

**SUBJECT:** Changing the eligibility age for certain firefighters to receive a COLA

**COMMITTEE:** Pensions, Investments and Financial Services — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 9 ayes — Anchia, Parker, Capriglione, Muñoz, Perez, Rogers, Slawson, Stephenson, Vo

**WITNESSES:** For — Ralph Marsh, Houston Firefighters Pension Fund; Brett Besselman, Houston Firefighters Relief and Retirement Fund

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jamaal Smith, City of Houston, Office of the Mayor Sylvester Turner)

**BACKGROUND:** Interested parties have noted that since the implementation of recent changes to the Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund (HFRRF), a small number of HFRRF members who retired when the old law was in effect are no longer eligible to receive a cost-of-living adjustment to which they were previously entitled and could have to wait for up to seven years to receive a benefit increase.

**DIGEST:** HB 805 would amend provisions governing the Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund to make members who terminated active service in a manner that entitled them to a service pension before July 1, 2017, and who were or would have been at least 48 years old, eligible to receive a cost-of-living adjustment to their benefits.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2021.