



CSEA NEWS

The Voice of Connecticut's Public Service Employees & Retirees

January, 2023

CSEA SEIU Local 2001

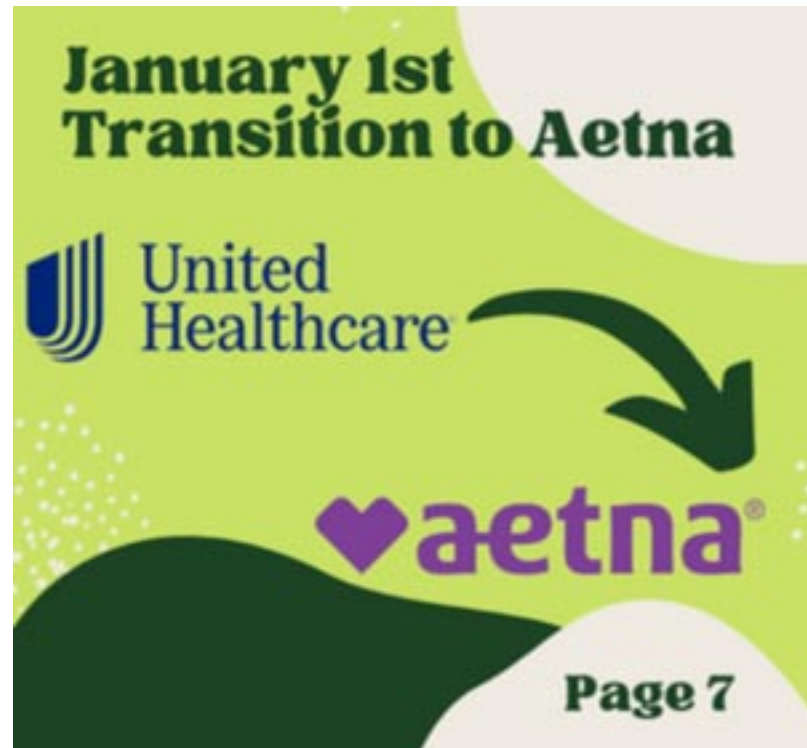
VOL. 56, NO. 1

CSEA Executive Council Approves 2023 Legislative Agenda

and the Executive Council. CSEA's Political Education

This year the General Assembly will convene on January 4, 2023, and adjourn on June 7, 2023 and amongst other tasks, will tackle the next biennial budget. Every session, budget year or not, CSEA sets a legislative agenda which outlines our union's top priorities to fight for under the gold dome. The legislative agenda is approved by both the Legislative Action Committee (LAC)

Director, Daniel I. Medress will be working with members to ensure that their voices are heard. Please be on the lookout for emails and text messages that will outline simple ways for you to push for these critical legislative priorities. The full 2023 Legislative Agenda can be reviewed starting on Page 6.



Danbury Tutors Win BIG!

Judge Rules in Favor of CSEA Members in Pension Case!

Back in November of 2020, the Danbury Tutors joined together with approximately 100 supporters to hold a press conference regarding the filing of a Motion for a Declarative Judgment against the City of Danbury. As full time employees, these CSEA members simply asked the court to confirm what is already clear in the Town's Pension Ordinance; specifically that the tutors, like all other Board of Education employees, are entitled to a pension benefit.

A few days ago, we learned that the judge granted our motion for summary

judgment and denied the City of Danbury's Motion. The judge ruled that the Danbury tutors were not obligated to bargain under MERA for the pension benefit and that, as a matter of law, the Tutors employed by the BOE are entitled to a Declaratory Judgment saying they qualify for a pension under the terms of the pension plan set forth in the City Charter.

This huge win comes after years of members fighting for their voice to be heard and will no doubt require further work to ensure the City of Danbury is not successful in an appeal of this motion, but for the meantime, we celebrate the hard fought win.

Impacted members should look forward to future communication from CSEA outlining the next steps, but in the meantime, let's take a moment to savor this big UNION win!

Update on Pandemic Pay Arbitration Between SEBAC & the State

On December 23rd, SEBAC and the State of Connecticut held the second and final day of the arbitration hearing over pandemic pay due to frontline essential state employees.

At the hearing, the arbitrator heard directly from workers who were not able to "stay safe, stay home" about the risks they faced at the job site to ensure that critical state services continued. Workers also submitted affidavits about their experiences on

the frontlines during a time when we didn't have treatments, we didn't have a vaccine, and in some cases, we didn't

even have appropriate PPE. These sacrifices were necessary in order to ensure that 3.5 million Connecticut residents continued to benefit from the critical state services they rely on. Simply put, without these frontline essential workers, our state would not have been able to lift up our communities during this difficult time.

CSEA had several members participate in the arbitration process including two CSC members- Samuel Quintana, Vice President of the Lieutenants and Angela McCalla who testified virtually. We are so grateful to the frontline workers who re-lived for the arbitrator their stories of risk, and fear, and sometimes devastating loss.

Both parties will now file briefs before the arbitrator will make a ruling, at which point we will update members immediately on the decision.

