

Connecticut For All Launches Equity Agenda

*CSEA Members Join Nearly 200
Advocates at the State Capitol*

On January 14, 2025, CSEA SEIU Local 2001 members joined a powerful coalition of advocates, labor leaders, and state legislators at the Connecticut State Capitol to rally for critical investments in education, housing, healthcare, and workers' wages. The event underscored the need for budgetary flexibility to address Connecticut's most pressing needs, especially as lawmakers prepare for the 2025 legislative session.

The coalition is calling for modifications to the state's fiscal "guardrails"—

budgetary constraints put in place to manage state spending and revenue. These restrictions, which over-prioritize paying down state debt, have resulted in more than \$12.5 billion in supplemental debt payments in recent years. These policies have captured a greater share of state revenue than originally intended, forcing the state to underfund essential services despite record budget surpluses. Therefore should be called fiscal roadblocks, not guardrails.

The rally also highlighted the call for fair wages and benefits for publicly funded

continue onto page 4



Poll Reinforces Need to Address Fiscal Roadblocks for K-12 Funding

A recent poll commissioned by the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) reveals that only about 40% believe that the state government adequately funds K-12 education. The survey, which included 400 registered voters, also found that two-thirds of respondents support equal funding across all school

districts—a longstanding challenge for Connecticut.

The poll indicates that 51% of voters are willing to accept state tax increases to enhance school funding. Additionally, 60% of respondents support reallocating existing state resources to prioritize

continue onto page 6

Biden Signs WEP/GPO Social Security Bill

Connecticut Retirees Celebrate the Win in DC

We are thrilled to announce that after years of relentless advocacy and dedication by retirees and workers nationwide, including our very own Council 400 members, the Social Security Fairness Act was signed into law by President Biden on Sunday, January 5th. This landmark legislation repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), long-standing provisions that unfairly reduced or eliminated Social Security

benefits for retirees receiving pensions from non-Social Security-covered employment, such as the Connecticut Teachers' Retirement System (TRS).

This victory would not have been possible without the unwavering commitment of Bette Marafino, President of the Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans (CTARA). Bette's work was honored with the opportunity to introduce President Biden ahead of this

continue onto page 4



Bette Marafino (Right) walks with former President Joe Biden following the historic signing of the WEP/GPO bill.

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

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

Also in this Edition:

Page 2 & 5:

February Meetings

Page 5:

What's in the Equity
Agenda

Page 5:

House Bill to Reform
Fiscal Roadblocks

Page 6:

Good Works
Committee

Page 7:

Members Op-Eds

Page 7:

Why Progressive
Taxation?

Page 8:

Solidarity Season

Page 8:

