



Whelan Should Forfeit Pension Credits for Ventnor Job

Says Whelan abused the system by achieving 25-year threshold in the PERS pension system via a previously non-existent job that was created just for him

For Immediate Release

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September 7, 2011 – Senator Jim Whelan abused the pension system and ripped off taxpayers by achieving the 25-year threshold in the PERS pension system through conspiring with his political pals to create a job that previously didn't exist, charged Assemblyman Vince Polistina, who today called on Whelan to forfeit pension credits he earned via his "Secretary to the Mayor" job in Ventnor.

Polistina cited recent documents obtained from the Division of Pensions that show Whelan reached 25 years in the system via his time in Ventnor, plus his tenure as an Atlantic City Councilman and Mayor, and through purchasing 4 years worth of credits. Exactly how he was deemed eligible for those credits and how he purchased them is the subject of a pending Open Public Records Act (OPRA) request.

"Jim Whelan's accumulated time in the PERS pension system consisted of his time as a politician in Atlantic City, topped off with a dubious job created especially for him in Ventnor to reach the 25-year threshold," said Polistina. "No wonder our state's pension system is so deep in the red. Providing retirement accounts for career politicians and political insiders who gamed the system was not the intent of the public pension system. Whelan should forfeit pension credits earned via the Ventnor job immediately and whatever other benefits come along with it."

Polistina said he expects more fallout about Whelan's pension scam in the coming weeks, as more information comes to light.

"It's been nearly six months and we're still trying to unravel the mystery of how Jim Whelan gamed the public pension system to his personal benefit, and his silence has been deafening," said Polistina, who has repeatedly challenged Whelan to answer questions on this issue to no avail. "What I do know is that the system was created so public employees who worked hard for 25 years could retire with some level of security, not for career politicians like Jim Whelan to line their pockets at taxpayer expense for the rest of their lives."