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:		
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Meetings And News

The January Delegates Meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, January 19th at 10am at the CSEA Union Hall

Chapter 401 (Hartford area):
Thursday, February 2nd
12:30 lunch & 1pm meeting
CSEA Union Hall & via Zoom
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Patrice Peterson: (860) 416-0306

Chapter 402 (Danbury area):
*Meetings will be canceled if Danbury Public Schools are closed due to weather.
Wednesday, January 11th - 10am
Guest Speaker: Kevin Sullivan,
CSEA Retiree Organizer
United Methodist Church
5 Clapboard Ridge Rd. Danbury
Linda Albanese: (860) 354-6965

Chapter 403 (Norwich area):
Tuesday, January 10th - 1:30pm
Guest Speaker: Cigna Dental Rep.
Rose City Senior Center
8 Mahan Drive., Norwich
Carol Burgess: (860) 859-3641

Chapter 404 (Waterbury area):
Tuesday, January 10th - 10am
Guest Speaker: Bernadette Conway
Trinity Orthodox Church
937 Chase Parkway, Waterbury
John Quinn: (203) 804-0189

Chapter 405 (New Haven area):
Thursday, January 12th - 10:30am
Hamden Government Center Bldg
2750 Dixwell Ave, Hamden
Ron Osokow: (203) 671-7685

Chapter 406 (Middletown area):
Tuesday, January 10th - 1pm
Guest Speaker: Aetna Representative
American Legion Post 75
58 Bernie O'Rourke Dr., Middletown
Joe Formica: (860) 347-4532

Chapter 407 (Bridgeport area):
Wednesday, January 18th - 1pm
St. Josephs of Stratford National Catholic Church
1300 Stratford Rd., Stratford (on Rt. 113)
Joan Matzonkai: (203) 751-0300

Chapter 408 (Willimantic area):
Thursday, January 12th - 12:30pm
Guest Speaker: Kevin Sullivan,
CSEA Retiree Organizer
Mansfield Senior Center
303 Maple Ave. Mansfield
Doug Racicot: (860) 234-2537

Chapter 409 (State University Professors)
Friday, January 20th - 10am
CSEA Union Hall & via Zoom
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Dave Walsh: (860) 684-4773

Chapter 410 (Windsor Locks area):
Monday, January 9th - 1pm
Suffield Senior Center
145 Bridge St., Suffield
Guest Speaker: Suffield Police Officer Terry Antrum
Amelia Smith: (860) 687-1848

Chapter 411 (Rocky Hill area):
Thursday, March 16th - 12pm
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Subby Puglisi: (860) 836-4009

Chapter 412 (Putnam area):
Tuesday, January 17th - 1:30pm
Guest Speaker: Aetna Representative
Putnam Town Hall
200 School St., Putnam
Don Gladding: (860) 933-9998

Chapter 414 (Torrington area):
Monday, January 16th - 10am
Five Points Art Center
855 University Dr, Torrington, CT 06790
Karen Pineman: (860) 354-6727

Chapter 415 (Manchester area):
Monday, January 23rd - 1pm
Elks Lodge
30 Bissell St., Manchester, CT
Stuart Clark: (860) 205-0657 (c)
(860) 454-4818 (h)

Chapter 416 (New London area):
Tuesday, January 10th - 12pm
Groton Public Library
52 Newtown Rd., Groton
John Knaff (860) 857-4244

Chapter 417 (Plainville area):
Wednesday, March 8th - 1pm
Guest Speaker: Aetna Representative
Plainville Public Library - Auditorium
56 East Main St., Plainville
Mark Kirschner: (860) 882-2717

Chapter 418 (Community College Retirees):
Tuesday, February 7th - 10am
Guest Speaker: Ted Doolittle, Healthcare Advocate for the State of CT
4C's Union Hall
907 Wethersfield Ave, Hartford
Bill Searle (860) 745-3692

Out of State Meetings - Speakers will include:
Kevin Sullivan CSEA Retiree Organizer
Representatives from Aetna & Cigna

Chapter 421 (Daytona, Florida Area)
*Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Wednesday, February 8th, 2023
11:30 Social - 12pm Luncheon
Halifax Plantation Golf Club
3400 Clubhouse Dr, Ormond Beach, FL 32174
Cost: \$33 for members and \$41 for guests
Write meal choices in memo section of check
make checks payable to "CSEA Chapter 421"
send checks to John Veray, 107 White Ibis Ct.,
Daytona Beach, FL 32119
Meal Choice: Chicken Frittata, Atlantic Cod,
or Beef Burgundy. Includes: salad, rolls and
butter, garlic red bliss potatoes, vegetables
Strawberry layer cake, coffee and tea included
RSVP by Friday, January 27th to:
Pat Albert (386) 615-6805

Chapter 422 (Ocala, Florida Area)
*Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Wednesday, February 1st at 11:30am
Francesco's Ristorante
16770 South Highway, Suite 608
Summerfield, FL 34491
Meal Choice: Chicken Parm., Sirloin Tips,
Whitefish Piccata, Eggplant Rollatini

Includes: Salad, Bread, Dessert, Coffee/tea
Cost: \$17.50 Members & \$22.50 Non-members
Checks payable to "CSEA Chapter 422"
Send checks along with meal choice to:
Hilda Spotts, 513 Fairways Circle Unit A
Ocala, FL 34472
Door Prizes!
Frank Berlinski (860) 604-7688

