



May 25, 2013

To the Editor, *The Intelligencer, Wheeling News-Register*

Your editorial *Getting Caught Was Officials' Fear* (May 23) is offensive in the extreme and nothing short of stunning in its failure to recognize simple, verifiable, oft-repeated facts.

The inescapable truth is that the cost of attending NCPERS' 2013 Annual Meeting in Honolulu was at least 30 percent *less* than the cost of attending last year's meeting in New York – because the cost of food and lodging in Honolulu is significantly lower than in most conference destinations on the mainland, while airfares are competitively priced.

Despite your snide assertions, it has indeed occurred to me and everyone else in our organization that taxpayers are right to insist that their money be spent as frugally as possible. So properly informed taxpayers would have been pleased to know that this year's meeting in Honolulu was a bargain. While you insist on chastising us for what you call "the unnecessary expense of holding a conference in Hawaii," the undeniable truth is that expenses were down significantly.

Incredibly, you have condemned us for saving public pension officials, their plans and taxpayers a considerable sum of money by staging our meeting in Honolulu. You have condemned us for doing *exactly* what you say we should be doing. Perhaps your obvious desire to generate heat on public pensions and the people who run them has caused you to ignore the light – hardly sound journalistic practice and most certainly a disservice to your readers.

Your editorial is a perfect example of what I was referring to with the term "headline risk." Some pension officials sat this conference out because they did not want to take an unfair public beating in publications like yours and leave their constituents with the wholly false impression that they were wasting public pension money.

If the headlines were more factually correct – *Pension Chiefs Economize With Hawaii Meeting*, for instance – they might actually have been applauded for attending.

Hank Kim, Esq.

Executive Director and Counsel

National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems

Washington, DC