

CSEA Childcare Providers Educate Next Generation

Celebrating the latest graduating class at Riba Aspira Career Academy

CSEA leaders Jacqueline Ulloa, Treasurer of the Family Childcare Council and Maribel Ventura, Waterbury a Regional Organizer led a successful graduating class through the RIBA Aspira Career Academy program to educate the next generation of childcare providers.

Waterbury's RIBA Aspira Career

Academy is addressing the economic and racial/ethnic inequities that have devalued the once vibrant South End neighborhood by creating a strong, resident-driven, civic infrastructure, realigning and relocating job training services and revising child care decision-making policies to be more equitable, insuring adequate

access for neighborhood residents, children and families.

CSEA members are an imperative part of this program, educating and mentoring students to become strong and productive providers. Join us in congratulating the newest childcare providers!



RIGHT: CSEA leaders Jacqueline Ulloa, Treasurer of the Family Childcare Council (bottom right) and Maribel Ventura, Waterbury Region Organizer (bottom center) celebrate with the graduating class.



ABOVE: CSEA Retiree Team members Bernadette Conway and Kevin Sullivan were honored with the Kevin Lynch award from the CT ARA.

CT ARA Honors CSEA Retiree Team

the

On June 24th, Council 400 Retiree Team members Bernadette Conway (Director of Administrative & Retiree Services) and Kevin Sullivan (Retiree Organizer) were honored by the Connecticut division of the Alliance for Retired Americans for their years of service to Connecticut retirees. Bernadette and Kevin were presented the Kevin Lynch Award, named after CSEA member and founding CTARA member. This honor recognizes

decades of work that the CSEA Council 400 Retiree Team has done to organize retirees to fight to expand and protect the very benefits retirees worked so hard to secure. CSEA is deeply appreciative of this award. Congresswoman Jahana Hayes was also on hand at the event and was presented with the Charlene Block Award.

BOE Budget Cuts Plaguing CT K-12 Public Schools Threatened with layoffs and program cuts

Connecticut's K-12 public education system is facing an unprecedented crisis. This issue spans rural, urban, affluent, and impoverished districts alike, threatening the educational foundation for all students. At a time

when our schools should be investing in our students to address the learning and achievement gaps still present from the COVID-19 pandemic, we are in-

stead seeing rampant divestment leading to larger class sizes and less student support. Without immediate and substantial intervention, our state's

educational future is at serious risk.

In Brookfield, CSEA paraeducators are worried about recent budget decisions which have led to the Board of Finance

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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

CSEA Retiree Organizer, Kevin Sullivan:
860-951-6614 x118

HEP Care Management Solutions: 1-877-687-1448 or visit them at their portal:
<https://www.connect2yourhealth.com/ParticipantPortal/Default.aspx>



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COUNCIL 400 SUMMER PICNIC

RSVP BY
AUGUST 3

\$15/ MEMBER
\$25/ NON-MEMBER SPOUSE
\$38/ GUEST

THE FARMINGTON POLO CLUB
162 TOWN FARM RD, FARMINGTON, CT 06032
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14 11AM - 4PM

QUESTIONS?
STU CLARK (860-205-0657)
TINA FRANCO (203-721-4382)

BUFFET: 12-2:30PM
CASH BAR (NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES SERVED ALL DAY)

ENTERTAINMENT

ANYTIME: OLYMPIC SWIMMING POOL, HORSESHOES, BOCCE, BASKETBALL, FISHING

STARTING AT 1:15PM: TRIVIA, BINGO & CARD GAMES



Member			
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Phone #			
Email Address			
	(If you want confirmation)		
Chapter #-Location			
No. of Guests		Guest Names	
\$ Amount Enclosed			

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Dividend Rates - Second Quarter 2024		
	Dividend Rate	Annual Percentage Yield
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SHARE DRAFTS (Checking)	1.25%	1.26%
CLUB ACCOUNTS	2.00%	2.02%
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Southbury, CT 06488
(203) 267-7610

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2434 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, CT 06111
(860) 667-7668

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.