Chapter 423 (Boca Raton, Florida Area)
*Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Monday, February 13th, 2023 at 12pm
Renzo's Cafe and Pizzeria
6900 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton, FL 33487
Ron Herzig (561) 994-6428

Chapter 424 (Sarasota, Florida Area)
*Annual Meeting & Informational Breakfast
Monday, February 6th, 2023 at 9am
Courtyard Marriott
8305 Tourist Center Dr., Sarasota
Breakfast Buffet Cost: \$20 per person
RSVP by February 1, 2023
Checks made out to "CSEA Chapter 424"
Should be mailed to: Robert Mackiewicz
414 Pelican Moorings, Venice, FL 34285
Questions? Contact: (941) 497-2370

Chapter 425 (Clearwater, Florida Area)
*Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Friday, February 3rd at 11am
Grillsmith - Countryside
2539 Countryside Blvd., Clearwater, FL
Menu options: Chicken Marsala,
Oak Barrel Salmon, Center-Cut Sirloin,
or Margherita Pasta. Includes salad,
dessert, coffee, tea and soda
Cost: \$25 for members and guests
Checks made payable to: "CSEA Chapter 425"
Sent to: Richard LeVine
1020 South Tennessee Ave
Lakeland, FL 33803
RSVP by January 27th
Questions? Kevin Sullivan (860) 951-6614

Chapter 426 (Ft. Myers, Florida Area)
*Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Wednesday, February 15th at 11:30am
KJ's Steakhouse
10950 S Cleveland Ave, Fort Myers, FL 33907
Cost is \$20 for members and guests
Checks to payable to "CSEA Chapter 426"
Should be sent to Ray McCabe,
2312 North West 5th St., Cape Coral, FL
33993
Questions? Deb Gould (203) 605-6690

Chapter 427 (Vero Beach, Florida Area)
*Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Friday, February 10th at 11am
Fort Pierce Elks Lodge 1520
608 S 5th St., Fort Pierce, FL 34950
Martha Jurek (860) 558-8172

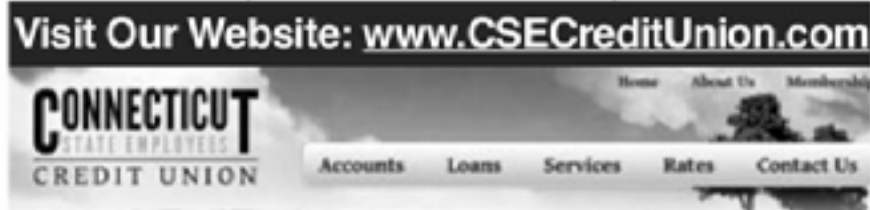
Chapter 431 (Carolinas Chapter)
*Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Tuesday, March 14th at 11am
Golden Corral
868 Oak Forest Ln, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
Buffet Cost: \$10 per person
Checks made out to "CSEA Chapter 431"
Should be mailed to: Virginia Nolan
3204 S. Memorial Ave., Nags Head, NC 27959
John Yopp (203) 507-1022



Happy Holidays
From All of Us at CSE Credit Union!



**We Wish Everyone a
Happy Holiday & A
Healthy New Year!**



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 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Monday, January 16th**

Dividend Rates - Fourth Quarter 2022

	Dividend Rate	Annual Percentage Yield
REGULAR SHARES	2.00%	2.02%
SHARE DRAFTS (Checking)	0.75%	0.75%
CLUB ACCOUNTS	1.25%	1.26%

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 Connecticut Valley Hospital P.O. Box 2485 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 Only): 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.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Abbatello, Charles | Hansen, Karen | Pelletier, Marie |
| Arsenault, Vincent | Hurliman, Donald | Rogers, Marsha |
| Baumgartner, Melinda | Isabell, Rosie | Rosa, Gerard |
| Beaudry, Karen | Jurkiewicz, John | Spielman, Ruby |
| Beaulieu, Michael | Kalaszewski, John | Stallings, Richard |
| Berta, Irene | Kecko, Mary | Thomas, Charles |
| Bissonnette, Maurice | Kutz, Wilhelm | Tolento, William |
| Burke, Helen | Leach, William | Wickwire, William |
| Campion, Evelyn | Lenda, Victor | |
| Cooney, Pamela | Logiudice, Carolyn | |
| Craddock, Roy | Magnano, Paul | |
| Cyr, Debra | Mills, Gary | |
| Doyon, Real | Molkenthin, William | |
| Dye, Frank | Mordarski, Grace | |
| Emonds, Richard | Moutafis, Michael | |
| Fenn, Lucy | Mrosek, Elaine | |
| Finnemore, Michael | Oconnor, Dennis | |
| Gary, Herbert | Orcutt, Martin | |
| Gerasimovich, Michael | Parks, Kevin | |
| Guerin, John | Payne, Ethel | |

When I randomly remember growth in pay since 1978 is up just 18% for workers; but up 1,460% for CEOs



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The Voice of Connecticut's
Public Service Employees & Retirees

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CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

Local 2001, Service Employees International Union, CTW/CLC

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Travis Woodward |President |
| Beverly Lee |Secretary/Treasurer |
| David Glidden |Executive Director |
| Drew E. Stoner |Communication Specialist |
| 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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CSC Goes to Norway! Tara Keaton Brings Back Expertise

In the month of August, I had the opportunity to travel to Norway with an organization called One Voice United. One Voice United has collaborated with several unions across the country to give union members in correctional institutions a voice in the national conversations about the corrections and the criminal justice system.

