

Sample Language for Valuation Reports

(Assumes language appears in risk assessment section of valuation report and that LDROM methods and assumptions are disclosed in the methods and assumptions section of the report.)

The pension plan invests in a diversified portfolio of stocks, bonds, real estate, and private equity with the objective of maximizing investment returns at a reasonable level of risk. The potential for investment returns to be different than expected is a key risk for the plan. Reducing the plan's investment risk by investing solely in bonds, however, would also likely reduce the plan's investment returns thereby increasing the amount of contributions needed over the long term.

The Low-Default-Risk Obligation Measure (LDROM) represents what the funding liability would be if the plan invested its assets solely in a portfolio of high-quality bonds whose cash flows approximately match future benefit payments. Consequently, the difference between the plan's Actuarial Accrued Liability and the LDROM can be thought of as representing the expected taxpayer savings from investing in the plan's diversified portfolio compared to investing only in high quality bonds.

ASOP 4 also requires commentary to help the intended user understand the significance of the low-default-risk obligation measure with respect to the funded status of the plan, plan contributions, and the security of participant benefits.

COMMENTARY ON SIGNIFICANCE -- OPTION 1

The LDROM helps understand the cost of investing in an all-bond portfolio and significantly lowering expected long-term investment returns. The funded status and Actuarially Determined Contributions are determined using the expected return on assets which reflects the actual investment portfolio. Benefit security for members of the plan relies on a combination of the assets in the plan, the investment returns generated on those assets, and the promise of future contributions from the plan sponsors.

Since the assets are not invested in an all-bond portfolio, the LDROM does not indicate the funding status or progress, nor provide information on necessary plan contributions or the security of participant benefits. The difference between the plan's Actuarial Accrued Liability and the LDROM can be thought of as representing the expected taxpayer savings from investing in the plan's diversified portfolio compared to investing only in high quality bonds.

COMMENTARY ON SIGNIFICANCE -- OPTION 2

The actuarial valuation reports the funded status and develops contributions based on the expected return of the plan's investment portfolio. If instead, the plan switched to investing exclusively in high quality bonds, the LDROM illustrates that reported funded status would be lower (which also implies that the Actuarially Determined Contributions would be higher), perhaps significantly. Unnecessarily high contribution requirements in the near term may not be affordable and could imperil plan sustainability and benefit security.



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