State Employees and
Unions are Under
Attack



Meetings And News

<p>The February Delegates Meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday February 20th at 10am at the CSEA Union Hall and via Zoom</p>	<p>303 Maple Rd., Storrs Doug Racicot (860) 234-2537</p> <p>Chapter 409 (Retired State University Professors) Friday, February 21st - 10am CSEA Union Hall & Zoom 760 Capitol Ave., Hartford Zoom ID: 868 8922 7158 Dave Walsh (860) 684-4773</p>	<p>Lobby Day at the Capitol 210 Capitol Ave., Hartford Colleen Richard (860) 202-4128</p> <p>Out of State Meetings with Speakers from Aetna, Cigna, and Kevin Sullivan the CSEA Retiree Organizer!</p>	<p>Chapter 423 - Boca Raton, FL Monday, February 10th 12pm Renzo's Cafe & Pizzeria 6900 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton Cost: \$25 per person Make checks payable to: "CSEA Chapter 423" Send checks to: Philip Karas 278 Las Palmas St West Palm Beach, FL 33411 Ron Herzig: (954) 868-8941</p>
<p>Chapter 401 (Hartford area) Thursday, March 6th - 1pm CSEA Union Hall & Zoom 760 Capitol Ave., Hartford Zoom Mtg ID: 83617277918 Patrice Peterson: 860 416-0306</p>	<p>Chapter 410 (Windsor area) Monday, February 10th 1pm Suffield Senior Center 145 Bridge Street, Suffield Amelia Smith 860 687-1848</p>	<p>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 Chapter 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 Sandwich, 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</p>	<p>Chapter 424 - Sarasota, FL Thursday, February 6th - 9am Carlisle Inn & Conference Center (Behind Der Dutchman) 3727 Bahia Vista St, Sarasota Continental Breakfast \$20 per person RSVP by January 31, 2025 Checks to: CSEA Chapter 424 Sent to: Robert Mackiewicz 414 Pelican Moorings Venice, FL 34285 Phone (941) 497-2370</p>
<p>Chapter 402 (Danbury area) Wed., February 12th - 10am United Methodist Church 5 Clapboard Ridge Road Danbury, CT Linda Albanese: 860 354-6965</p>	<p>Chapter 411 (Rocky Hill area) Thursday, March 20 1pm Guest Speakers: Aetna Rep & Cigna Dental Representative, Angie Nelson CSEA Union Hall 760 Capitol Ave., Hartford And online via Zoom.com Meeting ID: 848 1334 1668 Passcode: 507358 Subby Puglisi 860 529-8336</p>	<p>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 Chapter 422" 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</p>	<p>Chapter 425 - Clearwater, FL Date: Tuesday, February 4th Perkins Restaurant 10:30am 3:00pm 2626 Gulf to Bay Blvd, Clearwater 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</p>
<p>Chapter 403 (Norwich area) Tuesday, Feb. 11th - 1:30pm Rose City Senior Center 8 Mahan Drive, Norwich Carol Burgess: 860 303-7267</p>	<p>Chapter 412 (Putnam area) Tues., February 18th - 1:30pm New Putnam Town Hall 200 School Street, Putnam Don Gladding (860) 933-9998</p>	<p>Chapter 423 - 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 Chapter 423" 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</p>	<p>Chapter 426 - Ft. Myers, FL Friday, February 7th 11:30am KJ's Steakhouse 10950 S Cleveland Ave, Fort Myers, Florida Meal Choices: Meatloaf, Balsamic Herb Chicken, Maple Bourbon Salmon, or Vegetarian option (salad) All meals include; appetizers, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables and non-alcoholic beverages Cost: \$25 per person No Payments accepted at door Send check made payable to: "CSEA Chapter 426" along With meal choice. Send to: Linda Mathieu 5551 Lockett Rd Lot B25 Fort Myers, FL 33905 Debra Gould 203 605-6690</p>
<p>Chapter 404 (Waterbury area) Tuesday, Feb. 11th - 10am Guest Speaker: Connect Physical Therapy Trinity Orthodox Church 937 Chase Pkwy, Waterbury Tina Franco: (203) 721-4382</p>	<p>Chapter 414 (Torrington area) Monday, February 17 at 10am Speaker: Bernadette Conway CSEA Retiree Coordinator Five Point Extension Bldg 852 University Drive Torrington Kathryn Doan 860 324-8300</p>	<p>Chapter 424 - 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 Chapter 424" 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</p>	<p>Chapter 427 - Ft. Myers, FL Friday, February 7th 11:30am KJ's Steakhouse 10950 S Cleveland Ave, Fort Myers, Florida Meal Choices: Meatloaf, Balsamic Herb Chicken, Maple Bourbon Salmon, or Vegetarian option (salad) All meals include; appetizers, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables and non-alcoholic beverages Cost: \$25 per person No Payments accepted at door Send check made payable to: "CSEA Chapter 427" along With meal choice. Send to: Linda Mathieu 5551 Lockett Rd Lot B25 Fort Myers, FL 33905 Debra Gould 203 605-6690</p>
<p>Chapter 405 (New Haven) Thurs., Feb. 13th - 10:30am Speaker: Cigna Dental Hamden Government Center Building, 3rd Floor 2750 Dixwell Ave., Hamden Sue Pierson (203) 376-7207</p>	<p>Chapter 415 (Manchester) Mon., February 24th - 1pm Speaker: Richard Gentile Probate Judge Elks Lodge in Manchester 30 Bissell Street Stu Clark: (860) 205-0657</p>	<p>Chapter 425 - 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 Chapter 425" 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</p>	<p>Chapter 428 - Ft. Myers, FL Friday, February 7th 11:30am KJ's Steakhouse 10950 S Cleveland Ave, Fort Myers, Florida Meal Choices: Meatloaf, Balsamic Herb Chicken, Maple Bourbon Salmon, or Vegetarian option (salad) All meals include; appetizers, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables and non-alcoholic beverages Cost: \$25 per person No Payments accepted at door Send check made payable to: "CSEA Chapter 428" along With meal choice. Send to: Linda Mathieu 5551 Lockett Rd Lot B25 Fort Myers, FL 33905 Debra Gould 203 605-6690</p>
<p>Chapter 406 (Middletown) Tues. Feb. 11th - 12:30pm Speaker: CSEA Regional VP, Robert Rinker American Legion Post 75 58 Bernie O'Rourke Dr. Middletown, CT</p>	<p>Chapter 416 (New London) Tuesday, Feb. 11th at 12pm Speaker: Cigna Dental Groton Public Library 52 Newtown Rd., Groton John Knaff: 860-857-4244</p>	<p>Chapter 426 - 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 Chapter 426" 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</p>	<p>Chapter 429 - Ft. Myers, FL Friday, February 7th 11:30am KJ's Steakhouse 10950 S Cleveland Ave, Fort Myers, Florida Meal Choices: Meatloaf, Balsamic Herb Chicken, Maple Bourbon Salmon, or Vegetarian option (salad) All meals include; appetizers, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables and non-alcoholic beverages Cost: \$25 per person No Payments accepted at door Send check made payable to: "CSEA Chapter 429" along With meal choice. Send to: Linda Mathieu 5551 Lockett Rd Lot B25 Fort Myers, FL 33905 Debra Gould 203 605-6690</p>
<p>Chapter 407 (Bridgeport area) Wednesday, Feb. 19th 1pm St. Josephs of Stratford National Catholic Church 1300 Stratford Rd., Stratford Zoom ID: 872 4952 3823 Passcode: 000891 Liz Anderson (203) 676-0659</p>	<p>Chapter 417 (Plainville area) Wed., February 12th - 1pm Plainville Public Library 56 East Main St., Plainville Mark Kirschner (860) 882-2717</p>	<p>Chapter 427 - 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 Chapter 427" 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</p>	<p>Chapter 430 - Ft. Myers, FL Friday, February 7th 11:30am KJ's Steakhouse 10950 S Cleveland Ave, Fort Myers, Florida Meal Choices: Meatloaf, Balsamic Herb Chicken, Maple Bourbon Salmon, or Vegetarian option (salad) All meals include; appetizers, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables and non-alcoholic beverages Cost: \$25 per person No Payments accepted at door Send check made payable to: "CSEA Chapter 430" along With meal choice. Send to: Linda Mathieu 5551 Lockett Rd Lot B25 Fort Myers, FL 33905 Debra Gould 203 605-6690</p>
<p>Chapter 408 (Willimantic) Wed., February 12th, 12:30pm Speaker: Bernadette Conway CSEA Retiree Coordinator Mansfield Senior Center</p>	<p>Chapter 418 (Community College Retirees) Monday, February 17th</p>	<p>Chapter 428 - 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 Chapter 428" 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</p>	<p>Chapter 431 - Ft. Myers, FL Friday, February 7th 11:30am KJ's Steakhouse 10950 S Cleveland Ave, Fort Myers, Florida Meal Choices: Meatloaf, Balsamic Herb Chicken, Maple Bourbon Salmon, or Vegetarian option (salad) All meals include; appetizers, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables and non-alcoholic beverages Cost: \$25 per person No Payments accepted at door Send check made payable to: "CSEA Chapter 431" along With meal choice. Send to: Linda Mathieu 5551 Lockett Rd Lot B25 Fort Myers, FL 33905 Debra Gould 203 605-6690</p>