While in Norway we were briefed about the history of the Norwegian system, we had two prison tours, went to the Norwegian correctional employees Training Academy, as well as the Parliament and had a discussion about criminal justice reform.

We discussed how the prison systems in the United States ran. Each state is different but the general procedures are very similar. While in the prisons we learned the different procedures that worked effectively for the staff and offenders.

The offenders in Norway are treated with respect and dignity. All the citizens in Norway believe in the system. They believe that if you treat the offenders with respect and dignity they will become productive members of society and may learn from the crime they committed. All offenders are afforded the same welfare system as all

Norway citizens, which is free higher education, they go to outside medical facilities (same as the Norwegian citizens) plus more. Everyone says that the offender may be their neighbor one day so they believe that the system works by treating them fair.

One of the most important aspects that was taken from the trip was that the Norwegian unions have a voice with the Parliament when it comes to any decisions being made regarding the prisons, staff and offenders.

The Norwegian prison system is known to be one of the best in the world. Some of their policies and procedures work but its system has been in place for several years. The staff lifespan is the same as a regular citizen but they do still experience the work trauma. Norwegian prison staff are looking to incorporate some union language regarding the wellness of the staff. They experience staff suicides the same as the United States.

So as the Correctional Supervisor Council we will continue to fight for our members wellness and ensure the safety and security of the facility is not jeopardized. We hope to one day have a seat at the table and make the decisions for the prison system.

In solidarity,
Tara Keaton
CSC/NP-8 Executive Vice
President

Family Child Care Provider News

Noticias para Proveedores de Cuidado Infantil

Family Childcare Providers from across the State had a wonderful time celebrating the holidays at the union hall in Hartford.

Los proveedores de cuidado infantil familiar de todo el estado tuvieron una tiempo maravilloso celebrando las fiestas en el salón sindical en Hartford.



ABOVE: Providers in attendance enjoyed delicious food and amazing raffle prizes!
ARRIBA: ¡Los proveedores que asistieron disfrutaron de una comida deliciosa y premios de rifa increíbles!

10 Years of the Fight for \$15!

November 29, 2022 marked 10 years from the time 200 fast-food workers in New York City led strikes that launched the Fight for \$15 and a Union — the most powerful workers' movement in decades! No one thought we could win. But they were wrong. We've been organizing, building worker power, and winning justice ever since.

Raises for Low-Wage Workers Nationwide: Over the past 10 years, workers have secured \$150 billion in raises for more than 26 million low-wage workers! 43% of low-wage workers are now on the path toward \$15 or higher with major corporations like Amazon, Disney, Target and Costco reacting to workers' demands for higher wages. And, although \$15 is just the baseline, many of us are still fighting for that wage, which is why our fight goes way beyond higher wages. We need a seat at the table to ensure more than just a one-time increase.

McCusker Celebrates Its 62nd Year of Scholarship Incentive

February is McCusker month here at CSEA. The 2023 McCusker Scholarship Application will be available for download on our website, www.csea-ct.com, Thursday, February 1st, 2023. NOTEWELL - Complete applications must be received by CSEA no later than April 28th. This is a hard deadline. Completed applications along with all accompanying materials must be received before 4:30PM on April 28th. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

The Chapters, Councils and especially the individuals who gave from their hearts as donors to our McCusker Scholarship Fund have allowed us to once again help our young adults and their families. Coming out of the really restrictive time

of COVID last July, we handed out 60 individual \$1,000.00 scholarships to the children and grandchildren of CSEA members.

This year celebrates the 62nd anniversary of our McCusker Scholarship program. The Trustees and I, and especially our recipients, appreciate the effort made by everyone over the years, to provide the funds to help further the education of our deserving students. At our last Convention, we 'PASSED THE HAT' thru the audience. Our goal was to raise a scholarship (\$1,000) and we came close with \$854. The highlight was while we were in the foyer, counting out your donations. One of the keynote speakers, Rep. John Larson, walked past and as we said "Hi" he asked what we were doing. Upon being told about our scholarship program, he promptly donated \$50.00. Thank you, Rep. Larson.

Remember, you don't have to wait for Mc-

Cusker month in February, or for the last minute, when applications to start rolling in, to make a contribution. We cut off the annual donations in early June so that we know how much will be available for the awards. We will always be pleased to accept your donation at any time. Be sure to mail your check:

Payable to the "McCusker Memorial Scholarship Fund" to:

CSEA/SEIU Local 2001, 760 Capitol Ave. Hartford, CT 06106

Attention –Valeria Lattarulo

Please keep our student young adults in mind and support your McCusker Scholarship Fund throughout the year. Thank you.

Donate NOW!! and OFTEN!!

