

2024 General Election Results

CSEA-endorsed candidates triumphed across Connecticut on November 5th, with 66 out of 86 local endorsements turning into decisive victories. This resounding success reinforces what we know: Connecticut stands as a pro-worker, pro-union state. The growing pro-labor majority in our state legislature is set to significantly impact our members' jobs, contracts, and working conditions, making our political involvement essential to the union's overall strength. These results are especially critical as we prepare for battles over fiscal roadblocks that threaten our livelihoods.

Our endorsement process is rigorous and transparent. It begins with candidates reaching out to CSEA for consideration. Only those who actively request endorsement move forward to receive an extensive questionnaire.

Upon submission, candidates participate in interviews conducted collaboratively with our SEIU siblings—SEIU 1199, SEIU 32BJ, 4Cs, and CEUI/MEUI. This nonpartisan process led us to endorse candidates from both major parties this year. The CSEA Legislative Action Committee (LAC) reviews each interview and makes recommendations, which are then brought to the CSEA Executive Council for final approval.

Any CSEA member can join the LAC and be part of this influential work. If you want to take a more active role in shaping the future of our state and supporting candidates who stand with labor, contact our Political Director, Danny Medress, at dmedress@csea760.com.

As we head into the new legislative session, our engagement with these elected officials is

Council 400 Quarterly Virtual Meeting

Wednesday, December 18th 4:00PM

Guest Speaker: Rae-Ellen Roy, Assistant Director of Healthcare Policy & Benefit Services Division, Office of the State Comptroller, and Kristin Grose, Aetna Senior Account Director, Group Retiree Solutions

Sign on to Zoom
Enter Meeting ID:

838 6801 8842

By Phone: 1 929 205 6099

The speakers will answer questions regarding your retiree healthcare plans

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR EMAIL -
MORE INFORMATION WILL BE SENT SOON

crucial. We need to push forward on issues that matter most to CSEA members—from the paraeducator bill and the SEBAC contract to measures ensuring strong state

contracting standards and safeguarding our right to unionize. Your involvement is key to our continued success.

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East Haven Paraeducators Highlight Staffing Crisis at Board of Education Meeting

On November 12th, over 50 East Haven paraeducators walked into the Board of Education meeting to deliver a message about the ongoing staffing shortages that are directly impacting student success. Hannah Pellegrino, Angela Catalano, and Cindy Giammatti addressed the board with a statement on behalf of the bargaining unit:

We have come here, along with our fellow paraeducators to take the opportunity to address the Board through public comment, to express our very deep frustration with the current state of the paraeducator position in East Haven Public Schools.

For quite some time now, the District has been operating with a significant shortage in para staffing. There are currently multiple open positions in many of our schools, which cannot be filled fast enough. Furthermore, it is very common for these positions to be filled and then leave after a very short time. The turnover is downright brutal. This has created a very difficult situation for those of us who have decided to remain. But more importantly, it has seriously impaired our ability to provide the care and support that our students deserve and need. Morale is currently very low.

We have students that we care for and love, who need constant one on one support, that we cannot attend to properly because their para has been assigned multiple students. We have newly hired paras who are sent to deal with their assignments without any training, who end up resigning within weeks and even days, because they felt unsupported while being given immense responsibility. And it is all due to this shortage.



Over 50 paraeducators walked into the BOE meeting to deliver a message to elected officials.

And yes, this position demands incredible responsibility for those who undertake it. The education, health and safety of each of those students we love so much is in our hands and yet many seem to still have the impression that this is some sort of throw-away position where the turnover doesn't matter. Each year, more and more students enter our district with special needs and requirements. In the course of paras attending those needs, they get

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Visit our union's website at: CSEA-CT.com

Postmaster: Please forward address changes to:
CSEA, 760 CAPITOL AVE., HARTFORD, CT 06106

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Meetings And News

The December Delegates Meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday December 19th at 10am at the CSEA Union Hall and via Zoom

Chapter 401 (Hartford area)
Thursday, January 7th - 1pm
Guest Speaker: Aetna Rep.
CSEA Union Hall & Zoom
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Zoom Mtg ID: 83617277918
Patrice Peterson
(860) 416-0306

Chapter 402 (Danbury area)
Holiday Luncheon
Wednesday, December 11th
12pm at Chuck's Steakhouse
20 Segar St., Danbury, CT
Luncheon will include: Salad Bar, choice of Entree, Dessert and coffee/tea. Choose your entree at the luncheon
Cost: \$25.00 per person
Reservation: send a check made to CSEA Chapter 402 Send by 12/6 to:
Krista L Judson
475 Berkshire Rd
Southbury, CT 06488
Krista (203) 231-4176

Chapter 402 (Danbury area)
Wed., January 8th - 10am
United Methodist Church
5 Clapboard Ridge Road
Danbury, CT
Linda Albanese
(860) 354-6965