Continue onto page 5

Important numbers to have on hand: Caremark: 1-800-318-2572 Cigna: 1-800-244-6224
Retirement Division Payroll: 860-702-3528 Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield: 1-800-922-2232 HEP Care Management Solutions: 1-877-687-1448 or visit them at their portal:
Retirement Division Life Insurance: 860-702-3537 CSEA Retiree Organizer; Kevin Sullivan: 860-951-6614 x118
Retirement Division Health Insurance: 860-702-3533 UnitedHealthcare: 1-888-803-9217 <https://www.connect2yourhealth.com/ParticipantPortal/Default.aspx>



Don't Get Stuck Out in the Cold. Warm Up with a Great Auto Loan Rate!



**New Car Rate
4.49% APR*
Used Car Rate
4.99% APR***

Terms available up to 7 years!*Annual Percentage Rate. Certain restrictions apply. Cannot be applied toward existing car loans. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Rate is subject to change at any time.



Locations & Hours Forms Membership **CSE CREDIT UNION**
Accounts Loans Services Rates About Us

*With CSE Credit Union,
Auto Loans Are a Breeze.*

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 Lincoln's Birthday - February 12th
Closed Washington's Birthday - February 17th**

Dividend Rates - Fourth Quarter 2024

	Dividend Rate	Percentage Yield
REGULAR SHARES	2.75%	2.79%
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.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Andrychowski, Donna, Uconn
Becker, Patricia, Administrative
Clerical | Jubenville, Richard, Engineer, Scien,
Tech |
| Belinsky, Robert, St Vocation
Federation Teacher | Kaminski, Frank, Social And Human
Services |
| Belli, Dorothy, Administrative
Clerical | Keller, Joan, Administrative Clerical |
| Bivona, Ramona, Judicial | Kellogg, Mary, Administrative
Clerical |
| Boehm, William, Correctional
Officer | Lavery, William, Judicial |
| Brey, Catherine, Admin And
Residual | Lawlor, Annabelle, Administrative
Clerical |
| Cervero, Ronald, Service/
Maintenance | Lovetere, Wayne, Correctional
Officer |
| Chadwick, Mary, Social And Human
Services | Marone, Joseph, Health Professional |
| Cipos, Anna, Administrative Clerical | Mccain, Leonard, Managerial |
| Didonato, Ronald, Service/
Maintenance | Miles, Thomas, Correctional Officer |
| Dion, Kathleen, Judicial | Montgomery, Celess, Service/
Maintenance |
| Dobos, Matthew, Health
Professional | Motta, Joseph, Correctional Officer |
| Dodd, Paul, Judicial | Muldoon, Robert, Protective
Services |
| Donahue, Roger, Healthcare | Nash, Gloria, Administrative
Clerical |
| Drummond, Barry, Correctional
Officer | Nelson, Carol Ann, Comm College
Admin |
| Duhancik, Richard, Service/
Maintenance | Novak, Earle, St Vocation
Federation Teacher |
| Fast, Michael, St Vocation
Federation Teacher | Ortiz, Teresa, Health Professional |
| Ford, Clayton, Protective Services | Pinchuk, Paul, Protective Services |
| Furgalack, Thomas, Managerial | Pitcher, Hazel, Healthcare |
| Gawlak, Sandra, Administrative
Clerical | Plante, Kim, Criminal Justice
Residual |
| Ginocchio, James, Judicial | Powers, Cecile, Healthcare |
| Glinski, Paul, Managerial | Rampone, Mary, Administrative
Clerical |
| Gregor, Sandra, Administrative
Clerical | Sherwood, Joan, Administrative
Clerical |
| Gurlin, Paula, Administrative
Clerical | Sylvester, Clarence, Managerial |
| Hurley, Richard, State Police | Tolokan, Timothy, Uconn |
| Jamialkowski, Ceil, Administrative
Clerical | Williams, Hilda, Admin And Residual |
| | Yeziarski, Maryann, Administrative
Clerical |

