-term care coverage, when provided separately from a pension plan.

Under s. 40.70, Wis. Stats., the State Retiree Life Insurance program provides life insurance benefits to all eligible retired employees of the State of Wisconsin, including those employed by the University of Wisconsin (UW) System and authorities, such as UW Hospitals and Clinics Authority. Under this program, employers pay stated contribution amounts that are based upon the active employee premium amounts. After retirement, basic coverage is continued for eligible employees for life, with the benefit being reduced by a stated amount based upon the age of the retiree.

Accounting standards issued by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) require the calculation of a net OPEB liability, which is represented by the difference between the fiduciary net position reported in the financial statements and the total OPEB liability calculated by the actuary. As of December 31, 2021, ETF calculated a net OPEB liability for the State Retiree Life Insurance program of $947.8 million, which was an increase from the net OPEB liability of $867.0 million calculated as of December 31, 2020.

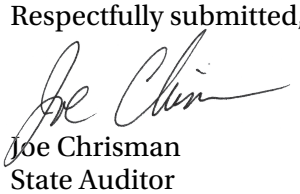
The State of Wisconsin's commitment to provide a postemployment life insurance benefit to retired employees results in an obligation to make contributions into the future to ensure that sufficient resources are available to make the benefit payments. Therefore, the State of Wisconsin has

responsibility for the resulting OPEB obligations and will report the net OPEB liability for the State Retiree Life Insurance program in the financial statements in the State's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the year ended June 30, 2022. In addition, the schedules will be used by state agencies and authorities that are part of the State's financial reporting entity, but that prepare separately issued financial statements. Additional information related to the OPEB accounting standards is included in report 22-15.

The Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters, which is required by *Government Auditing Standards*, begins on page 5.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by ETF staff during our audit.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe Chrisman
State Auditor

JC/BG/ag

Auditor's Report

Report 22-16

STATE OF WISCONSIN
Legislative Audit Bureau

Joe Chrisman
State Auditor

22 East Mifflin Street, Suite 500
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

Main: (608) 266-2818
Hotline: 1-877-FRAUD-17

www.legis.wisconsin.gov/lab
AskLAB@legis.wisconsin.gov

Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters

Senator Robert Cowles, Co-chairperson
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Members of the Employee Trust Funds Board and
Mr. A. John Voelker, Secretary
Department of Employee Trust Funds

We have audited the Schedule of Employer Allocations of the State Retiree Life Insurance program as of and for the year ended December 31, 2021, and the related notes. We have also audited the totals for the columns titled Net OPEB Liability (Asset), Total Deferred Outflows of Resources Excluding Employer Specific Amounts, Total Deferred Inflows of Resources Excluding Employer Specific Amounts, and Plan OPEB Expense included in the Schedule of Collective OPEB Amounts of the State Retiree Life Insurance program as of and for the year ended December 31, 2021, and the related notes. We have issued our report thereon dated September 26, 2022. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards,* which is issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The schedules and related auditor's opinions have been included in the 2021 employer schedules report for the State Retiree Life Insurance program, as prepared by the State of Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF).

Internal Control over Financial Reporting

Management of ETF is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control over financial reporting (internal control). In planning and performing our audit of the State Retiree Life Insurance program schedules, we considered ETF's internal control as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the schedules, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of ETF's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of ETF's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent misstatements, or to detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency or a combination of deficiencies in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the schedules will not be prevented, or that a material misstatement will not be detected and corrected on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency or a combination of deficiencies in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material

weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the State Retiree Life Insurance program schedules are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, and contracts, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the schedules. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

We have also audited the financial statements and related notes of the State Retiree Life Insurance program as of and for the year ended December 31, 2021, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*. We expressed an unmodified opinion, dated September 26, 2022, on those financial statements. In addition, we issued the Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters, dated September 26, 2022, and included in report 22-15, related to the audit of the financial statements.

Purpose of This Report

This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be used when considering ETF's internal control and compliance. The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the result of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of ETF's internal control or on compliance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

LEGISLATIVE AUDIT BUREAU

Legislative Audit Bureau

September 26, 2022