Chapter 403 (Norwich area)
Holiday Luncheon
Tuesday, Dec. 10th - 11:30am
Prime Restaurant - Norwich
182 West Town Street
RSVP by December 5th
Fish, Chicken or Steak
Members; \$20, \$24 or \$26
Guests; \$22, \$26 or \$28
Checks to "Chapter 403"
Sent to: Richard Kerrigan
82 Case Street
Norwich, CT 06360

Chapter 404 (Waterbury area)
Holiday Luncheon
Tues, December 10 - 12pm
San Marino's Restaurant
Cost is; \$15 per Member
\$20 per Non-Member Spouse
And \$30 per Guest
RSVP by November 29th
Checks payable to:
"CSEA Chapter 404" send:
CSEA Chapter 404
c/o Tina Franco
45 Peach Orchard Road
Prospect, CT 06712-1052

Chapter 405 (New Haven)
Holiday Luncheon
Thurs., December 12th
12:00pm to 3:00pm
Terrace at the Green
Traditions Golf Club
37 Harrison Rd., Wallingford
Cost is: \$20 per member
\$25 for non-member spouses
\$30 for each guest
Space is Limited to 70 people
Lunch Buffet will be available

RSVP by November 29th to:
CSEA Chapter 405 c/o
Bill Morico
470 Ellsworth Avenue
New Haven, CT 06511

Chapter 405 (New Haven)
Thurs., January 9th - 10:30am
Guest speaker: Aetna Rep.
Hamden Government
Center Building, 3rd Floor
2750 Dixwell Ave., Hamden
Sue Pierson (203) 376-7207

Chapter 406 (Middletown)
Annual Holiday Luncheon
Tues, December 3rd - 11am
Location: Athenian Diner
864 Washington St.,
Middletown, CT
Cost: Pay what you order
RSVP by November 26 to:
Joe Formica (860) 347-4532

Chapter 407 (Bridgeport area)
Holiday Luncheon
Wednesday, December 11th
Riverview Bistro at 12:30pm
946 Ferry Blvd., Stratford, CT
Order off the menu

Chapter 408 (Willimantic)
Holiday Luncheon
Thursday, December 12
11:30am to 3:00pm
Georgina's Italian Restaurant
275 Boston Turnpike, Bolton
\$30 for Chapter 408 Members
\$40 per Guest
Chicken Francaise, Sliced
Sirloin, or Baked Stuffed Sole
RSVP Deadline: Dec 2nd
Checks to: CSEA Chapter 408 sent to:
Christine Ashe,
141 Love Lane,
Coventry, CT 06238
Christine (860) 742-0667

Chapter 408 (Willimantic)
Wed., January 8th, 12:30pm
Guest Speaker: Cigna Dental
Representative, Angie Nelson
Mansfield Senior Center
303 Maple Rd., Storrs
Doug Racicot (860) 234-2537

Chapter 409 (Retired
State University Professors)
Friday, December 20th - 10am
CSEA Union Hall & Zoom
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Zoom ID: 868 8922 7158
Dave Walsh (860) 684-4773

Chapter 410 (Windsor area)
Holiday Luncheon
Monday, December 9th
12pm to 3pm
Figaro Restaurant
90 Elm Street, Enfield
Chapter 410 Member - \$18
First Guest - \$18
Additional Guests - \$27
Eggplant Parm, Veal Parm,
Chicken Francaise, New York
Sirloin, Stuffed Sole
Checks to: CSEA Chapter 410
RSVP by December 2nd to:
Oscar Gomez
33 Sylvester Street
Springfield, MA 01109
Oscar: (413) 246-2829

Chapter 411 (Rocky Hill area)
Holiday Luncheon
Thursday, Dec. 19 12:30pm
Casa Mia on the Green
600 Cold Spring Rd

Rocky Hill, CT
Choice: Chicken Parmigiana,
Grilled Salmon, or Prime Rib
Dinner includes: Appetizers,
Salad, Pasta, Potato,
Vegetables, Dessert,
Coffee or Tea
Members: \$20.00
Guests: \$40.00
Make checks payable to: CSEA Chapter
411
Mail payment to:
Joy Gutis
34 Farview Rd
Brookfield, CT 06804
Questions/Dietary Restrictions
Call Joy: (860) 966-3340

Chapter 412 (Putnam area)
Holiday Potluck Luncheon
Tues., December 17 - 1:30pm
Speaker: Kevin Sullivan,
CSEA Retiree Organizer
Putnam Town Hall 1st Floor
200 School Street, Putnam
Call Don to let him know the
dish you are bringing!
Don Gladding (860) 933-9998

Chapter 414 (Torrington area)
Holiday Luncheon
Monday, December 9 at 11am
The Log House
110 New Hartford Road,
Barkhamsted, CT 06063
Lunch options: Chicken, Fish, Pork or
Pot Roast
Cost \$20 per member
\$25 per guest. Accommodations may
be
made for vegetarians/allergies
RSVP by calling Peaches
Miller at (860) 830-0632