Anderson, Gloria,Admin And Residual
Arroyo, Jorge, Judicial Marshals
Barber, Bradley, Service/Maintenance
Barstow, Julia, Uconn
Bible, Bernard, Uconn
Budzinski, Evelyn,Administrative Clerical
Byrne, Patricia, Judicial
Campanelli, Margaret, Health Professional
Carthon,A James, Correctional Officers
Cox, John, Engineer, Scien, Tech
Cutler, Mary, Health Professional
Devin, Ronald, Social And Human Services
Dicapua, Richard, Uconn
Fedor, Edward, Judicial
Ferguson, John, Correctional Officers
Forward, Brian, Correctional Officers
Frantz, Gregory, Uconn
Funk, John, Correctional Officers
Garron, David, Uconn
Gaynor, Eleanor, Service/Maintenance
Gill, Susan, Judicial Marshals
Gori, Helen, Health Professional
Greco, Irene,Administrative Clerical
Harding,Ansel,Administrative Clerical
Harding, John, Uconn
Hausman, Lawrence, Social And Human Services
Holzberg, Maria, Dpds Asstpd
Ireland, Gerald, Correctional Officers
Jakubielski, Raymond, Correctional Officers
Kane, Frances,Administrative Clerical
Keirans, Robert,Admin And Residual
Leiper, James, Comm College Admin
Lieberman, Joseph, Elected
Lipinsky,Alice,Administrative Clerical
Locke, Bryan, Service/Maintenance
Loiselle, June, Health Nonprofessional
Macneil, John, Service/Maintenance
Maleski, Christine, Health Nonprofessional
Mann, Shirley, Social And Human Services
Mckee, George, Legislative Management

Moffett, Frances, Judicial
Nielsen, Randolph, Service/
Maintenance
Nuttall, Paul, Uconn
Page, George, State University Faculty
Paulson, Margaret, Service/
Maintenance
Potkay, Elizabeth, Service/Maintenance
Previti, Shirley, Engineer, Scien, Tech
Riccio, Leone, Service/Maintenance
Ridzon, Daniel, Service/Maintenance
Roberts, Carol,Administrative Clerical
Roy, Loretta, Service/Maintenance
Sales, Kathleen,Administrative Clerical
Shea, Edward, Service/Maintenance
Sheary,Albert, Judicial
Swan, John, State Education
Vartanian, Pamela, Engineer, Scien, Tech
Versachi, Lincoln,Administrative Clerical
Wilson, Julia, Service/Maintenance

CSEA NEWS

The Voice of Connecticut's
Public Service Employees & Retirees

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MA Millionaire Tax Success Vs. CT Fiscal Guardrail Failure

Our neighbors to the north have found a solution to the seemingly-unsolvable issue of sustainable funding for public education and transportation infrastructure by implementing a more just, progressive tax policy. Meanwhile, Connecticut remains shackled by outdated promises to Wall Street while we face record-breaking child poverty rates, and historic cuts to our poorest public school districts that only face more challenging months to come with little political will to make the transformative fiscal shifts required to fix these wrongs.

Massachusetts' Millionaires Tax, a 4% income surtax on earnings over \$1 million, has far exceeded expectations, generating \$1.8 billion in the first nine months of the fiscal year. This windfall is directed towards essential public services, with significant portions earmarked for education and transportation, two investment areas in particular known for their strong return on investment. The success of this tax has also generated this substantial revenue without driving away the wealthy residents who are often falsely presumed to flee when more progressive taxation is implemented (see A Better Connecticut Institute's report, Millionaire's Pay to Stay).

The impact of this tax is palpable. The revenue has already funded public college scholarships, universal free school meals, and infrastructure upgrades. Critics who predicted a mass exodus of millionaires have been proven wrong, as the state continues to thrive economically while making critical investments in its future.

Conversely, Connecticut's fiscal policy is hamstrung by the so-called "fiscal guardrails" – including most notably the spending and volatility cap. These measures, initially intended to promote fiscal responsibility, have ironically stymied the state's ability to utilize surplus revenue for meaningful investments in public services. Despite this year's \$1 billion surplus, Connecticut faces severe underfunding in higher education and other essential services. The spending cap, in particular, prevents the legislature from using existing surplus revenues to bolster programs that could benefit residents and reduce long-term service needs - reducing future reliance on public services.

Governor Lamont's stringent adherence to these fiscal policies has manufactured a crisis of public service disinvestment. The state's inability to invest in higher education, for example, has led to a system that is deeply underfunded, impacting the quality and accessibility of education for many residents. This stands in stark contrast to Massa-

chusetts, where surplus revenue is being used to enhance educational opportunities and infrastructure, driving long-term economic growth and stability.

