As you may be aware, senate Bill 5365 took effect June 7, 2012. This bill is known as the "Buy-Back Bill". This bill was sponsored by Senators Nelson and Khol·Welles and was supported by the various fire serviceorganizations. It allows members to buy back pension payments that were missed prior to the year of their enrollment in the pension system (members are enrolled when they make their first payment).

In order to be eligible to take advantage of the bill, members must have served as active volunteer firefighters as ofJune 7,2012. Any members that have separated from serviceprior to this date cannot buy-back their pension payments.In addition, members are only eligible for the buy-back if the BVFF has record of their service as a volunteer firefighter(relief/disability payments were made for them during the requested years).

Eligible members that would like to make up payments must work through the fire departments for which they weremembers of at the time of the missed payment(s). The fire department should contact the State of Washington Board for Volunteer Firefighters & Reserve Officers, in writing, specifying whichmember would like to make up their payment(s), their date of birth, and the year(s) that they would like to make uppayments. The Board will notify the department of the cost to make up the payment(s). The price will varydepending onthe age of the member, the number of years they havebeen active volunteer firefighters, and the number of paymentsthat are being bought-back. It is then up to the department and the member to determine who will pay the cost of thebuy back. If the member is going to buy-back all or part of the payment, the payment must be made to the firedepartment and the department must Issue the payment to the BVFF. That payment must be submitted along with aseparate remittance form for each year that payment is being made. If a member is making up fivepayments, fiveremittance forms must be completed. Incorrect remittances will be returned to a department.

If a member would like to make up payments for years that they were not reported to the BVFF, the department will firstbe required to proveservice for their member. Both the Perjury Statement and the Documentary Evidence Checklist willneed to be completed. They can be found at http://www.bvff.wa.gov/forms.html. That process must be completed priorto being eligible for the pension payment buy-back.