Chapter 415 (Manchester)
Holiday Luncheon
Mon., December 16 - 12pm
The Hollow at
Manchester Country Club
Cost is: \$30/member &
\$40/non-member spouse
or one guest
Checks payable to:
"CSEA Retiree Chapter 415"
RSVP by Nov. 27th to:
William A Dorn
848 Center Street
Manchester, CT 06040

Chapter 416 (New London)
Holiday Luncheon
Tuesday, Dec. 10th at 12pm
Langley's Restaurant at
Great Neck Country Club
28 Lamphere Road, Waterford, CT
Members: \$19.50
Non-members: \$39.00
Menu: salad station, top
sirloin, chicken piccata,
vodka rigatoni, oven-roasted
potatoes, asparagus, cookies,
lemon tarts, brownies, rolls,
coffee, and soft drinks.
RSVP by December 4th
Send your payment to:
Mr. John A. Knaff
191 Rogers Road
Groton, CT 06340
For questions, contact:
John at 860-857-4244

Chapter 417 (Plainville area)
Holiday Luncheon
Wed. December 11 - 12:30pm
Gobi Mongolian Grill
Southington, CT
\$10/member & \$20/guest
Make checks payable to:

"CSEA Chapter 417"
Send to: Debra Eddy
105 Concord St.,
Bristol, CT 061010

Chapter 417 (Plainville area)
Wed., January 8th - 1pm
Plainville Public Library
56 East Main St., Plainville
Mark Kirschner
(860) 882-2717

Chapter 418
(Community College Retirees)
Tuesday, December 17 - 11am
Holiday Potluck Luncheon
Four C's Union Hall & Zoom
Zoom Meeting ID: 7421833716
Passcode: 6KUURC
907 Wethersfield Ave., Hartford, CT
Colleen Richard
(860) 202-4128

Chapter 441 (Cape Cod)
Holiday Luncheon
Wednesday, December 4
Time: 12:00 PM
Alberto's Ristorante
360 Main Street
Hyannis, Massachusetts
Richard Peterson
(203) 507-1189

Please Hold the Date for upcoming
Florida and South Carolina Meetings
with Aetna, Cigna, and Kevin Sullivan -
the CSEA Retiree Organizer!

Chapter 421 - Daytona, FL
Thursday, Feb 13th 11:30am
Crane's Roost Restaurant
1850 Crane Lakes Blvd,
Port Orange, FL 32128
\$15.00 per member, spouse/significant
other
Make checks payable to: "CSEA Chap-
ter 421"
Send checks to:
Ronald Eddy, Treasurer,
1433 Areca Palm Drive,
Port Orange, FL 32128, Checks should
be received by February 7, 2025. Please
indicate choice for your meal(s) on
your check from following options:
Chicken Caesar Salad, Cobb Salad,
Roost Burger, Charleston
Chicken Sandwich, Cheese Steak Sand-
wich, BLT Wrap, or, indicate vegetarian.
Side of your choice included, dessert
and non-alcoholic
drinks also included. Vegetarians can
choose selection off main menu
day of meeting.
Questions: Call John Veray, Sec'y, (386)
871-0573

Chapter 422 - Ocala, FL
Tuesday, February 18th
Check-in 11:30am
Social: 12 & lunch: 12:30pm
Francesco's Ristorante
16770 US-441
Summerfield, Florida
Please indicate menu choice:
Chicken Parmesan with pasta,
Sirloin Tips w/ mashed potato.
White Fish piccata with pasta,
Eggplant Rollatini (vegan).
All meals include salad, bread,
coffee/tea, soda and dessert
Door prizes and 50/50 raffle!
ASL Translation Available
Members: \$19 Guests: \$24
Make checks payable to: "CSEA Chap-
ter 422"

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Quick Tip: Earn your \$10 eStatement bonus before it's too late! The deadline to sign up for eStatements in order to receive the bonus is December 31st. For more information, visit www.CSECreditUnion.com.



Find all the essential information about the products and services we have to offer. You can even print a loan application online! Best of all, it's accessible from your personal computer 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.CSECreditUnion.com

**Closed Christmas Day
Wednesday, December 25th**

Dividend Rates - Third Quarter 2024

	Dividend Rate	Annual Percentage Yield
REGULAR SHARES	2.50%	2.53%
SHARE DRAFTS (Checking)	1.25%	1.26%
CLUB ACCOUNTS	2.00%	2.02%

Minimum opening balance \$25.00. The annual percentage yield is accurate as of the last dividend declaration date. Rate may change after the account is opened. Fees or other conditions may reduce the earnings on the account.