CSEA NEWS

*The Voice of Connecticut's
Public Service Employees & Retirees*

USPS # 224-100 ISSN # 0273-6055

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.

"CSEA NEWS" (USPS 224-100, ISSN 0273-6055) is published monthly for \$2.80 per year members, \$5.00 per year non-members, by CSEA/SEIU Local 2001, 760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT 06106-1263. Periodicals postage paid at Hartford, CT. Postmaster: Send address changes to "CSEA NEWS," 760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT 06106-1263.

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



The 2025 Equity Agenda Launch

CSEA Members Join 200 Advocates for Rally

continued from page 1
workers, including healthcare staff, state workers, child care providers, teachers, and paraeducators. Jenny Graves, vice president of the New Haven Federation of Teachers emphasized the importance of equity in education, particularly for special education students. "The time for action is

now," she said, urging legislators to modify fiscal roadblocks to ensure equitable education for all Connecticut students.

CSEA retirees were present at the rally to show their unwavering support for these legislative priorities. Many retirees, who spent their careers serving the public, remain deeply invested in the future of

public service and the well-being of their former colleagues. Their attendance underscored the long-lasting impact that state budget decisions have on workers, families, and communities across Connecticut.

As the legislative session progresses, CSEA will continue to advocate for changes to the fiscal

roadblocks, pushing for policies that ensure fair compensation for public service workers and adequate funding for critical programs. With the support of retirees and allies, the union is committed to fighting for a budget that truly serves the people of Connecticut.



Senator Gary Winfield addresses the crowd with a moving story about the impact his son's teacher had on him before her untimely passing.



CSEA Retirees Dave Walsh (left) and Amelia Smith (right) listen to the panel of speakers.

Council 400 January Meetings (continued)

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
Cost is \$25 per person
Make checks payable to: "CSEA Chapter 427"
Send checks to: Deborah Mangano
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 Chapter
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

Chapter 441: Cape Cod, MA
Wednesday, May 21 at 10am
South Yarmouth Public Library
312 Old Main Street
South Yarmouth, MA
Richard Peterson (203) 507-1189

Biden Signs Historic WEP/GPO Social Security Bill

continued from page 1
historic signing. Our heartfelt thanks also go to Win Heimer, Vice President of CT ARA, and Amelia Smith, CSEA Council 400 Liaison to CT ARA, for their tireless efforts in championing this cause. The CSEA Council 400 Retirees have supported this initiative for many years, and we are overjoyed to see it finally come to fruition.

What Does This Mean for You?

1. Full Social Security Benefits for Non-Teaching Work
If you worked in jobs outside of teaching where you paid

into Social Security, you are now eligible to receive the full benefits you earned—no longer reduced by the WEP.
2. Spousal or Survivor Benefits
If you qualify for Social Security spousal or survivor benefits, these will no longer be reduced by two-thirds of your TRS pension. This change could result in a significant boost to your income.
3. Retroactive Payments
The repeal includes retroactive payments for benefits withheld during 2024 due to WEP or GPO. You may receive a lump sum for these amounts; however, the exact timing for such payments is

still being determined.

- Next Steps for Retirees**
Contact the Social Security Administration (SSA):
Update your work history and confirm your eligibility for benefits.
- Monitor Updates:**
SSA will begin recalculating benefits for those affected. Be prepared to provide additional documentation if requested.
- Seek Professional Guidance:**
Consider consulting a financial advisor who specializes in retirement benefits to ensure you're maximizing your

income. As a reminder, the Retiree Team cannot provide you with specific guidance. This historic development restores fairness to retirees who contributed to both public pensions and Social Security. We'll continue to share updates as more details become available. Congratulations again to everyone who played a part in making this happen—it's a monumental step forward for retirees across the nation!



Council 400 Member, Bette Marafino, introduces President Biden ahead of historic signing.



