

# CORRE Newsletter

SEPTEMBER, 2024 EDITION



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

[About CORRE \(Who We Are\)](#)

[CORRE Annual Meeting Notice](#)

[What CORRE Does for Our Members](#)

[A Closer Look at Annual Funding Notices](#)

[Update Your Contact Information](#)

[Contact Your Elected Representatives](#)

[Spotlight on EEOICPA](#)

[Consumer Price Impact for Seniors](#)

## A Message From Our CORRE President, Dave Whitehead

Welcome to the September 2024 edition of our CORRE newsletter. We hope you find it interesting and informative. We plan to publish a newsletter quarterly and make it available on our website. The website contains a wealth of information that should be interesting and useful to our members. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please email them to: [communications@mycorre.org](mailto:communications@mycorre.org).

## Who We Are:

**CORRE** (pronounced “core”) is an acronym for the *Coalition of Oak Ridge Retired Employees*, which was established in 2002 to represent the interests of some 15,000 retirees and surviving spouses. CORRE is not-for-profit (501 (c)(5) corporation, run by volunteers and managed by an elected board of directors. Our mission is to protect, preserve, and enhance the retirement benefits of its members and their surviving spouses. All retirees are considered *de facto* members of CORRE. and are welcome to participate in CORRE activities regardless of whether they were formerly hourly, management, monthly, or weekly employees. You can become a **contributing member** by making a one-time \$20 donation to CORRE. This entitles you to vote in our annual meetings. We encourage all members to provide your contact information to CORRE. We use your street address (zip code) to determine your congressional district. We may occasionally send you email to inform you of important issues that could affect your pension or healthcare benefits (or to remind you when a new newsletter is available on our website).

***CORRE does not share your contact information with anyone in a way that identifies you by name.***

## CORRE Annual Meeting Notice

CORRE will hold its annual meeting of members on Friday, November 8, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. in the New Hope Center at Y-12. All Oak Ridge retirees are invited to attend. At this meeting the Board of Directors of CORRE will give a report on the activities of the past year and plans for the coming year. Also, new members of the Board of Directors will be elected at this meeting. There will be opportunity for members to ask questions of the Board.

Plans are to have representatives of the various healthcare companies that provide care for former nuclear workers present to answer questions you may have. We also plan to have representatives of the contractor Human Resources Departments attend the annual meeting to answer questions about member's benefits. All of these representatives will be in the lobby of the New Hope Center before and after the meeting. For those not familiar with New Hope Center, it is located on the East end of Y-12 and outside the security areas. It faces on Scarboro Road (602 Scarboro Road, Oak Ridge for your GPS's). One may enter the parking lot via East Portal Road off Scarboro Road.

### **Things one should be aware that are not permitted in New Hope Center:**

- Explosives
- Fire arms
- Narcotics and other drugs
- Hazardous materials
- Flip flop shoes

Additionally, meeting attendees should dress appropriately (not excessively informal) and should wear sturdy shoes. We are looking forward to seeing everyone there.



**New Hope Visitor Center at Y-12**

## What CORRE *Does* for Our Members...

CORRE works with contractors, the Department of Energy, local and state officials, congressional representatives, and other related organizations to secure fair, just, and equitable retirement benefits for all eligible retirees.

In our effort to safeguard and improve retiree pensions and medical benefits for our members, CORRE communicates with human resources staff members and management from Department of Energy (DOE) Oak Ridge contractor facilities. We communicate with retiree organizations at other DOE sites throughout the nation. We also monitor and review proposed contract, pension, and benefit changes at those facilities. Last but not least, we communicate with Tennessee's congressional delegation. They are the source of funding for all DOE facilities, and they have some control over how those funds are used. We have access to staff members of senators Blackburn and Hagerty, and congressional representatives Burchett (District 2) and Fleischmann (District 3).



Recently, CORRE president Dave Whitehead and vice president Shirley Cox met with U.S. Senator Marsha Blackburn at a recent East Tennessee Technology Council Meeting at the UT Economic Center in Oak Ridge.