7 Full Service Offices To Serve You

NORWICH Uncas on Thames 401 West Thames St. Norwich, CT 06306 (860) 889-7378	HARTFORD 84 Wadsworth St. Hartford, CT 06106 (860) 522-5388 (Savings) (860) 522-7147 (Loans)	NEW HAVEN 1666 Litchfield Turnpike Woodbridge, CT 06525 (203) 397-2949
MIDDLETOWN 15 Ward Street Middletown, CT 06457 (860) 347-0479	STORRS 1244 Storrs Rd. Storrs, CT 06268 (860) 429-9306	SOUTHBURY Southbury Training School P.O. Box 644 Southbury, CT 06488 (203) 267-7610
		NEWINGTON O'Neil Plaza 2434 Berlin Turnpike Newington, CT 06111 (860) 667-7668

Hours: Main Office: Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Branches: Mon-Fri, 9:30am-4pm
Drive-Up Teller (Hartford & Middletown): Mon-Fri, 8:30am-4pm; Paydays Open Until 5pm

**Gone too Soon:
CSEA Members Who Have Passed On**

The Office of the State Comptroller has provided CSEA with the following members that have recently passed away. Our condolences are with their friends, family and loved ones.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Alspaugh, Steven, Correctional Officer | Pinney, David, Correctional Officer |
| Anderson, Bert, Protective Services | Resnick, Stanley, Judicial |
| Arsenault, Carolyn, Judicial | Richardson, Mary, Healthcare |
| Bepko, Rose Marie, Administrative Clerical | Sacks, Helen, Judicial |
| Blonshine, Lorraine, Healthcare | Skaff, Teresa, Health Professional |
| Bundy, William, Healthcare | Smith, David, Judicial Marshals |
| Bussa, Patricia, Administrative Clerical | Stevens, Ronald, Service/Maintenance |
| Bysiewicz, Peter, Service/Maintenance | Surdyka, Mary, Administrative Clerical |
| Carr, Thomasina, State University Employee | Sylvester, Marc, Healthcare |
| Coles, Phylisha, Confidential Employee | Timmeny, Thomas, State Police |
| Colucci, Roberta, Service/Maintenance | Tully, George, Judicial |
| Gavlik, Robert, St Vocation Federation Teacher | Wdowiak, Henry, Judicial |
| Gibault, Lorraine, Uconn Health | Weglarz, Justine, Administrative Clerical |
| Gunn, Janet, Protective Services | White, Charles, Education |
| Huckenbeck, Ann, Judicial | Wilson, Terry, Service/Maintenance |
| Hurley, Eric, Correctional Officer | Young, Joanne, Healthcare |
| Jones, James, Healthcare | |
| Judson, Floyd, Service/Maintenance | |
| Knudsen, John, Social And Human Services | |
| Kostin, Mark, Judicial | |
| Lambert, Ada, Comm College Faculty | |
| Levine, Donna, Uconn | |
| Lizee, Raymond, Service/Maintenance | |
| Marco, Gordon, Judicial Marshals | |
| Marone, Joseph, Health Professional | |
| Marshall-Jackson, Susan, Administrative Clerical | |
| Mayo, James, Service/Maintenance | |
| Miller, Emanuel, Service/Maintenance | |
| Miller, George, Managerial | |
| Molis, Joan, Health Professional | |
| Muggeo, Barbara, State Police | |
| Pease, Sandra, Admin And Residual | |

CSEA NEWS

The Voice of Connecticut's
Public Service Employees & Retirees

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Published Monthly by:

CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

Local 2001, Service Employees International Union, CTW/CLC

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Travis Woodward |President |
| Diane Murphy |Secretary/Treasurer |
| David Glidden |Executive Director |
| Drew E. Stoner |Communication Director |
| Jason P. Webster |Graphic/ Technical Assistance |

INSERTION DEADLINE: 1st of prior month.

MAILING ADDRESS: CSEA/SEIU Local 2001, 760 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106; PHONES: (860) 951-6614, toll-free: (800) 894-9479, FAX: (860) 951-3526; INTERNET: www.csea-ct.com.

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The inclusion of advertising in the CSEA News does not constitute an endorsement



What to Do When a State of Connecticut Retiree Passes

By: Kevin Sullivan, Retiree Organizer

When a State of Connecticut retiree passes away, there are several important steps that need to be taken to ensure that all benefits, accounts, and necessary procedures are properly managed. Here's a quick guide to assist you during this difficult time.

1. Notification of the Retirement Services Division

Contact the Office of the State Comptroller's Retirement Services Division to report the retiree's death. This can be done by emailing, or calling the Retirement Division.

Email: osc.rethealth@ct.gov

Payroll: (860) 702-3480

Health Insurance: (860) 702-3533

Group Life: (860) 702-3537

It is best to contact all three departments of the Comptroller's Office because some departments utilize remote work from home days and the calls cannot always be transferred.

2. Pension Payments - Payroll: (860) 702-3480

Stop Direct Deposits: Upon notification, the Retirement Services Division will discontinue the

retiree's monthly pension payments.

Survivor Benefits: The beneficiary or surviving spouse should inquire about survivor benefits. If the retiree had elected a pension option that provides benefits to a spouse or another beneficiary, the Retirement Services Division will provide guidance on how to proceed.

3. Health Insurance: (860) 702-3533

Stop Health Benefits: Upon notification, the Retirement Services Division will discontinue the retiree's healthcare benefits.

Survivor Benefits: The beneficiary or surviving spouse should inquire about survivor benefits. If the retiree had elected a survivor healthcare option that continues healthcare benefits to a spouse or another beneficiary, the Retirement Services Division will provide guidance on how to proceed.