Review the Connecticut For All Equity Agenda

A budget that works for us funded by progressive revenue & fiscal roadblock reform

For too long, policies have benefited the ultra wealthy and corporations. Our Equity Agenda is a step in the right direction. We need to invest in programs that will address generational poverty and racism, invest in working people, reject the corporatization of government, and prioritize democracy and government transparency.

A budget that works for us

Coalition partner organizations are leading the work needed to adopt a budget that works for the people of Connecticut and invests in the public services our communities need to thrive.

- **HUSKY For Immigrants:** Expand Husky for immigrants 15 and older, regardless of immigration status. Enhance data security to ensure personal data is safe from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

- **Invest in Families by Reestablishing a Child Tax Credit:** Expand the child tax credit from \$250 to \$600 per child. Make it permanent and refundable.

- **Just Cause for Tenants:** A universal Just Cause law that protects tenants without a lease, whose lease is ending, or who are month-to-month from being evicted for no reason. ECS funding for PreK-12: increase funding for public preK-12 districts in need.

- **Equity in Special Education Funding:** Adjust the Educational Cost Share Formula to include and account for the needs of special education students.

- **Healthcare for Childcare Workers:** Establishing a healthcare trust for Care4Kids providers to help with out-of-pocket costs.

- **Unemployment Benefits for Striking Workers:** Authorize unemployment benefits

for striking workers to level the playing field between workers and management and standardize pro-worker laws in our immediate region.

- **Fair wages for Healthcare workers - Nursing Homes:** Raise wages of the predominantly Black, brown and white working class workers to help recruit and retain staff and provide essential services to our elderly community and adults with disabilities.

- **Fair wages for Healthcare workers - Group Homes:** Raise wages of the predominantly Black, brown and white working class workers to help recruit and retain staff and provide essential services to adults and children with intellectual disabilities.

- **Protections for Rideshare Drivers:** Ensure livable wages and pass health and safety protections for rideshare and delivery drivers in Connecticut.

- **Fair wages and retirement benefits for Paraeducators:** Support improvements to wages and retirement benefits for paraeducators across Connecticut.

Protect & Expand Public Services: Address the state's ongoing recruitment and retention challenges through fully funding critical public services and passing fair and honorable state employee contracts as soon as possible to create more accessible and affordable public services for our communities.

- **Fight Against Employer Wage Theft:** Increase Department of Labor Wage and Hour Investigators by hiring 45 inspectors to fill vacancies and make sure working people receive the earned wages they deserve.

- **Restore and expand public sector mental health, substance abuse, and safety net healthcare services for children and adults:** No matter where you live, what you look like, how much money you make, or whether you have insurance—every single Connecticut resident deserves access to life-saving state services.

- **Robustly fund public institutes of higher education to enhance instructional quality and expand affordable access to post-secondary education.** Every CT resident deserves access to real college, regardless of income level and location.

- **Expansion of PACT to cover CSU students -** Extend the PACT program to income eligible State University students (Eastern, Central, Western, & Southern Connecticut State Universities). This program is currently available to income eligible Community College students.

Equity Requires Revenue

In order to meet the needs of our communities, we must demand that billionaires and wealthy corporations pay what they owe. We envision a Connecticut that invests in quality public schools, colleges, and universities; child care; health care, and many other essential services that all our families deserve.

- **Capital Gains Surtax:** Impose a 5% surtax on capital gains, dividends, and taxable interest for individuals earning \$500,000 and joint filers earning \$1 million or more to fund the needs in our community.

- **Capture offshore corporate taxes on profits:** Require complete reporting of all profits everywhere.

House Bill Filed to Reform the Fiscal Roadblocks

As we enter a critical moment in Connecticut's legislative session, it's essential that our union shows up in full force to support the House Bill that will shape the future of our state's investments. This bill has the potential to make necessary changes in how we fund vital public services like our K-12 schools, state agencies, and more.

Key aspects of the bill include several important amendments that will directly impact how we allocate resources for critical public services. First, the bill proposes that the definition of "increase in inflation" be amended to ensure the consumer price index adjustment applies to all

items under the CPI-U - including energy and grocery costs. This change will provide a more accurate reflection of inflation and its impact on state budgeting. The bill also calls for a more equitable methodology in calculating the annual adjustment to the revenue transfer threshold by using an inflation-adjusted ten-year moving average, which ensures the revenue transfers better reflect the state's actual economic growth. Furthermore, it proposes that the limitations on appropriations for both the General Fund and the Special Transportation Fund be based on the actual balances of the Budget Reserve Fund and Special

Transportation Fund, respectively, providing a more transparent and reliable framework for funding. Lastly, the bill includes a critical amendment to the state bonding process, requiring the Treasurer to provide economic impact analyses for proposed bond expenditures, ensuring that public money is spent wisely and in ways that benefit all of Connecticut's communities..

The changes outlined in the bill are critical to the long-term stability of Connecticut's public services. By passing this bill, we can secure the investments we need to support education, improve state agency resources, and ensure that

Connecticut's working families are not left behind.