## A Closer Look At Annual Funding Notices

Every retiree with a pension should receive annually a document known as an Annual Funding Notice (AFN). Its contents are prescribed by laws and regulations but generally include identifying information about the plan's sponsor, how well the plan is funded, the value of pension plan's assets and liabilities, how the plan's assets are invested, and the legal limits on how much the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation can pay if the plan ends or becomes insolvent (unlikely with the Department of Energy reimbursing contractors as part of their approved benefit packages). New events that could impact plan assets or liabilities may also be discussed. The AFNs sent out in 2025 will have some changes in the information presented.

Data from the most recent AFNs for the Oak Ridge contractor plans are summarized below. Fluctuations in net assets are often attributable to investment performance, particularly that of equities.

### Annual Funding Notice Data as of 1/1/2023

#### (Net Assets and Liabilities)

	Net Assets	Liabilities	Assets/Liabilities (%)
CNS	\$2,240,507,481	\$2,336,630,289	95.88
Golden SVCS	\$22,399,025	\$25,335,397	88.41
UCOR LLC	\$331,196,557	\$341,378,250	97.02
UT-Battelle*	\$2,203,202,312	\$2,480,506,611	88.82
Totals	\$4,797,305,375	\$5,183,850,547	92.54

\*UT Battelle withheld a \$354,796,644 Pre-Funding Balance from prior excess contributions.

### Annual Funding Notice Data as of 1/1/2023

#### (Participants in Pension Plans)

	Total Participants	Current Employees	Retired with Benefits	Rights to future benefits
CNS	11,469	2,710	8,030	729
Golden SVCS	161	36	97	28
UCOR LLC	1,993	198	1,515	280
UT-Battelle	11,895	5,801	5,444	650
Totals	25,518	8,745	15,086	1,687

Underfunding of pension plans is a complex issue, legally allowed by accommodation of interests more powerful than retirees. Generally minimum required contributions are prescribed to bring the plans to full funding on a schedule that allows ongoing plan obligations to be met. To illustrate, Oak Ridge plans pay out about \$350 million in benefits annually compared to net available assets of almost \$5 billion

Underfunding has been used as rationale for not amending the plans to increase benefits but then not increasing benefits when the plans are overfunded, citing protection against future losses. We encourage CORRE members to read the AFNs and ask tough questions about the pension plans.



## Help CORRE Communicate More Effectively with Our Members

### I. Please Update Your Contact Information!

CORRE currently has over 7,000 retiree member names in our database. However, the majority are missing either your email address, your phone number, or your street address (including zip code). ***We will never share this with other organizations in a way that reveals your name.***

Why do we need all of this information? We need your street address and zip code to determine which congressional district you live in. When CORRE meets with congressional staff members, it is extremely important to be able to tell them *how many of their constituents* are CORRE members. Having your street address and zip code enables us to provide an accurate answer. Most of our communication with you will be done via email, our website and our newsletter. If you are already a contributing member of CORRE, please take a minute and update your contact information (preferably by sending an email), to [communications@mycorre.org](mailto:communications@mycorre.org). Please provide the information shown below.

### II. Become a *Contributing* CORRE Member

All CORRE board members are volunteers, and receive no compensation for their work. All retirees from Oak Ridge DOE contractor facilities are considered *de facto members* of CORRE. By making a one-time contribution of \$20, you will become a *contributing member*, and will be entitled to vote in our annual meeting. Your contribution will help CORRE defray the cost of maintaining a website, conducting our annual meeting, and other operating expenses. Just send your check for \$20, along with the following contact information:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name: (First, middle name or initial, Last)

\_\_\_\_\_  
P.O. Box or Street Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State and Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (Please include area code)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

Retired From:

☐ Y-12   ☐ X-10   ☐ K-25   ☐ ProForce

Year you Retired: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:    CORRE Treasurer  
              P.O. Box 4266  
              Oak Ridge, TN 37830-4266

## Prepare and Send Emails or Letters to Your Congressional Members

In your request for their support for adjustments to our retiree benefits, letters in your own words are the most effective. Your letter should express how inflation has impacted your finances and quality of life in retirement. (If you prefer, you can also use the template form letter below.)