4. Life Insurance - Group Life: (860) 702-3537

If the retiree had State of Connecticut group life insurance, contact the Group Life department at the Comptroller's Office. If you

are unsure about the existence of a life insurance policy through the State, please call the Group Life number to find out.

5. Death Certificate

Obtain multiple copies of the certified death certificate through the: **Local Town Clerk:** You can request a death certificate from the town clerk's office in the town where the death occurred or where the deceased person lived at the time of death.

Or through the **State Vital Records Office:** You can also request it from the Connecticut Department of Public Health's Vital Records Office in Hartford.

This will be needed to settle various aspects of the retiree's estate. The Comptroller's Office will only need one copy, it will be applied to the deceased member's record for all State of Connecticut departments.

6. Contacting the Union

If the retiree was a member of the CSEA Council 400 Retiree Union, notify the union about the retiree's death. If you would like to continue union membership, please let the staff know.

Retiree Organizer Contact: Kevin Sullivan - (860) 951-6614 x 118.

7. Update of Records

Social Security: Contact the Social Security Administration to inform them of the retiree's passing. Benefits may change, and there may be a death benefit for eligible survivors.

Additional Notes

Future Changes: It's important to stay informed about any future changes to retiree benefits as outlined in the SEBAC agreements. Changes to (Cost of Living Adjustments) COLAs, health insurance premiums, and other benefit-related aspects may affect the survivor's benefits. Remaining a CSEA retiree member will help you stay informed.

This guide provides an overview of the steps to take following the death of a State of Connecticut retiree. Always reach out to the appropriate departments and organizations for specific guidance tailored to individual circumstances.

Council 400 December Meetings (continued)

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Send checks to:

Hilda Spotts

513 Fairways Circle - Unit A
Ocala, FL 34472,

Checks should be received
by January 30, 2025

Questions?

Frank Berlinski: 860 604-7688
or Hilda: (352) 843-7988

Chapter 423 - Boca Raton, FL

Date: Monday, February 10th

Renzo's Cafe & Pizzeria

6900 N Federal Hwy, Boca
Raton

Chapter 424 - Sarasota, FL

Date: Thursday, February 6th

Carlisle Inn & Conference
Center

3727 Bahia Vista St, Sarasota

Chapter 425 - Clearwater, FL

Date: Tuesday, February 4th

Perkins Restaurant 10:30am
3:00pm

2626 Gulf to Bay Blvd, Clear-
water

Southwest Avocado Salad;
Steak Tips and Bell Peppers;
Teriyaki Glazed Chicken Skillet
and

Grilled Fish & Shrimp includes
a beverage and choice of
dessert

Cost: \$18.00 per person.

Make Checks payable to:
"CSEA Chapter 425"

Mail to: Richard LeVine

1020 South Tennessee Ave

Lakeland, FL 33803

Richard: (813) 732-2219

Chapter 426 - Ft. Myers, FL

Date: Friday, February 7th

KJ's Steakhouse

10950 S Cleveland Ave,
Fort Myers, Florida

Chapter 427: Vero Beach, FL

Tuesday, February 11th

Social: 11-12pm, lunch: 12pm

Meeting to follow at 12:30pm

Elks Lodge No. 1520

608 S 5th St

Fort Pierce, FL 34950-8336

Lunch Buffet with Roast Pork,
Baked White Fish Primavera,

Au gratin potatoes, salad, rolls

ASL Translation Available

Make checks payable to:

"CSEA Chapter 427"

Send checks to:

Deborah Manganaro

10111 Greatwoods Pond Dr

Fort Pierce, FL 34945

Checks should be received

by February 1, 2025

Questions?

Call Deb (203) 910-2049

Chapter 431: Carolinas Chap-
ter

Date: Thursday, February 20th

Golden Corral,

868 Oak Forest Lane

Myrtle Beach, SC

Buffet Luncheon - \$10/ person

RSVP by sending check to:

Virginia Nolan

3204 S Memorial Ave

Nags Head, NC 27959

RSVP soon - space is limited!

Questions? Call John Yopp

(203) 507-1022



CLEARING THE ROADBLOCKS: PAVING THE WAY FOR A CT FOR ALL

In the spring of 2023, Connecticut passed a budget with a **\$3.3 billion surplus**, the second largest in state history. Meanwhile, our communities' **basic needs are not being met amidst budget cuts and understaffing**. It's time to come together with our elected leaders to discuss how we can address the crisis of need and invest in our people.



Tuesday, December 3rd



ARRIVAL 1:00PM

PROGRAM 1:30 PM-2:30 PM



Christ Church Cathedral:

955 Main St, Hartford

(Across from Capital Community College)



Speaker Matt Ritter



Rep. Josh Elliot

This is a panel discussion for members of our organizations to come together to discuss important issues, and hear from our community about what's at stake in 2025.