The volatility cap, which supposedly targets only fluctuating revenues, has diverted approximately \$8.4 billion over six years from potential investments. This cap captures "excess" revenues, which have averaged \$1.4 billion yearly, including over \$530 million during the pandemic's first year. These funds, if invested in Connecticut's people and communities, could have spurred economic growth and increased future revenue.

Research consistently shows that investment in core services fosters more resilient economies and communities than austerity measures. Yet, Connecticut's fiscal caps, based on outdated formulas from 1991, fail to consider the current and future needs of its residents. They exacerbate economic and racial inequities, locking in patterns of injustice rather than addressing them.

Massachusetts' approach illustrates the benefits of taxing the ultra-wealthy to fund

critical public services, creating a more equitable and thriving state. Connecticut, a state with substantial wealth, can and should adopt similar strategies, but the fiscal guardrails, initially intended as a safeguard, have become a hindrance, preventing the state from leveraging its wealth to benefit all residents.

It's time for Connecticut to redefine success. The state must move beyond survival mode and embrace a model that prioritizes investment in public services, fostering economic growth and improving the quality of life for all its residents. By reforming our fiscal policies to allow for greater flexibility in utilizing surplus revenues, Connecticut can create a more just and prosperous future.

The lesson from Massachusetts is clear: progressive taxation works. By taxing the ultra-wealthy and reinvesting in public services, states can generate significant revenue and drive long-term growth. Connecticut has the wealth and the potential to follow this path. It's time to dismantle the fiscal guardrails and build a Connecticut for all.



DEMOCRACY SCHOOL

A CONNECTICUT LEGISLATURE THAT WORKS FOR US: THE IMPORTANCE OF ELECTIONS IN OUR FIGHT TO WIN

Join us to build a shared understanding of upcoming elections, and how the balance of power at the Capitol impacts our ability to win policies for a CT where everybody can thrive.





SATURDAY July 27, 10am-2pm
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500 Main St, Hartford, CT, 06103
Light Breakfast and Lunch + Interpretacion en Español

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Questions? Contact Constanza constanza.gsegovia@gmail.com



ABOVE: The P3B Council members enjoyed spending time with one another at their annual P-3A/SDE Summer Picnic last month.

SEIU 2001

CSEA

Child Care Union

10yr Celebration

A great time for childcare providers to come together, celebrate our achievements and have some good food!

SATURDAY

JULY 20TH

2024

11AM - 4PM

(PARK RESERVED ALL DAY!)

Location:

Lakewood Park Pavilion

100 Lakewood Rd.

Waterbury, CT. 06701

RSVP:

seiu2001.cc/picnicRSVP

Council 400 Staff Report - 2023/2024 Fiscal Year

By: Kevin Sullivan, Retiree Organizer

When it comes to making a lasting impact and championing the rights and well-being of workers, CSEA Council 400 has set a shining example as an exceptional retiree union. With a legacy built on unity, dedication, and advocacy, Council 400 continues to inspire and empower retirees to make a difference long after their active careers have ended. Let's take a moment to reflect on the remarkable achievements of this incredible retiree union over the past year.

Retiree Membership Increase: The union has successfully enrolled over 1,000 new retiree members, strengthening our ability to defend pensions, healthcare, and hold insurance providers like Aetna and Cigna accountable for retiree well-being.

Resolving Issues with the Aetna Medicare Advantage Plan: The Aetna Medicare Advantage Plan has continued to present challenges for some of our members, both significant and minor. However, thanks to our proactive members who have notified us of

their issues, we have been able to effectively advocate for resolutions. Specifically, we have addressed concerns related to co-pays, prescription denials, denials of physical therapy, MRI's and CAT scans. By leveraging our members' feedback, we have ensured that they receive the benefits outlined in their health plan as per the contractual requirements.

Legislative Victories: The union has led effective legislative actions, defeating bills that aimed to weaken public sector unions, recalculate pensions, and cap pension amounts for State of Connecticut Retirees. These wins safeguard retirees' benefits. We also fought to make sure that higher education receives the proper funding needed to educate our students in State Universities and Community Colleges.