We need to show our lawmakers that it's a vital tool for the future of our state. That's why it's important for our union members to actively participate in the upcoming public hearings, rallies, press conferences, and digital actions in support of this bill. Your participation can make a real difference in pushing this bill forward.

Together, we can advocate for the investments our state desperately needs. Let's stand united and demand that lawmakers prioritize working families, education, and our future.



Poll Reinforces Support for Fiscal Roadblock Reform to Fund Public K-12 Schools

continued from page 1
education. These findings come amid ongoing debates about education funding in Connecticut, where disparities between wealthier and high-need districts have persisted for decades.

Earlier this month, mayors and superintendents from Connecticut's largest cities, including New Haven, Hartford, Bridgeport, Waterbury, and Stamford, called for an additional \$545 million in state funding for the upcoming year. They argue that this increase is necessary to address the rising costs of educating high-need students, such as those eligible for free and reduced lunch, multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and those experiencing homelessness. Urban districts in particular have felt the brunt of rising costs, which have left many schools struggling to provide basic resources, let alone the additional support required for their most vulnerable

students.

Connecticut's education funding disparities are closely tied to its heavy reliance on local property taxes to fund schools, a system that disproportionately benefits wealthier communities while underfunding those with a smaller tax base. Advocates argue that systemic reform is essential to closing this funding gap and ensuring that every child, regardless of their ZIP code, has access to a high-quality education.

The state legislature approved a budget last year that included a \$150 million increase in K-12 education funding for the 2024-25 school year. This investment was intended to address student learning loss, support mental health services, combat teacher shortages, and expand after-school and summer programs. While this increase was a historic step forward, many education leaders and advocates caution that it falls far short of addressing the

deeper inequities embedded in the current funding system.

Despite these efforts, the CCM poll suggests that many voters feel more needs to be done to ensure equitable and adequate funding for all Connecticut school districts. CSEA and our allies for education reform have pointed out that without addressing the state's restrictive fiscal roadblocks, significant progress is unlikely. These guardrails, which limit how much the state can spend and save, have often been criticized for preventing Connecticut from making bold investments in its public education system.

At the same time, there is growing support for progressive tax reform, which would ask the wealthiest individuals and corporations in the state to contribute their fair share to funding public schools. Proponents argue that such reforms are necessary to break the cycle of underfunding and

provide the resources needed to address disparities. As Connecticut grapples with these challenges, the conversation around education funding is likely to remain a central issue in the 2025 legislative session.

If Connecticut is to secure a brighter future for its students, it will require not only greater financial investment but also a collective commitment to addressing the systemic barriers that have held back progress for too long. From overhauling the education cost-sharing formula to rethinking how the state allocates its resources, the time for action is now. The call for additional funding is not merely a request for money; it is a demand for justice and opportunity for all Connecticut children.

Good Works Committee Announces Two Exciting Volunteer Opportunities

The Good Works Committee is proud to announce two upcoming volunteer events that will make a meaningful impact in the community. Members are invited to participate in both the Special Olympics 2025 Winter Games and a Habitat for Humanity build event, offering opportunities to give back and support local causes.

Special Olympics 2025 Winter Games – Volunteer Opportunity

Saturday, March 1st

Location: Eversource Windsor, 1985 Blue Hills Ave Ext, Windsor

Time: 8:15 AM to 3:30 PM

The Special Olympics Winter Games are a beloved tradition, and the Good Works Committee is seeking volunteers to assist with various roles on event day. Volunteers will have the opportunity to support athletes and ensure the smooth operation of the competition. Roles include:

Athlete Escort: Volunteers will be assigned to a team or athlete for the day, helping with transportation to staging areas, competition venues, lunch, and the Olympic town.

Cross Country Straight: Volunteers will assist with staging, timing, monitoring, and scorekeeping for the 100/50/25 meter Cross Country courses.

Cross Country Loop: Volunteers will help with the 250 meter Cross Country course, supporting staging, timing, monitoring, or scorekeeping.

Snowshoe Loop: Volunteers will assist athletes with putting on and taking off snowshoes and support with staging, timing, and scorekeeping during the snowshoe races.

Volunteers interested in participating must register by February 15th. For more information or to sign up, contact Bernadette Conway at bconway@csea760.com.

Habitat for Humanity Build Event – Volunteer and Sponsorship Opportunities

Saturday, May 17th

Location: East Hartford, CT

Time: 8:00 AM – Full day (lunch provided)

The Good Works Committee is also seeking volunteers and sponsors for the Habitat for Humanity Build Event. This is the second year the committee has partnered with Habitat for Humanity to raise the profile of CSEA's membership through hands-on community service. Volunteers will assist in building homes for families in need and help make a significant difference in the community.

Volunteer Teams: Two teams of 10

volunteers will be needed for the event.

Sponsorship: Sponsorship is available at \$250 per person to support the event and the work of Habitat for Humanity.

For those unable to volunteer, financial contributions are also welcome. Donations can be sent to CSEA Good Works Committee, 760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT 06106, with checks made out to the Good Works Committee.