Don Gladding, Chair
McCusker Scholarship Trustees

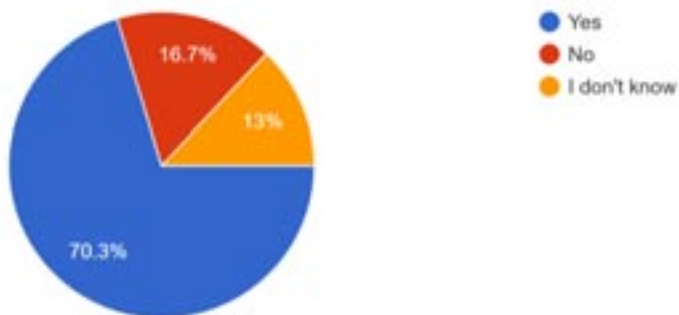
Council 400 Legislative Action Committee Survey

A recent email survey, sent to State of Connecticut Retiree Council members, showed overwhelming support for early voting and no-excuse absentee balloting. The survey was conducted between December 14th and 19th and has a margin of error of 3.3%.

On the issue of early voting, 82% of retired members said they voted in favor of the constitutional amendment during last November's midterm election. 70% of members stated that if given the opportunity to vote early they would do so.

If you had the opportunity, would you vote early?

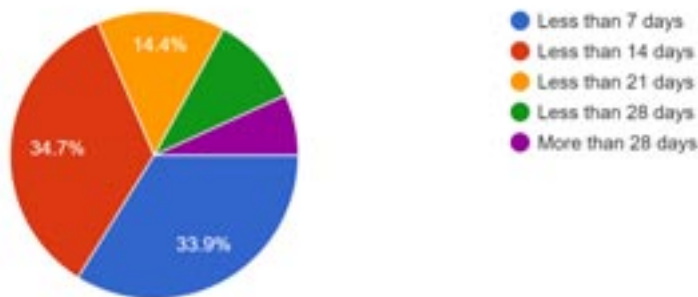
818 responses



When asked, how many days of early voting should there be, 34.7% said between 7 and 14 days, and 33% wanted less than 7 days, but a clear majority wanted there to be more than 7 days.

How many days of early voting should be available?

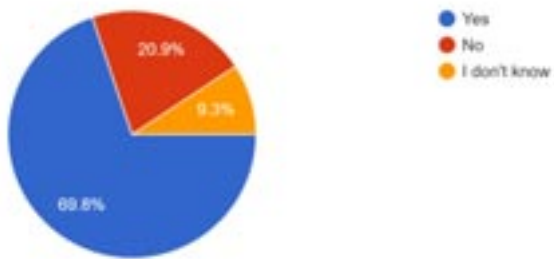
818 responses



70% of members supported no-excuse absentee balloting, and 21% of members were not in favor of it. The remaining members did not have an opinion on the issue.

Do you support No Excuse Absentee Balloting? (so that Connecticut voters are able to vote by absentee ballot without having to provide a reason)

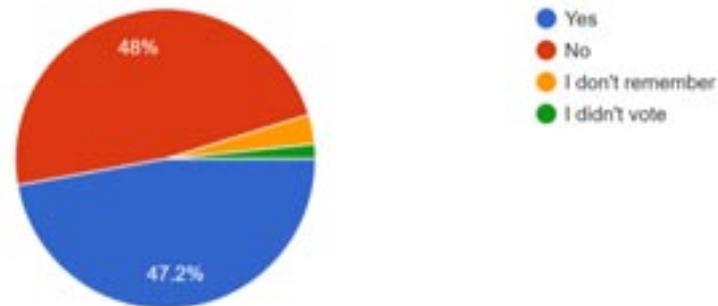
818 responses



On whether you voted by absentee ballot in the past three elections, the percentage of members voting by absentee ballot has declined since the 2020 election. In the 2020 election, an equal number of members voted by absentee ballot as did those that voted in-person. In the 2021 election, the number voting by absentee ballot declined to 34.7%. By the 2022 election, the number of members voting by absentee ballot was 28.5%

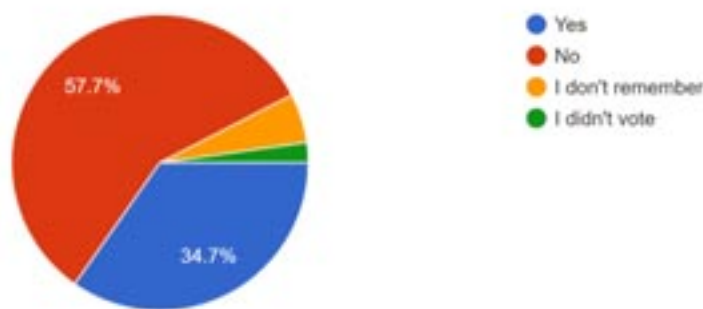
Did you vote by absentee ballot in 2020?

818 responses



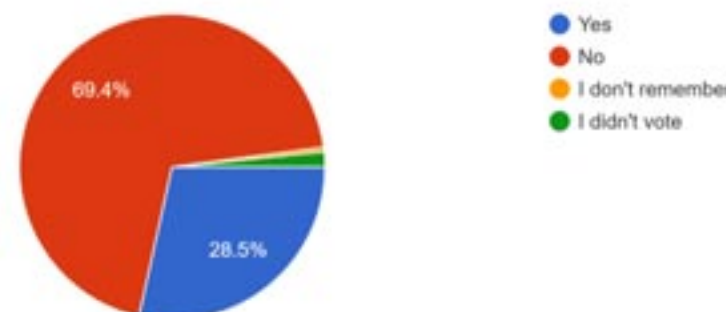
Did you vote by absentee ballot in 2021?

