Little Hoover Commission (April 22, 2010)

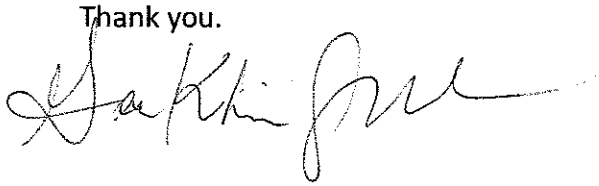
Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to address you this morning.

My name is Georkeshia Campbell and I am an Intermediate Clerk for Los Angeles County at Olive View Medical Center. I've worked for the County since _june 2006____ . I'm a mother and adoptive parent **to 3(4)** children. I'm very committed to my job and the community that I live and work.

At Olive View Medical Center, we serve the entire community whether they have insurance or not. And now more than ever, people are turning to public health services because they have lost their job and medical benefits. For many patients, this is difficult because they have never had to rely on public healthcare before. I empathize with them because all of us are facing the worst recession since the 1930's and healthcare and secure retirements are just a few of the recession's victims.

I believe in taking responsibility for one's choices in life and that is one of the reasons I became an employee of Los Angeles County. I believe it's important to plan for the future and that means a retirement plan. I am very concerned about the myths and newspaper article about lavish pensions for public employees because they are greatly exaggerated. The vast majority of California public employees will receive retirement income of less than $30,000 a year and most public employees don't receive Social Security or retirement health care benefits. I contribute to my own retirement each and every paycheck and will receive approximately $2,000 a month when I retire.

I imagine most of you on this commission live in California so you probably know that $24,000 would not afford a lavish retirement lifestyle. However, I am grateful to have it and I think it's important that all workers have the same opportunity that I have to save for their own retirement. I have always believed that if I work hard, save for my retirement and play by the rules than a secure retirement is not a reward but something I earned. However, pensions are being attacked and not just by news articles filled with half-truths. All retirement funds in this country were hit hard by this recession but that does not mean they are not sustainable. Much of the loss at Cal-PERS and other pension systems can be attributed to banks and Wall Street NOT playing by the rules and hopefully, something can be done about that.

I hope that this committee will look beyond the myths and look at the facts about California's Pension System. Because a secure retirement is not just important to workers but it's vital to California's future economy to have independent retirees who are not relying on public aid but rather their own contribution.

Thank you.