

Good Afternoon,

I'd like to offer my support for Senate Bill 8. I appreciate Kathleen Ryan's initiation and advocacy of this bill, which would allow time served in the Peace Corps to be included in pension benefits without having to purchase the credit. The fact that a State employee is able to purchase the credit now for Peace Corps service indicates that such is recognized as a valuable public service. So it begs the question of why Peace Corps service needs to be purchased whereas military service does not. The Peace Corps has been an important and valuable national program for more than 60 years, offering Americans the opportunity to serve abroad to help people around the globe in many diverse ways.

As a returned Peace Corps Volunteer who has had the opportunity to serve as a teacher in the Fiji Islands from 1988 to 1990, I know firsthand the value the Peace Corps brings to other countries as well as to the United States. Peace Corps volunteers not only work in valuable programs and services around the globe but also learn about other peoples and cultures and bring that knowledge and experience back to the U.S., adding value to our own states and local jurisdictions and residents served thereof. Thank you for your consideration.

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