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn  
357 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, D. C. 20510  
<https://www.marshablackburn.senate>  
Phone: (202) 224-3344

Representative Tim Burchett  
1122 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D. C. 20515  
<https://burchett.house.gov>  
Phone: (202) 225-5435

The Honorable Bill Hagerty  
251 Russell Senate Bldg.  
Washington, D. C. 20510  
<https://www.hagerty.senate>  
Phone: (202) 224-4944

Representative Chuck Fleischmann  
2187 Rayburn House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
<https://fleischmann.house.gov>  
Phone: (202) 225-3271

### (Template/Form Letter)

Dear (Congressional Representative),

Our Coalition of Oak Ridge Retired Employees (CORRE) board of directors recently submitted a request for legislative corrective action concerning needed improvements to our pension and health care benefits for retired Oak Ridge nuclear workers. There are about 15,000 former Department of Energy (DOE) retirees and spouses, most of which live in Tennessee and are your constituents.

Our retirement and health benefits have eroded significantly over the past several years due to ever increasing inflation. No cost-of-living adjustments have been made since 1998 for those who worked for many years for the DOE as contractor employees at the Oak Ridge nuclear complex. The cost of living has nearly doubled since then!

*(Add anything you wish regarding how inflation has affected you personally here.)*

It is my request that you please be a champion and sponsor for this legislative corrective action request from our retiree organization (CORRE), which represents your Oak Ridge nuclear worker constituents. This legislation, if passed, will honor those who have worked for the DOE as contractors for so many years and made sacrifices for the country we have served.

Thank you so much for your support on this issue and for your service to our country and our state.

(Retiree signature and address)

Some Oak Ridge retirees live outside Tennessee congressional district 2 (Burchett) or district 3 (Fleischmann). If you don't already know your representative's name, you can determine it by visiting [this web site](#) and entering your zip code. In some cases, you will also need to enter your street address.

## Spotlight on the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA)

“The Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) was enacted in October 2000. Part B of the EEOICPA, effective on July 31, 2001, compensates current or former employees (or their survivors) of the Department of Energy (DOE), its predecessor agencies, and certain of its vendors, contractors and subcontractors, who were diagnosed with a radiogenic cancer, chronic beryllium disease, beryllium sensitivity, or chronic silicosis, as a result of exposure to radiation, beryllium, or silica while employed at covered facilities.” (Source: U.S. Department of Labor, [Office of Workers’ Compensation Program website](#).) There is a wealth of information about this program on the website. Every person approved for compensation or benefits under the EEOICPA receives a special Medical Benefits Identification card. It is known as the *White Card*. Details are available on the above website.

There is also an excellent article on a local Knoxville Area Community Action Committee website entitled [Do You Have A White Card?](#) Written in lay terms, it describes the EEOICPA, what conditions it covers, and what medical and healthcare services are available.

Not all CORRE members are eligible for a White Card. But for those who are—in each newsletter edition, CORRE plans to highlight one or more medical and home healthcare service providers and what they offer. In this edition We are featuring ***Quality Private Duty Health Care***.