REGISTER [BIT.LY/CTFATOWNHALL](https://bit.ly/ctfatownhall)



CSEA Responds to Lamont's Emergency Cuts Amid Historic Surplus

Connecticut is navigating an unfortunate paradox as Governor Ned Lamont enacts mid-year budget cuts despite the state's projected \$1.6 billion surplus. These cuts, targeting state agencies and public colleges, come in response to a projected \$394 million overrun in expenses, driven by Medicaid costs and about \$200M in built-in lapses. While Lamont justifies the decision as necessary fiscal caution, it has sparked concern among union leaders, educators, and some legislators who understand that these reductions are counterproductive in the face of a surplus.

In a story covered by Keith Phaneuf in the *CT Mirror* on November 15th, "Lamont moves to tighten CT spending despite projected surplus", CSEA President Travis Woodward sharply criticized the approach, highlighting that such budget cuts undermine vital public services and threaten the stability of the workforce. "How does it make sense to make cuts in times of great surplus?" added Travis Woodward, President of CSEA SEIU Local 2001, the union that represents state transportation engineers and planners. "We've experienced difficult financial times in the past. Hiring freezes and

'efficiency' cuts have been necessary — but these are not one of those times."

Connecticut's adherence to strict budget controls, including spending and revenue caps put in place in 2017, is impeding the state's ability to address urgent needs effectively. These controls were designed to build reserves and pay down pension liabilities, which they have done successfully. However, as Woodward and others point out, maintaining these controls at the expense of public services and investment will do more harm than good in the long run.

The impact on public colleges is particularly troubling, as institutions have already been stretched thin by years of funding constraints. Reducing resources further could erode the quality of education, limit access for students, and compromise the state's long-term economic competitiveness by weakening the workforce pipeline. State agencies, facing similar financial pressures, risk losing their capacity to deliver essential services effectively, which impacts everyone, from working families to the state's most vulnerable populations.

Lawmakers and union representatives are ad-

vocating for a reassessment of the 2017 fiscal "guardrails," or what we call, the roadblocks, which have served their purpose but now limit the state's ability to make strategic investments. This call to action is underpinned by the recognition that today's surplus presents an opportunity to strengthen, not shrink, public support systems. In a state with clear economic disparities and rising costs of living, investing in public infrastructure, healthcare, and education is critical to addressing systemic challenges and ensuring a fairer distribution of resources.

The path forward, as Woodward and other labor advocates suggest, lies in balancing fiscal responsibility with the urgent need for strategic reinvestment in Connecticut's people and public services. Without such measures, budget cuts in the shadow of a surplus threaten to undermine years of progress and stability. As the legislative session approaches, the call for a shift from austerity measures to proactive public investment is louder than ever. It is a call that union members, educators, and advocates must echo to ensure that Connecticut's policies align with the well-being and prosperity of all its residents.

East Haven Paras Demand More for their Students

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screamed at, bitten, kicked and spit on. They are one misread gesture or word away from having DCF called on them. Many are forced to take on other jobs to make ends meet and most are not even able to qualify or afford their own health insurance. They are the first to get reprimanded or called on when something goes wrong.

We cannot perform our duties under these conditions. We will not be able to fill the open positions over the long term while making people work under these conditions. We cannot serve our students efficiently under these conditions. We demand change. We demand respect. Yes, we do not feel respected and it is not just one or two people who feel that way as it has been suggested. That is why we are here today.

We do not feel appreciated and we do not feel respected. Which is why we want to share with this Board a specific list of things that paras have been clamoring for to help us do our job and give the students of East Haven the education they deserve.

1. We need better and more efficient training, at all levels but especially when starting out as new hires. It is not reasonable for newly hired para

to be given a stack of papers, a list of modules and zero training, then thrown into the job without even explaining what the position entails.

2. Speaking of training, let us be specific and make sure to mention we mean paid training. It is also unreasonable to expect paras to complete live training or training modules that are required for our job, to be done on our private time. We have families just like you do. We have 2nd and in some cases third jobs because we do not make enough money. Training is part of work. You want us to work, pay us.

3. Still regarding training, it has often been the case that paras who require training for specific things they are doing like CPI, training to handle specific equipment or to assist students with mobility issues are often met with disdain and the para feels they are somehow getting in trouble for wanting to serve the students better. This is not acceptable. Also, if the request is met, it is often done in a dismissive and incomplete manner. Students deserve better. We deserve better.

4. We need more participation in the schools we work at. We are often treated as second class workers and decisions are often made without our input even though they affect us di-

rectly. This is part of our work.

5. We need better pay. We recognize that the district did offer solid pay increases on our last contract negotiations and this was done in the hope it would attract more people into the job. But we are halfway through the school year and it is safe to say that it was not enough. Starting salaries for paras need to start at around 20 dollars per hour and work their way up from there. It has always been the policy of the district to encourage people with college degrees and teaching certificates to apply for these positions but why would they? Why would a college graduate take a

job making less than \$20,000 dollars a year while taking up so much responsibility, when they can get paid more, taking far less risk somewhere else?