818 responses



Did you vote by absentee ballot in 2022?

818 responses



The General Assembly will take up the two issues in the upcoming legislative session that begins on January 4th. On early voting, the General Assembly will decide on the number of days of early voting and when. On no-excuse absentee balloting the General Assembly will decide if there will be a constitutional amendment to be determined by voters in the 2024 election.

The CSEA Council 400 Legislative Action Committee appreciates the input of their members and will be guided by your feedback.

Get Involved! Let's Win in 2023

This Legislative Session we have to fight together, lifting our collective voice, to ensure that our numerous legislative priorities are successful!

This year is a budget year, which means that we must fight hard over the next six months to ensure that the biennial budget is one that reflects the crisis of unmet need in Connecticut and uses the huge surplus to take strong steps towards equity.

More at stake means more

work to be done. Join us in the coming months by emailing your legislators, submitting written or verbal testimony, writing letters to the editor or attending rallies. You will be receiving emails and texts to alert you to key pressure points that require full member-action to push us to success. Remember two things when you read those emails: "Union" means "You" and we are "Stronger Together!"

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

CSEA Executive Council Approves 2023 Legislative Agenda

Recovery for All Legislative Proposals

Recovery For All is a coalition bringing together more than 60 community, faith, labor, and nonprofit advocacy organizations representing hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life across Connecticut. CSEA was a founding member organization of the coalition because we know that every working person is an ally in the battle to create an economy that works for everyone.

Today, billionaires and wealthy corporations are seizing more and more wealth while working people have been left to struggle during one of the most challenging times our society has ever faced. Imagine what our communities would look like if wealthy corporations and billionaires paid their fair share so we can invest in quality public schools, colleges, and universities; child care; health care, mental health and addiction services, and re-entry services that all our families deserve.

From tax increases on the ultra wealthy to tax relief for working people to investments in public services and broad economic development, Recovery for All's Equity Agenda presents a set of transformational policies to build a more equitable Connecticut—where all residents have the chance to live a fulfilling life, not just the wealthy few.

SEBAC Legislative Proposals

Joining with allied unions in the State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC), CSEA will be working to advance legislative proposals that fund services and jobs, protect against attempts to privatize public work, and address the continuing problem of short staffing.

CSEA members will also work with our allies in SEBAC to get the General Assembly to, not only, maintain full funding of the State Contracting Standards Board (SCSB), but also to pass legislation that will improve and enhance its operations. Additionally, CSEA will support our brothers and sisters in Connecticut's Higher Education system as they fight against harmful consolidation and privatization proposals.

Reliable and Affordable Healthcare for Municipal and Board of Education Workers

CSEA members have long been at the forefront of the fight to expand and improve access to quality health insurance. CSEA members were instrumental in the creation of the Partnership Plan, the Comptroller-managed version health plan modeled on the State Employee Health Plan. CSEA will work with other impacted unions to ensure this critical program is, not only, protected, but strengthened so that more workers have access to this important health care option.

School Paraeducator Advisory Council Legislative Proposals

The School Paraeducator Advisory Council - which includes a representative from CSEA, other unions representing paras, as well as policy experts in education and the work of paras - advises the Commissioner of the State Department of Education and the General Assembly about the career, training, and professional development needs of paras.

Following up on legislative progress from last session that saw paras make critical gains when it comes to career training, as well as participation in Planning and Placement Team meetings, CSEA will work with our partners on the Council to pass legislation that will make significant improvements to para pay, healthcare, and retirement benefits.

Pandemic Pay for Municipal and Board of Education Workers

CSEA will fight to expand Connecticut's pandemic pay program to include public sector workers, specifically for people working for municipalities and boards of education. These essential workers, along with all others who are publicly employed, were excluded from the current program. CSEA will work with our allies in other municipal and board of education unions to push for legislation that honors their sacrifice and commitment.

Expansion and Improvement of the Paid Sick Days Law

Connecticut was the first state in the nation in 2011 to require certain employers to provide service workers with accrued paid sick days. Now, more than 10 years later, and as the COVID-19 pandemic continues, CSEA and our allies in the Paid Sick Days coalition recommend legislation that strengthens current law and ensures access to paid sick days for all workers, regardless of their job title or size of their employer.

Passage of the Childcare Providers' Contract

Currently, the family childcare providers represented by CSEA are in contract negotiations with the state. And, just like with state employee contracts and arbitrated awards, before an approved contract can be finalized, it must be voted on in both chambers of the General Assembly. Throughout the pandemic, childcare providers never stopped working and never closed their doors. Their continued work through dangerous circumstances has been remarkable. They have more than earned a fair contract, and all CSEA members will join with them to ensure that when one is reached, it will pass any votes in the House and Senate.

Worker Safety and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

No one should be allowed to abuse Connecticut's transparency laws to harass, intimidate, or inflict violence upon a public employee. CSEA members will work to add Disability Determination Services employees and Supervising Judicial Marshals to the list of state employees whose home addresses are protected from release through a FOIA request. This sort of personal information is already protected from release for workers in the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Correction, as well as the State Police. What is a major safety concern for those workers, is also one for these state employees.

