

BRAD OWENS

RPEA CANDIDATE STATEMENT

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

I have been a member of RPEA since 2014. I have held the position of Executive Vice President of RPEA since 2016. During my entire time with RPEA I have focused on legal issues involving the 2014 modifications by DRB to the retiree health care plan. This has involved regular, persistent and direct contact with DOA and DRB personnel discussing and contesting these 2014 changes. Despite these regular efforts to resolve the legal issues raised by the refusal of DRB to comply with the constitutional requirements protecting retiree medical and dental benefits, RPEA eventually had to file two lawsuits against the State to protect these benefits.

Prior to my retirement in 2012, I worked for 35 years as an attorney in the law firm of Jermain, Dunnagan & Owens. My firm represented Joe Hoffbeck in one of the most important retirement lawsuits in Alaska: *Hammond v. Hoffbeck*. This lawsuit established that public employee retirement benefits may not be diminished or impaired under the Alaska Constitution. In addition, I was the attorney who represented RPEA in the *Duncan v. RPEA* lawsuit that established the same Constitutional protection for retiree medical benefits.

For the last five years I have been directly and closely involved in the dental and medical diminishment lawsuits filed by RPEA against the State. We have been successful in the dental lawsuit and the medical lawsuit is scheduled for trial in July. I believe it is important to maintain the current leadership in these critical RPEA lawsuits.

It is my hope that RPEA members will vote for me in this election so that I can continue my efforts as a leader of RPEA in completing these legal actions to protect retiree benefits. I believe my legal background and experience is a clear benefit to RPEA and all public retirees.