Active Retiree Chapter Engagement: CSEA Retiree Chapters held 204 in-person meetings across 27 chapters along the East Coast, providing retirees with opportunities to come together and make collective decisions. For

those living outside of our regional chapter areas, we have continued to offer meetings via Zoom!

Social Activities Committee: Council 400 members have been busy planning trips, vacations, and social outings for CSEA members, fostering community and camaraderie. Keep an eye out for the CSEA News and emails for trips that are planned, and we hope you participate in them!

Strong Support for Political Action Committee: Many Council 400 members have chosen to contribute to the Political Action Committee (PAC) through automatic deductions from their pension checks. These funds strengthen the union's ability to defend members' benefits both in Hartford and in Washington.

Solidarity with Coalition Partners: Council 400 members have supported the Connecticut for All coalition, advocating for a long-term mission to build a better Connecticut.

As the contract for negotiated pension and healthcare

benefits expires in 2027, it's important to act now to ensure that no benefits are lost during the upcoming negotiations. Building a strong membership base and maintaining an active Political Action Committee (PAC) are key to this process. With a robust membership and an engaged PAC, the union will be well-positioned to protect members' hard-earned benefits.

CSEA Council 400 has exemplified what a strong retiree union can accomplish. Your outstanding achievements in advancing workers' rights, engaging communities, shaping legislation, and fostering lifelong learning, serve as an inspiration to all. Council 400's legacy of empowerment and unity will continue to resonate, leaving a lasting imprint on the labor movement and the lives of workers for generations to come. It has been a pleasure working with all of you and I know we are going to continue to make great strides. Stronger Together!

What are the Fiscal Guardrails? *And why are they not fiscally responsible?*

The fiscal guardrails, introduced to foster fiscal responsibility and stability, have inadvertently become a straitjacket, hampering the state’s ability to make necessary investments in critical areas such as infrastructure, education, healthcare, and child-care. The volatility cap, in particular, stands out as a significant threat to the investments that Connecticut so desperately needs.

Established as part of a 2017 bipartisan budget agreement, advocates often slam legislators for passing these highly influential controls behind closed doors, with no opportunity for public comment. Intended to stabilize the state’s finances, the crafters of these controls lacked the economic understanding of the consequences that these inflexible policies would have on Connecticut residents. They never understood that these fiscal guardrails would create years of divestment in critical programs despite booming revenues.

The volatility cap, specifically, requires that any revenue exceeding a certain threshold—derived mainly from “highly volatile” sources such as capital gains—which are actually incredibly stable and reliable sources—be deposited into the state’s Budget Reserve Fund (BRF), commonly known as the rainy day fund. While the intent behind this fiscal oxymoron was to prevent the state from becoming overly reliant on unpredictable revenue streams, it’s instead forced legislators to make short-sighted and economically unsensible decisions with our tax dollars.

At the time of this printing, the Lamont Administration has projected Connecticut will close its fiscal year on June 30 with \$1.35 billion in surplus, marking the sixth time in the seven year old program will capture at least \$950 million in surplus. The only notable year under this mark was 2020 when COVID-19 terrorized the state finances - even still it managed to siphon away over a half a billion dollars that year.

This trend doesn’t seem to be slowing either; analysts have projected that through 2028 (the furthest projection models go) the volatility cap will capture between \$800 million to \$1.2 billion each year. It’s important to note that these projections are very conservative, for example, the Lamont Administration projected that

this year the cap would only capture around \$450 million, just a few months later and those numbers ballooned to more than double.