With this message, we hope the Board of Education will begin to understand that definite, immediate changes need to start taking place. It is the education of our children that is at stake here. No school district can provide comprehensive education services to children with special needs without a trained, professional workforce providing these services in a safe and adequate work environment. Thank you for your time.



Paraeducators from across East Haven schools came together to deliver an important message to the Board of Education.

Go Green!

Sign up to have the CSEA News be sent digitally rather than a hardcopy in the mail.

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2024 General Election Results

Candidate Name	Office Sought	District	Results
Chris Murphy	US Senate	Statewide	Won
John Larson	US House	1	Won
Joe Courtney	US House	2	Won
Rosa DeLauro	US House	3	Won
Jim Himes	US House	4	Won
Jahana Hayes	US House	5	Won
Saud Anwar	State Senate	3	Won
MD Rahman	State Senate	4	Won
Rick Lopes	State Senate	6	Won
Cynthia Mangini	State Senate	7	Lost
Matt Lesser	State Senate	9	Won
Gary Winfield	State Senate	10	Won
Martin Looney	State Senate	11	Won
Christine Cohen	State Senate	12	Won
Jan Hochadel	State Senate	13	Won
Jorge Cabrera	State Senate	17	Won
Catherine Osten	State Senate	19	Won
Martha Marx	State Senate	20	Won
Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox	State Senate	22	Won
Julie Kushner	State Senate	24	Won
Bob Duff	State Senate	25	Won
Ceci Maher	State Senate	26	Won
Rob Blanchard	State Senate	28	Lost
Mae Flexer	State Senate	29	Won
Norm Needleman	State Senate	33	Won
Brandi Mandato	State Senate	34	Lost
Merry Garrett	State Senate	35	Lost
Nick Simmons	State Senate	36	Lost
Matthew Ritter	State House	1	Won
Maryam Khan	State House	5	Won
Nancy Hammarstrom	State House	8	Lost
Jason Rojas	State House	9	Won
Geoffrey Luxenberg	State House	12	Won
Tom Delnicki	State House	14	Won
Bobby Gibson, Jr.	State House	15	Won
Jillian Gilchrest	State House	18	Won
Kate Farrar	State House	20	Won
Mike Demicco	State House	21	Won
Rebecca Martinez	State House	22	Won
Jane Wisialowski	State House	23	Lost
Manny Sanchez	State House	24	Won
David DeFronzo	State House	26	Won
Gary Turco	State House	27	Won
Amy Morrin Bello	State House	28	Won
Brandon Chafee	State House	33	Won
Nick Menapace	State House	37	Won
Nick Gauthier	State House	38	Won
Christine Conley	State House	40	Won
Aundré Bumgardner	State House	41	Won
Samantha Derenthal	State House	44	Lost
Christopher Rivers	State House	48	Lost
Susan Johnson	State House	49	Won
Renee LaPalme Waldron	State House	51	Lost
Ann Bonney	State House	53	Lost
Gregg Haddad	State House	54	Won
Amanda Veneziano	State House	55	Lost
Kevin Brown	State House	56	Won
Rick LeBorious	State House	59	Lost
Jane Garibay	State House	60	Won

Good Works Committee Update

November 2024 - The Thanks for Giving Drive

The Holidays can be a difficult time for many, and for decades the Good Works Committee has a tradition for providing for those in need at Thanksgiving. Please consider making a donation to this worthy cause, it is never too early to be thinking about helping members in need during the holidays. You can send checks to "CSEA Good Works" to CSEA, 760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT 06106. These Thanksgiving gift-cards are only made possible through the generous donations provided from money raised from Council, Chapter and Individual donations to the Good Works Committee.

March 1st and 2nd, 2025 - Special Olympics.

The Connecticut Winter Special Olympics Opening Ceremony date is set for Saturday, March 1st! If you would like an opportunity to volunteer helping the athletes during their events or the ceremonies, you can email bconway@csea760.com to get more information. The event is held at Ever-source in Windsor, 1985 Blue Hills Rd. Ext. You must sign up first, so please send an email for additional information.

Spring 2025 - Habitat for Humanity Build

This past May, the Good Works Committee had a great turnout of 20 volunteers from CSEA who took part in a Habitat for Humanity build in East Hartford. It was a fantastic day for our members to get to work building homes for others in need.

Plans are in the works to participate in this event again in Spring of 2025! If you would like to volunteer, email bconway@csea760.com, or if you would like to donate to this worthy cause, you can send a check to Good Works Committee, 760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT 06106. Not only are volunteers needed, but monetary donations are needed to sponsor the volunteers.

It is not too early to think about sponsorships for the Spring Habitat for Humanity Build! Each team of ten volunteers has a monetary sponsorship to make the event happen, so it is never too early to bring it up at chapter or councils meetings. Individuals can donate any amount as well!

