



National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems

The Voice for Public Pensions

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Legislative Conference Agenda

2026 PRELIMINARY AGENDA

As of 1/6/25

2026 KEYNOTE SPEAKER

NCPERS is pleased to welcome back **William Kristol**—renowned political analyst and founding editor of *The Weekly Standard*—as our keynote speaker. Kristol will revisit his 2024 predictions, offering fresh perspective on what unfolded and sharp commentary on the political events shaping today's headlines.

A familiar voice through his work with *FOX News* and *The Washington Post*, Kristol has long influenced American political discourse. His career includes serving as chief of staff to Vice President Dan Quayle, and he has been a strong advocate for U.S. foreign policy leadership.

The author of several New York Times bestsellers and recipient of the prestigious Bradley Prize, Kristol brings decades of experience and insight to the stage. This is a chance to hear his take on the nation's most pressing challenges and what lies ahead.



MONDAY, JANUARY 26 – Legislative Conference

12:00 PM–6:30 PM **REGISTRATION**

2:00 PM–5:00 PM **GENERAL SESSION I: State Policy and Pensions**

2:00 PM–2:15 PM *Welcoming Remarks*
Hank Kim, Executive Director, NCPERS

2:15 PM–2:45 PM *Anticipated Pensions, Personnel, and Other Benefit Activities in State Capitals*
This session will provide an overview of emerging legislative priorities in state capitals, focusing on pensions, personnel policies, and employee benefits. It will explore the challenges and opportunities policymakers face and the potential impacts on public pension systems, workforce policies, and retirement benefits.

SPEAKER

Angela Rowe, National Conference of State Legislature (NCSL)

2:45 PM–3:30 PM

How State Budgets Will Impact Public Pension Funding

State budgets are a key factor in determining whether public pensions receive their full actuarially determined contributions (ADC). As there is widespread anticipation that 2026 will bring budget shortfalls, Shelby Kerns will offer an in-depth analysis of the state budget outlook and its implications for pension contributions, emphasizing how fiscal policies and economic conditions shape the resources available to meet pension obligations.

SPEAKER

Shelby Kerns, National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO)

3:30 PM–3:45 PM

NETWORKING BREAK

3:45 PM–4:30 PM

SWOT Analysis for Public Pensions in 2026

A conversation with a panel of leading state and local pensions on what they see as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for 2026.

SPEAKERS

*Daniel Brown, The California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS)**Mark White, Arkansas Teacher Retirement System (ATRS)*

4:30 PM–5:00 PM

2026 Agenda for the National Public Pension Coalition

Kendal Killian, NPPC executive director, will provide an overview of his organization's priorities in 2026.

SPEAKER

Kendal Killian, National Public Pension Coalition (NPPC)

5:00 PM – 5:45 PM

Policy Day Prep Session

Those attendees who registered for Policy Day (group meetings on Capitol Hill) will gather and get prepared for their meetings with Members of Congress or their staffs.

FACILITATORS

*Hank Kim, Executive Director, NCPERS**Joshua Campbell, Williams & Jensen*

6:00 PM–7:00 PM

NETWORKING RECEPTION**TUESDAY, JANUARY 27 – Legislative Conference & Policy Day**

7:00 AM–1:00 PM **REGISTRATION**

7:00 AM–8:00 AM **BREAKFAST**

8:00 AM–12:00 PM **GENERAL SESSION II: Federal Policy and Pensions**

8:00 AM–9:00 AM *What did we Learn in 2025 and What Does It Portend for 2026 Midterms*

In this insightful session, William Kristol will provide insights from the first half of the 119th Congress and their implications for the political and policy landscape. He will also outline priorities and outlook for the 2026 Midterm elections, highlighting potential challenges and opportunities for stakeholders in the public sector.

MODERATOR

Hank Kim, Executive Director & Counsel, NCPERS

SPEAKER

William Kristol, Founding Editor, The Weekly Standard

9:00 AM–9:45 AM *Key Congressional Issues Impacting Public Pensions*

This session will provide a timely overview of the most significant congressional issues and policy debates that could impact public pension systems in the year ahead.

SPEAKERS

Mark Iwry, Brookings Institution

Robert Gauss, Ice Miller

Michael Kreps, National Institute on Retirement Security

9:45 AM–10:00 AM **NETWORKING BREAK**

10:00 AM–10:45 AM *The Outlook for Social Security*

This session offers a forward-looking discussion on the future of Social Security. Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of the issues driving the national conversation and what developments may shape the program in the coming years.

MODERATOR

Barry Lew, Los Angeles County Employee Retirement Association (LACERA)

SPEAKER

Martin O'Malley, Commissioner of the Social Security Administration

10:45 AM–11:30 AM *NCPERS 2026 Legislative Policies*

This session offers an in-depth exploration of the legislative priorities shaping the public pension landscape in 2026. Attendees will gain insights into key federal and state legislative initiatives, their potential impacts on retirement security, and strategies to navigate emerging challenges.

SPEAKER

Anthony Roda, Williams & Jensen

11:30 AM–11:45 AM The NCPERS Policymaker of the Year Award is presented annually to recognize a policymaker who has made a significant positive impact on public pensions or contributed to advancing retirement security. Join us as we celebrate the recipient for 2026.

12:00 PM–1:00 PM **NETWORKING LUNCH****POLICY DAY - Day 1**

1:30 PM–5:30 PM **CAPITOL HILL MEETINGS**
NCPERS will schedule your meetings with congressional offices. Final meetings schedules will be sent to attendees one week prior to the event.

6:00 PM–7:00 PM **POLICY DAY HAPPY HOUR****WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28****POLICY DAY - Day 2**

8:00 AM–9:00 AM **POLICY DAY BREAKFAST**
(Registered Policy Day Attendees Only)

9:00 AM–12:00 PM **CAPITOL HILL MEETINGS**
NCPERS will schedule your meetings with congressional offices. Final meetings schedules will be sent to attendees one week prior to the event. Learn more about what to expect.

CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) CREDITS

By attending the Legislative Conference, you can earn up to 6.5 Continuing Education (CE) hours toward your Accredited Fiduciary (AF) recertification and/or state-mandated continuing education requirements. CE credits are automatically recorded in your NCPERS membership account after the conference, where you can log in to download your CE certificate.

NCPERS is an accredited Minimum Educational Training (MET) sponsor for Texas public retirement systems, as recognized by the State Pension Review Board. This accreditation does not imply an endorsement by the Board regarding the quality of the MET program.

Event Registration

Annual Conference & Exhibition (ACE)

Center for Online Learning

Chief Officers Summit

Communications & Member Services Summit

FALL Conference

Legislative Conference & Policy Day

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NCPERS Accredited Fiduciary (NAF) Program

NCPERS University

Program for Advanced Trustee Studies (PATs)

Public Pension Funding Forum

Public Pension HR Summit

Public Safety Conference

Trustee Educational Seminar (TEDS)

Conference Archives

Future Conferences & Events

National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems
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