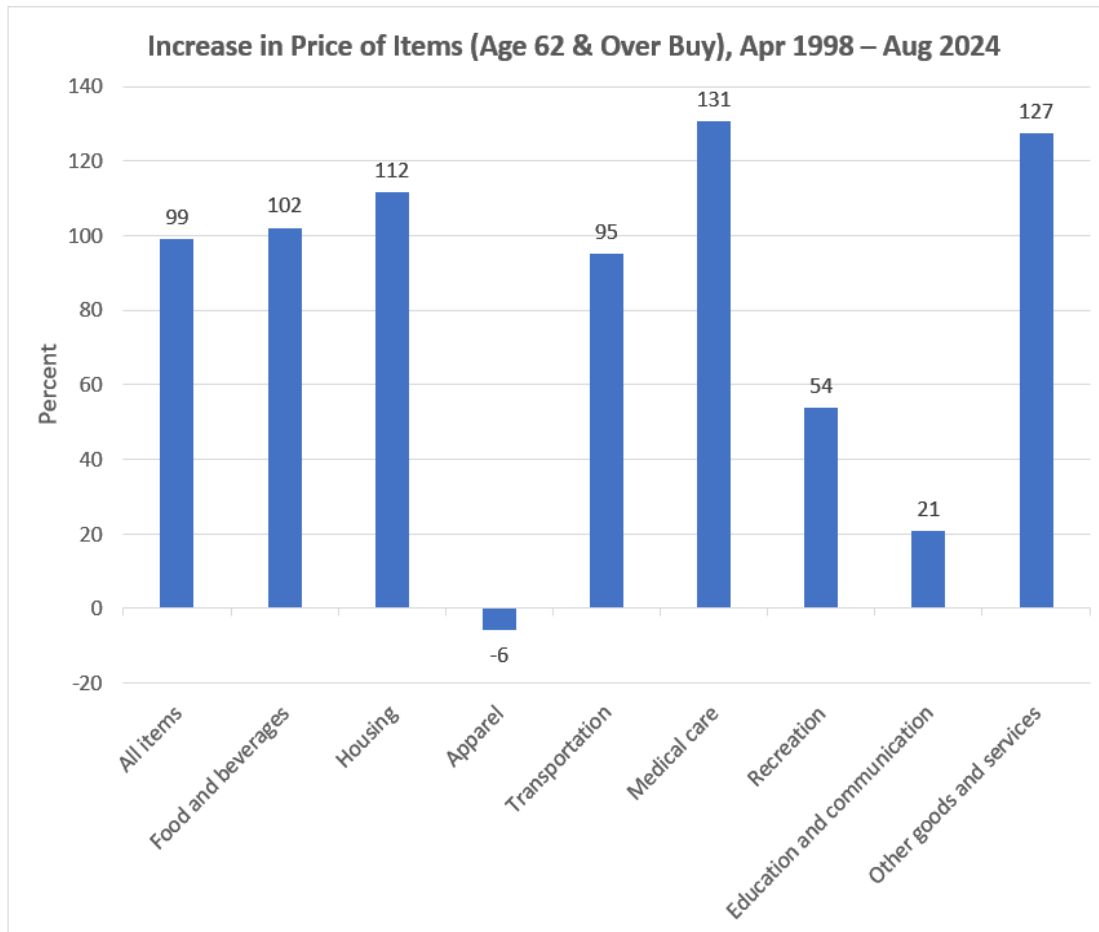


At Quality Private Duty Care, it is our mission to provide the highest standard of home health care and services that are beneficial in maintaining our patient’s optimal functions and independence. We strive to be compassionate, caring, and devoted in the delivery of our services to our patients and their physicians. Recognized by the Department of Labor, Quality Private Duty Care is an authorized service provider of the EEOICPA Program, or what we like to call our “Energy Worker’s Wellness Program”. This is a unique service that provides Private Duty services to those who carry the U.S. Department of Labor Medical Benefits Identification Card also known as “The White Card”. Where else better to go than your locally based provider who is right by your side, able and ready to personally invest in your care? For more information, please visit us at [Home - Quality Private Duty Care \(qualityprivatecare.com\)](http://Home - Quality Private Duty Care (qualityprivatecare.com)).

CORRE has no affiliation with Quality Private Duty Care (or any other healthcare provider).

## A Look at the True Impact of Inflation on Retirees

Based on the current consumer price index, \$1.00 in April 1998 needs to be \$1.94 today to have the same purchasing power. However, as shown below, the situation is even worse for the elderly because we typically spend a much larger percentage of our retirement income for medical care and related items than younger adults.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Research Consumer Price Index for the Elderly

## Upcoming Events

CNSCares will hold an event on Saturday, 9/28 from 11:30-1:30 at the Oak Ridge Civic Center; Representatives from CORRE will have a welcome table to provide information important to Oak Ridge retirees.

Y-12 will sponsor a Heath Fair for current employees at the Y-12 Cafeteria Hallway, Jack Case Center, on Wednesday, October 16 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. CORRE representatives will be there to welcome future retirees and provide important CORRE retirement information.