

## President's Message

In the next few months, before the legislature meets, the employees of the state should see to it that their local legislative representatives are advised of our program and the reasons back of our requests. I will endeavor to list the most important parts of our program and give a few of the reasons why we think they should receive favorable consideration by the legislators.

Probably the most important item affecting state service at this time is that the present wage scale is too low in comparison to wages paid in private industry and due to the rise in the cost of living, wages paid the majority of state employees are too low to meet current living costs. This condition has resulted in an abnormally large increase in the number of employees leaving state service for better paying jobs necessitating the replacement of employees with employees who, in most cases, can not meet the minimum requirement for the positions as set up by the Civil Service Commission. Prospective employees having the proper qualifications are able to secure jobs at higher pay in private industry or in competing governmental agencies. This condition is resulting in less efficient operation and increased cost of operation in the various state departments.

We are asking that wages paid to state employees be kept sufficiently close to wages paid elsewhere to enable the state to maintain a high rate of efficiency which is possible under present civil service standards.

Our next most important program has to do with changes in the retirement law. First, it must be pointed out that the retirement law was passed several years ago when aver-

age earnings and cost of living index were about half their present value. When the law was passed the amount paid for past service was set at \$2.50 a month and credit allowed for maximum of twenty years service. This makes it necessary for those employees facing immediate retirement to retire on a maximum of \$50.00 a month or less. Under present conditions the small amount paid employees who have retired since the effective date of the law is not enough to sustain life and in many cases is less than they could secure under state welfare. We are asking that the payment for each year of prior service be increased from \$2.50 a month to \$4.00 a month and that the limit of twenty years be eliminated and credit for full time be allowed.

The next change we are requesting involves the amount of the employer's contribution and the amount of the employee's salary on which an employee can pay retirement. Under the present law the employee can pay retirement and the State will match his payments only on the first \$3,000 of his salary. This sets the maximum amount at which an employee can retire after thirty years of service at \$125<sup>00</sup> a year. When the retirement law was passed this was considered an adequate pension but under present economic conditions that amount is not sufficient for minimum living requirements.

The law was drawn up with the understanding that a person retiring with thirty years service at the age of sixty-five could retire at fifty per cent of his average salary during the last five years of employment. It was the intent of the law that this retirement would be sufficient to allow the employee to retire on a respectable retire-