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June 21, 2016

Colorado PERA 2015 Investment Returns Top Benchmarks in Difficult Year

*Delivering positive returns in challenging financial markets during 2015,
PERA proves it is one of Colorado's best investments*

DENVER— Colorado PERA outperformed its policy benchmark as well as the public fund median return in 2015 according to its *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report* released today by the PERA Board of Trustees. PERA surpassed the policy benchmark set by the PERA Board of Trustees by 100 basis points, returning 1.5 percent for the year ending December 31, 2015. The total fund has outperformed the policy benchmark for the three-, and five-year time periods, with the long-term investment return for 35 years coming in at 9.5 percent. The total fund benchmark represents the Board's policy allocation to different kinds of investments in the PERA portfolio that ensure long-term stability for the plan.

In 2015, PERA distributed \$4.3 billion to retirees who are former teachers, public safety officers, road and bridge workers, and other public employees. Of that \$4.3 billion, \$3.7 billion went to retirees who live in Colorado, helping to sustain the state's economy. PERA's investments in Colorado totaled \$448 million in 2015.

The total PERA fund return of 1.5 percent compares favorably to the BNY Mellon Performance and Risk Analytics' and Investment Metrics' Median Public Fund Universe return of -0.2 percent. The measure is comprised of 95 public pension funds with assets of approximately \$1.4 trillion. PERA's 10-year annualized rate of return was 6.0 percent compared to the BNY Mellon Performance and Risk Analytics' and Investment Metrics' Median Public Fund Universe return of 5.5 percent.

"It was a very challenging year in terms of the investment markets," said PERA Executive Director Gregory W. Smith. "We were able to achieve a positive return in an environment when a number of other public funds did not, which affirms PERA's investment strategy and allows us to offer our retirees and the entire state a reliable source of economic stability. As a long-term investor, we understand there are ebbs and flows to the market and are built to withstand them," Smith concluded.

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Retiree benefits for employees in all divisions within PERA are projected to be secure as a result of benefit structure changes that primarily resulted from legislation enacted in 2010 by the Colorado General Assembly.

PERA's *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report* is available [here](#).

Colorado PERA provides retirement and other benefits to more than 547,000 current and former teachers, State Troopers, corrections officers, snow plow drivers, and other public employees who provide valuable service to all of Colorado. PERA is a vital and stable contributor to Colorado's economy, distributing \$3.7 billion in 2015 to retirees who live in Colorado. PERA manages \$46.1 billion in defined benefit and defined contribution assets, and helps sustain more than 29,000 jobs, making it one of Colorado's best investments.