Improving Indoor Air Quality in Schools

CSEA is part of a school indoor air quality coalition with other board of education unions, building trade unions, environmental advocates, and other community groups. Last session, we helped pass legislation that, among other things, created an indoor air quality working group. The working group is putting together legislative recommendations for the

next session regarding implementing high quality indoor air standards in Connecticut's schools. CSEA looks forward to seeing the final recommendations, ensuring they protect and empower our members, and supporting their passage.

Justice Reinvestment Coalition Legislative Proposals

Medical and mental healthcare for state prison inmates has been cut over 25% in the last decade, despite skyrocketing medical costs and an aging inmate population with a higher acuity of health needs. Staffing ratios and care standards for too long have been determined by the bottom line rather than what is necessary for patient health and safety. Connecticut must expand services to save lives by investing in healthcare, education, housing, and employment opportunities for individuals currently and formerly incarcerated. CSEA is working with our allies in I199 as well as community organizations to ensure funding for reentry programs for inmates released from state prisons, as well as funding for educational programs in Unified School District #1 that are provided by CSEA members.

Early Voting Implementation and No-Excuse Absentee Voting Constitutional Amendment

With the success of the early voting constitutional amendment in the last election, the General Assembly is now empowered to pass legislation that will allow Connecticut voters to cast their ballot in person in the days prior to Election Day. CSEA will work with other early voting allies to pass strong legislation to implement our newly won early voting system.

Right now, 27 states offer no-excuse absentee voting and eight states conduct their elections entirely by mail. This places Connecticut, with our strict vote by mail rules, in a dwindling minority of states. So, on top of the early voting legislation, CSEA will also work with allies to pass the no-excuse absentee voting constitutional amendment. This constitutional amendment will allow for no-excuse absentee voting and needs to pass through both chambers in the coming session. If it does, it will be on the ballot in 2024. And, if approved, Connecticut voters will no longer need a reason to request a mail ballot.

Collective Bargaining Rights for Probate Court Workers

For the past several sessions, CSEA has been working to pass a bill that will give employees in Connecticut's probate court system collective bargaining rights and the ability to join a union if they want. It is just plain wrong that there is a group of workers who are legally barred from even thinking about joining a union and engaging in collective bargaining. CSEA members stand with the probate court workers and will work with them to pass this necessary update to Connecticut's labor laws.

Safety and Security in Connecticut's Courthouses

The Supervising Judicial Marshals, who are represented by CSEA, along with members of the Judicial Marshals' union - together, these are the workers who provide security in Connecticut's courthouses - will work together on legislation that will improve and enhance the safety protocols in the state's courthouses.

Aetna Transition Update for State Medicare Advantage Program

On January 1st, anyone age 65 and over (i.e Medicare eligible) transitioned to the Aetna Medicare Advantage plan. This means that those who were enrolled in the United-Healthcare Medicare Advantage plan are now covered by Aetna. CSEA leaders have been working tirelessly to ensure that the transition goes smoothly. It is important to remember that coverage and benefits remain the same - it is only the insurance carrier that will change.

What exactly does that mean? Do I need to do anything?

The only thing you have to do is provide your new Aetna Medicare Advantage Card to your physicians and pharmacy. Any appointment or prescription you have in 2023 should be covered under your Aetna coverage. Your prescriptions and any procedures or surgeries you have scheduled should transfer right over and your physicians should not need to provide a new prescription or any additional prior authorizations though. If you have not received your card, please contact the dedicated customer service phone number for Aetna, 1-855-648-0391 Monday through Friday 8AM-9PM. You can also visit www.CT.AetnaMedicare.com to learn more.

There was also a letter from Aetna which

provided information about opting out of this plan. It is a federal requirement from Medicare that you receive information on how to opt out. **CSEA STRONGLY URGES THAT YOU DO NOT OPT OUT OF THE PLAN! THIS IS THE SAME COVERAGE THAT YOU HAVE NOW, JUST A DIFFERENT CARRIER.** You've worked hard in your state career to achieve these retiree health benefits and you should not give those benefits up!

It is important to clarify that opting out does not allow you to stay with United because United will no longer administer our plan - instead, opting out means that you are giving up your state-provided health coverage altogether. As such, if you opt out you would need to wait another year to re-join the plan, and in that period of time you will not have the same coverage you have now. Any other plan you choose would be inferior to your state retiree health insurance plan and MORE COSTLY.

Again, as with the last transition in 2018 to the UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage plan, we will be here to help you with any issues you may have and will provide you with any information you need to have!

Is your Spouse a Member of Council 400?

The size of our membership is an important way that CSEA Council 400 demonstrates our power, our voice and our strength—and for 2023 we've set out to drastically increase our membership numbers ahead of the 2023 Legislative Session and expected legislative threats.

Spouses are a large part of our membership, and it's no secret why—they are affected by health insurance and pension benefit changes and are often slated for survivor benefits.

By becoming a member, your spouse will ensure they will continue to

receive the CSEA News and important notifications regarding the benefits you worked hard to secure if you were to pass away. They will also be eligible for SEIU Member Benefits like travel rewards and reduced auto and home insurance rates.

