

TUA NEWS RELEASE

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Charlotte Taxpayers Grapple With Crushing Government Pensions

Charlotte—[Taxpayers United of America](http://www.taxpayersunited.org) (TUA) today released the results of a new pension study of Charlotte Municipal and Mecklenburg County government retirees.

“North Carolina lawmakers have only flirted with reforms of the government pension system, and not without boosting their own pensions,” stated Rae Ann McNeilly, Director of Outreach for TUA. “North Carolinians have been led to believe that their system is in good health, but with inflated actuarial practices and a limping economy, meaningful reforms are imperative.”

“While residents across North Carolina face crushing taxes, falling home values, 9.3% unemployment, and a painfully slow economic recovery, government employees continue to receive stunning pensions largely funded by taxpayers who will never collect more than about \$22,000 a year from Social Security.”

“North Carolina is the 18th state in our nationwide pension reform tour and the results are consistent with our findings across the country: government pensions are out of control. Across the country, millions of bureaucrats are being paid billions, to do absolutely nothing!”

“The purpose of our study is to put some perspective around individual pensions, to put them in terms to which the average taxpayer can relate. Taxpayers need to know how much North Carolina’s government retirees are being paid *not to work* and the astronomical accumulation of those payments over an average lifetime. Hundreds of government retirees’ pensions being released today will accumulate to millions of dollars in payouts.”

McNeilly continued, “For example, **James W. Schumacher**, retired at **age 57** from the Charlotte Municipal government and collects an annual pension of **\$114,367**. His estimated lifetime pension payout is stunning **\$3,750,760.***”

“**James Irving Pendergraph**, retired from Mecklenburg County government at the **age of 57**, has an annual pension of **\$101,314**, with a staggering estimated lifetime payout of **\$3,085,778.***”

“Retired Mecklenburg County government teacher, **Gregory Clemmer**, has a lifetime estimated pension payout of **\$3,708,541***, with an annual pension of **\$117,401**, having retired at **56**.”

“North Carolina’s government pension systems are crushing middle class North Carolinians. Government employees should be paid a fair wage for the work they do today so they can save for their own retirement. [Replacing defined benefit pensions for all new government hires with social security and 401\(k\)s would eventually eliminate unfunded government pensions](#). Current government employees must consider a voluntary pension contribution of up to 10% to preserve their pension benefits. Additionally, all members should pay for 50% of their healthcare premiums. ***We need a stable system that is fair to both taxpayers and beneficiaries or pension checks will stop coming,***” added McNeilly.

*Annual pensions are actual amounts provided by the respective fund. Lifetime estimates include the sum of the pension paid to date and the projected remaining payments with a 1% COLA. Uses a life expectancy of 85 (IRS Form 590), the actual retirement date and age at retirement.

Founded in 1976, TUA is one of the largest taxpayer organizations in America.

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