If you are interested in volunteering or learning more about either event, please reach out to Bernadette Conway at bconway@csea760.com. Your participation and support for these important events will help make a lasting impact in our communities. We look forward to seeing you there!



Union Members Take the Lead: Opinion Pieces Amplifying Our Voices

Across Connecticut, union members are stepping up and making their voices heard in local media. These opinion pieces serve as powerful reminders of the impact we have when we speak out on the issues that matter to working families. Below are excerpts from some of the recent op-eds submitted by our very own members, highlighting the importance of our collective voice.

Dave Walsh Calls for CT to Safeguard Against Federal Cuts

In his recent piece, Dave Walsh calls for stronger protections for workers in an era of corporate greed. "As workers, we should demand policies that not only ensure fair wages but also guarantee safe and stable working conditions for all. The time for lip service is over; it's time for leadership that puts the needs of working families first."

Dave's words capture the essence of what

it means to be a union member — standing together to advocate for what's right. If you missed his full article, *Safeguarding Against Federal Cuts*, you can read it in the *CT*

Examiner.

Comptroller Scanlon Response by Carol Burgess

Carol Burgess took to the pages of *CT Mirror* to respond to Comptroller Scanlon's stance on fiscal policies. "The status quo isn't leadership," she writes, critiquing the current administration's reluctance to make meaningful changes that support Connecticut's working-class families. "We need bold leadership that challenges the norm and works for the betterment of everyone, not just the wealthy few."

Read Carol's full response, *Status quo isn't leadership*, Comptroller Scanlon, in the *CT Mirror*.

Tom Connolly Reflects on MLK's Legacy

In a moving tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Tom Connolly also penned an op-ed discussing the ongoing struggle for racial and economic justice. "Dr. King's vision for a just society calls on us to keep pushing for policies that uplift all people, regardless of their background. The work is not done — it's up to us to carry the torch forward."

You can read his full piece, *A Stark Contrast*, in the *CT Mirror*.

Op-eds like these show the strength of our union and the power we have when we speak out about issues impacting our lives. By sharing our perspectives, we not only raise awareness but also inspire others to take action. If you're interested in submitting an opinion piece of your own, don't hesitate to reach out to Drew Stoner at DStoner@csea760.com.

Does CSEA have your correct contact info on file?

Update your info by scanning the QR code.



- @CSEA2001
- @CSEA_CT
- @cseaseiulocal2001
- CSEA-CT.com

PAVING THE WAY TO A CONNECTICUT FOR ALL

CT RANKS IN BOTTOM 1/2 OF STATES IN TAX FAIRNESS
CT is one of 34 states with highest state/municipal tax burden on poorest households

CUTS & DEFICITS IN TIME OF MASSIVE SURPLUS
Programs & services are being cut and underinvested in despite a \$1.5B surplus

HIGH RELIANCE ON PROPERTY TAXES
State and local government raise 60% of their collective tax revenue from the property and sales taxes and other regressive levies.

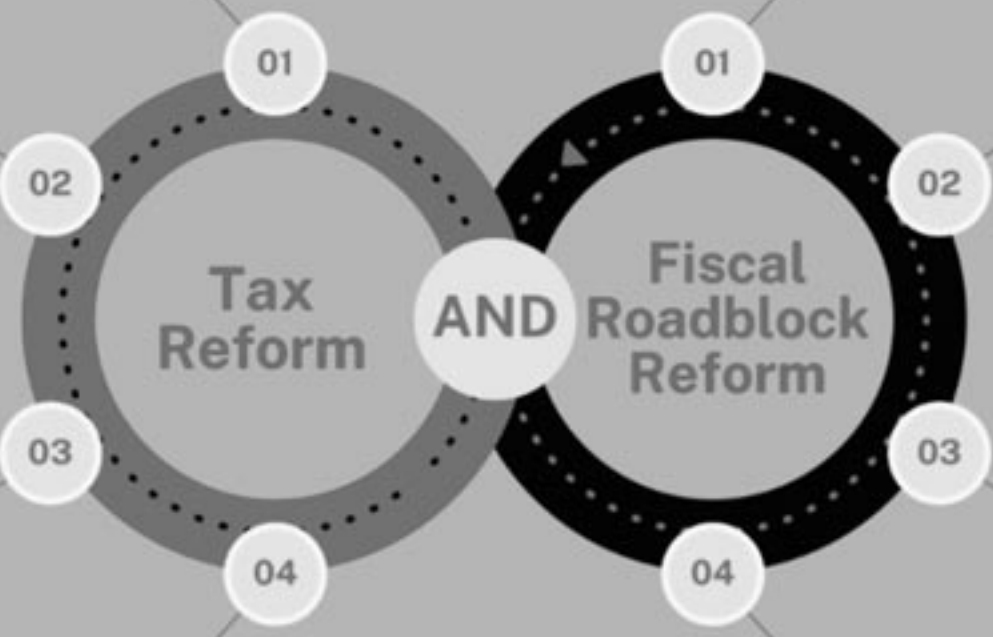
PREVENTS LONG-TERM STABILITY
The roadblocks prevent investments in programs that could reduce future public service needs and increase state revenue

SOME MANSION TAXES ARE REFUNDED
Wealthy homeowners can recover any taxes paid at 2.25% (portion of a sale above \$2.5M) in the 3rd year through a state income tax credit.