But most importantly, by becoming a member, they will help to increase our membership numbers so that CSEA Council 400 will have an even larger voice against our opponents who want to slash benefits—your benefits, their benefits.

If your spouse isn't yet a member, contact our Retiree Organizer, Kevin Sullivan at ksullivan@csea760.com or 860-951-6614 x 118 to get them signed up!

Part B Reimbursement for State Retirees

The standard premium rate for Medicare Part B is scheduled to reduce to \$164.90 per month for 2023.

Most people have now received their statement from Social Security noting the personal premium amount. If you haven't you may want to call Social Security or visit their website: <https://www.ssa.gov/>

What do you do next?

If you are already receiving reimbursement and you receive a notice that your premium will be \$164.90 for your Part B, you don't have to do anything!

If you receive notice from Social Security that your premium is higher than \$164.90, and/or you will be paying an additional amount for Part D, you will need to report the information to update your monthly reimbursement in your pension. This year, you will need to send the information to Aetna, who is now taking over processing the Part B reimbursement information. Do not send information to UnitedHealthcare! There are several ways you can report this information. Make a copy of your SS statement showing the amount you will be paying, and mark your state employee ID number above your name. Aetna is also asking for your Medicare ID number to speed up processing. For your spouse, include your name, Medicare ID number and your state employee ID number on the copy. All information must be submitted to Aetna, no later than February 28, 2023. You may submit by either:

MAIL TO:

Aetna, Inc.
PO Box 7083
London, KY 40742

EMAIL TO:

medicareenrollmenttransactions@aetna.com

FAX TO:

1-855-481-3124.

If you send by mail they are stating DO NOT SEND CERTIFIED. If you are able to, it's recommended that you email your information. You will receive a confirmation of receipt of your email.

Why Might You Be Charged a Different Rate?

If your Medicare premiums are something other than \$164.90 per month for 2023 it may be because:

You have higher annual earnings; you will be charged a Medicare Parts B and Part D Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA). Those retired prior to August 1, 2022 are eligible for reimbursement of this total monthly rate. Those retired on or After August 1, 2022 are eligible for reimbursement of 50% of the additional monthly rate. Your premium may be less than \$164.90 due to the "hold harmless" provision that limits Medicare premiums if the increase would exceed the amount of the member's cost of living adjustment from Social Security. Please note, if it is determined mid-year that your rate is less than \$164.90 any amounts over refunded will be recovered by the State of CT.

Important - all updates must be submitted no later than February 28, 2023 for full reimbursement. Any updates submitted after February 28, 2023 will only be prospective from the date of receipt by Aetna.

Important numbers to have on hand:

Retirement Division Payroll: 860-702-3528

Aetna Customer Service: 1-855-648-0391

Retirement Division Life Insurance: 860-702-3537

Caremark: 1-800-318-2572

Retirement Division Health Insurance: 860-702-3533

Cigna: 1-800-244-6224

Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield: 1-800-922-2232

HEP Care Management Solutions: 1-877-687-1448 or visit them at their portal:

CSEA Retiree Organizer, Kevin Sullivan:
860-951-6614 x 118

<https://www.connect2yourhealth.com/ParticipantPortal/Default.aspx>

Hartford School Crossing Guard Meeting Notice

Tuesday, February 14th of 2023 at 9:45 am at the CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Union Hall
(760 Capitol Avenue, Hartford)

Agenda: Meet your Staff Reps. and Officers, and come love your Union on Valentine's Day!
Contacts: Rosa Salto (Rsalto@csea760.com) and Julius Preston (JPreston@csea760.com)

Recovery For All Equity Agenda Launch

Join CSEA and our allies at Recovery for All for the launch of our Equity Legislative Agenda!
Thursday, January 19th at 12:45PM in the State Capitol Building, 210 Capitol Avenue, Hartford - 1st Floor - Hall of flags.
Bring a mask!

Go Green!

Opt-In to our Digital CSEA News

Did you know that the average person in the US uses more than 700 pounds of paper per year? Or that despite global digitalization, paper usage has actually grown 126% in the last 20 years in the US?

The CSEA News has been an integral part of our communications program for decades, but it is 2022 and we have a host of resources to reduce our carbon footprint and "Go Green." The most effective way for our members to "Go Green" is to request that the CSEA News be sent digitally rather than a hardcopy in the mail!

"Going Green" not only helps decrease the amount of paper waste in our landfills, but it also reduces ink waste and the carbon emissions from delivery. Many of our CSEA members have been interested in decreasing their carbon footprint and opting into the

digital E-Newsletter is a great way to take a small step towards a greener future! Every month you will receive this digital paper in your email inbox - all of the same information, just a lot less waste! To opt into the Go Green E-Newsletter, simply visit bit.ly/GoGreenCSEA and fill out the form.

To make your communications experience even easier, we've launched a BRAND NEW WEBSITE! Visit CSEA-CT.com or SEIU2001.org and let us know what you think - give us feedback on what you like, don't like and what you want improved by visiting bit.ly/CSEAWebSiteInput (case sensitive).

If CSEA has your email address, then you've already received this survey in your inbox, but if we don't then it is also a good opportunity for you to update your contact information by visiting bit.ly/UpdateCSEA (case sensitive).

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