2024 General Election Results

Candidate Name	Office Sought	District	Results
Kim Becker	State House	62	Lost
Maria Horn	State House	64	Won
Michelle Cook	State House	65	Lost
Ronald A Napoli	State House	73	Won
Jack Fazzino	State House	83	Won
Joshua Elliott	State House	88	Won
Rebecca Hyland	State House	90	Lost
Laurie Sweet	State House	91	Won
Patricia A Dillon	State House	92	Won
Kai Juanna Belton	State House	100	Won
Robin Comey	State House	102	Won
Kara Rochelle	State House	104	Won
Bob Godfrey	State House	110	Won
Beth Cliff	State House	112	Lost
MJ Shannon	State House	117	Won
Frank Smith	State House	118	Won
Kaitlyn Shake	State House	120	Won
Dottie Lerner	State House	122	Lost
Sarah Keitt	State House	134	Won
Anne M. Hughes	State House	135	Won
Kenneth Gucker	State House	138	Won
Kevin Ryan	State House	139	Won
Dominique Johnson	State House	143	Won
Corey P. Paris	State House	145	Won
David Michel	State House	146	Lost Primary Election
Matt Blumenthal	State House	147	Won

Does CSEA have your correct contact info on file? Update your info by scanning the QR code.



WEP/GPO Reform Bill Gaining Momentum in Congress: A Critical Step Forward for Teachers, but Funding Still Needed

This month, there has been significant progress in Congress on the much-anticipated reform bill addressing the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). These provisions have long posed unfair financial burdens on public sector workers, including our dedicated teachers, firefighters, and other public servants. The bill's movement through Congress marks

a pivotal victory in recognizing the decades-long advocacy by labor unions and education associations calling for fairness in how Social Security benefits are calculated.

For years, the WEP and GPO have penalized retired educators and other public workers by reducing Social Security benefits they earned through other employment or through spousal benefits. This unjust offset has

left countless retirees facing unexpected financial shortfalls, eroding the security they deserve after years of service. The new bill proposes to mitigate these reductions, ensuring fairer access to benefits.

While this progress is undeniably a win for teachers and all affected workers, it comes with a caveat: funding and further legislative progress are still needed to ensure this reform is comprehensive and sustainable. The bill's impact will depend on how it is financed and implemented. Ensuring equitable funding mechanisms is crucial for this bill to meet its intended goals without compromising other critical programs.

CSEA, alongside our national allies and advocacy partners, continues to push for legislation that not only rolls back the punitive effects of WEP and GPO but also guarantees long-term protections for our members. We must hold our legislators accountable to deliver a solution that is both just and fully supported by sustainable funding.



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Text "CSEA" to 787753 to get important updates from our union!

As this bill moves forward, member engagement is more important than ever. Reach out to your representatives, share your stories, and let them know why full support and funding for this reform are essential. Our union will continue to monitor the bill's progress and keep you informed on how we can collectively push for the changes that will benefit teachers and public workers across the country.

Union Under Fire: Addressing Recent Attacks on State Workers and Unions

Recent opinion pieces have launched significant criticisms at state employees, particularly focusing on wages, pensions, and health benefits. Understanding these perspectives and addressing them is vital for our union members as we prepare for upcoming negotiations and the legislative session.

These criticisms are not isolated opinions; they fuel legislative pushes to undermine unions, reduce public sector benefits, and erode collective bargaining rights, while ignoring the broader impact on public services and the state's economy. Cutting benefits and wages harms not just workers but the quality of services residents rely on daily, from education and

healthcare to public safety.

CSEA members stand firm against these mischaracterizations. We continue to fight for fair wages, secure health care, and earned pensions that protect workers and their families. State employees are not a "grave train"; they are the backbone of Connecticut's public infrastructure. As negotiations approach, solidarity and clear communication will be our strongest tools.

We urge members to stay informed, participate in union meetings, and engage with lawmakers. We must counter these narratives with facts and the voices of those directly impacted: the workers who make Connecticut thrive.

"Of course Connecticut's state employee pension system isn't a racket for everyone, but it is **often excessively generous**. It is a fair question as to **why state government should pay large pensions, or any pensions, to people earning substantial amounts in second careers.**"

— Chris Powell, "Pension System Politically Impossible to Mend" (Oct 8, 2024)

"**Rather than incentivizing nonprofits to promote union lobbyists, we should adopt the free-market reforms that increase prosperity for the people who need it most and support the common sense fiscal policies that will keep our state's balance sheet stable and strong.**"

— Frank Ricci, "A kidnapers bargain: linking CT union and nonprofit interests" (Nov 12, 2024)

"On the wage side, [Lamont] should be **demanding a wage freeze**, just as Malloy did. On the benefit side, he should also emulate his predecessor. Malloy negotiated **meaningful pension benefit reductions**. Yet, **further benefit reductions**, e.g. health care coverage reforms, are clearly needed. There is simply no reason that Connecticut state workers should enjoy vastly more generous health care coverage than state workers in all other states. **The state employee compensation gravy train must stop. It is patently unfair and unaffordable.**"

— Red Jahncke, "Stop the Gravy Train for CT Payroll Workers. Lamont Should Demand Wage Freeze" (Nov 13, 2024)

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