TAXES FROM THE WEALTHY ARE UNTOUCHED
The state treats taxes from the wealthy differently than working people's taxes which protects them from tax increases

THE TOP 1% PAY THE LOWEST EFFECTIVE TAX RATE
Connecticut is one of 41 states that imposes the lowest rate on the top 1% of earners

"VOLATILITY" CAP IS NOT SO VOLATILE
On average has captured \$1.4B annually in the program's first 7 years, and never less than \$500M.



Attacks on State Employees Escalate as Legislative Session Opens

As Connecticut lawmakers enter the 2025 legislative session, a series of attacks on state employees and their benefits have made headlines, underscoring the ongoing battle between working families and anti-union policymakers. Several recent articles have highlighted critiques and challenges aimed at public sector workers, including state employee raises, healthcare costs, and pension liabilities.

The Yankee Institute recently released their 2025 Legislative Agenda which takes direct aim at state employee contracts, insisting that state workers should expect to take hard zeroes in the coming years.

Meanwhile, Reddington Jah-

ncke in the *CT Examiner* reported on the assertion by some that rising state employee wages are putting a squeeze on the state's budget, shifting the blame from structural fiscal issues to the compensation of public servants. Jah-ncke incorrectly argues that these wage hikes are inflating the state's payroll and creating future pension liabilities that could exceed \$9 billion. These claims are being used as a basis to justify calls for wage freezes and cuts to state worker benefits, even as other sectors in the state continue to thrive.

At the same time, state employees are facing increased scrutiny on healthcare costs. The *CT Insider* reported on the state's growing expense related to high-

demand medications. While some may view the \$60 million expense as excessive, it's a reminder of the importance of comprehensive health benefits for workers, who rely on these plans to maintain their well-being. With healthcare costs rising nationwide, state employees should not bear the burden of these increases alone,

These attacks, along with ongoing struggles to protect state workers' rights, underscore the continued importance of union solidarity in Connecticut. The efforts to undermine state employee compensation and benefits are part of a broader agenda to shift the financial burden from the state to its workers, further exacerbating the challenges they already

face. As the legislative session progresses, it will be critical for union members and lawmakers to work together to protect the hard-earned benefits of Connecticut's public servants, ensuring they are not left behind in the face of rising costs and an evolving economic landscape.

The coming months will likely see increased pressure on both state employees and their representatives, with the outcome of these battles shaping the future of labor rights in Connecticut for years to come. Stay active within your chapters and council so that we can fend off these attacks together.

Solidarity Season

Washington Legislative Staff Approve First-Ever Collective Bargaining Agreement

Democratic legislative staff in Washington State have ratified their first-ever collective bargaining contracts, marking a historic achievement for the state's public employees. After months of negotiations and a rejected tentative agreement in September, the House

and Senate Democratic Caucus staff have approved two-year contracts that include pay raises and a fair grievance process with third-party arbitration. This marks a significant milestone in the efforts of legislative staff to secure better working conditions,

protections, and support. The agreements come after Republican caucus staff also approved their contracts in September, and now all eyes are on lawmakers to secure funding for these agreements in the upcoming state budget.

Sponsored Content

Farmers GroupSelectSM

AUTO AND HOME* INSURANCE THAT FIT YOUR UNIQUE NEEDS



CSEA/SEIU Local 2001 members, take advantage of special savings today!

Farmers GroupSelect offers the following discounts and benefits:

- Group discounts of up to 15%[†]
- Automatic payment discount
- Good driving rewards
- A loyalty discount for your years of service**
- Multi-vehicle savings
- 24/7 superior service

Call today for free quotes: 800-438-6381

Provide your discount code: BAR

*Home insurance has limited availability in MA and is not part of Farmers GroupSelect benefit offering in FL.

**Not available in MA.

[†]Based on the average nationwide discount available in 2020 through the Farmers GroupSelectSM program for eligible individuals. In some instances discount is higher.

Advertisement produced on behalf of the following specific insurers and seeking to obtain business for insurance underwritten by Farmers Property and Casualty Insurance (a MN licensee) and certain of its affiliates: Economy Fire & Casualty Company, Economy Premier Assurance Company, Economy Preferred Insurance Company, Farmers Casualty Insurance Company (a MN licensee), Farmers Direct Property and Casualty Insurance Company, Farmers Group Property and Casualty Insurance Company, or Farmers Lloyds Insurance Company of Texas, all with administrative home offices in Warwick, RI. Coverage, rates, discounts, and policy features vary by state and product and are available in most states to those who qualify. 3875242.1 © 2021 Farmers Insurance®.

