

# **Editorial: Bankrupt public-employee pensions a looming crisis**

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As the media relentlessly focus on the federal government's burgeoning debt, a new report says that states face their own ticking debt bomb: the exploding liabilities for lavish state and local public-employee pensions. Reform won't be easy, but there is no choice.

A new report by the Pew Charitable Trusts shows that the problem is getting out of hand. In 2016, the most recent full year for which data are available, states were more than \$1.4 trillion in the red. Pension debt has increased for 15 straight years, and shows no signs of abating.

Indeed, as Reason blogger Eric Boehm notes, "The really scary part is that pension debt keeps increasing despite the fact that taxpayers' contributions to state-level pension plans have doubled as a share of state revenue in the past decade."

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