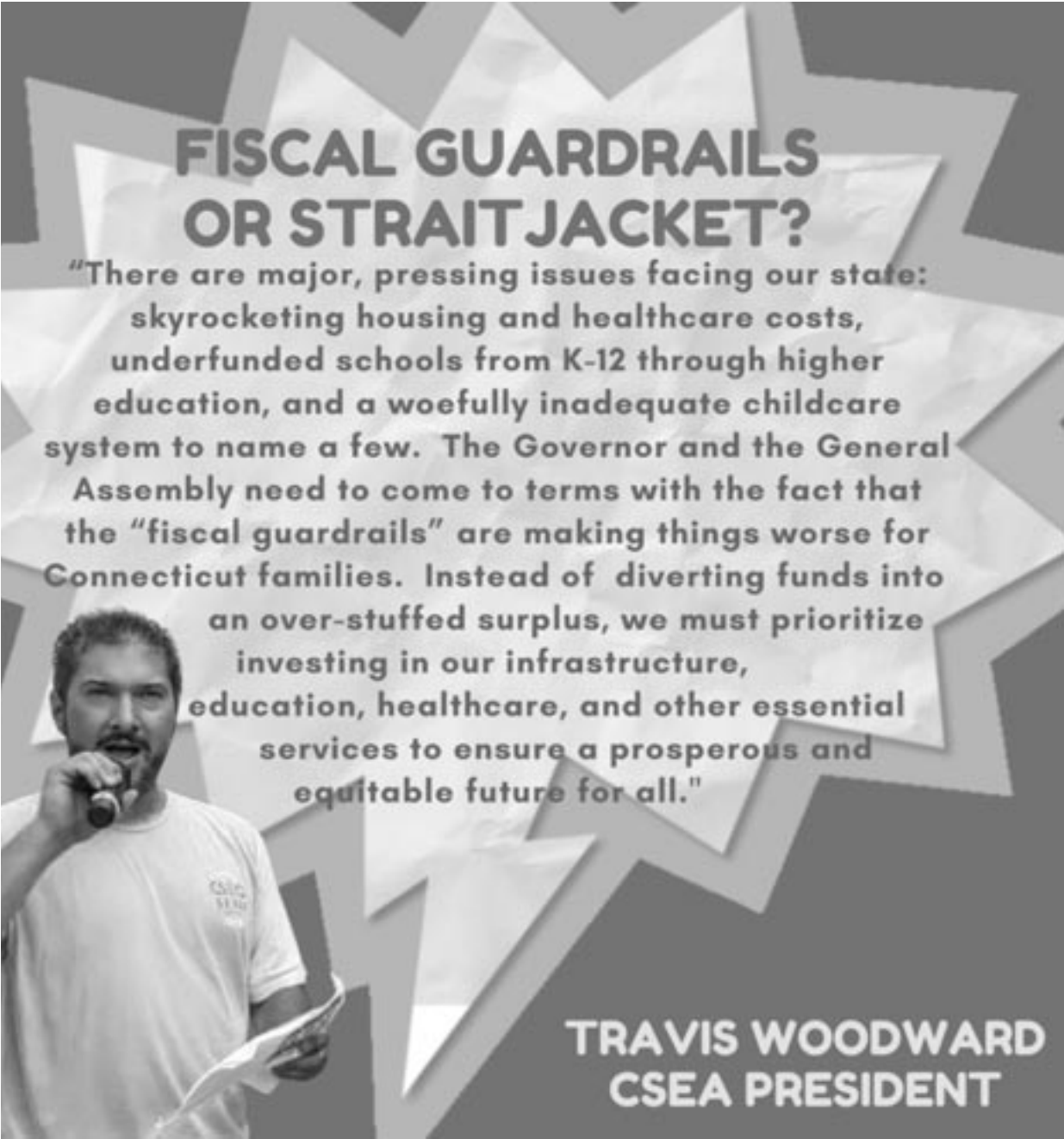
This is a broken system. By inaccurately labeling revenue as “volatile” we are unnecessarily stripping critical programs from the funding they desperately need in order to provide baseline services.

Connecticut’s infrastructure is in dire need of modernization. Roads, bridges, and public transportation systems require substantial upgrades to meet current and future demands. Our future generations are seeing chronic divestment from early child-care and development funding, through public K-12 and beyond to public higher education. State agencies across Connecticut are dangerously understaffed and re-sourced.

This is not the picture of a state that is, as Governor Lamont put it, in good fiscal health. A state in good fiscal health, as thou-

sands of economic studies have proven, are states with flexible fiscal controls and a strong and consistent appetite to invest in the very programs and people that help improve the state’s quality of life - for everyone, not just the ultra-wealthy.

Throughout the next several months, we will be providing you with more information about these backwards fiscal controls, ways that they are directly impacting residents and how CSEA, SEBAC, Connecticut For All, the SEIU State Council and all of our other allies are working together to ensure that 2025 priorities are not swept away due to these arbitrary policies.



Cigna Dental & Balance Billing on the Basic Plan *By: Kevin Sullivan, Retiree Organizer*

If you are enrolled in the Basic Plan (regardless which State you live in), you do not need to be concerned about selecting in-network or out-of-network dentists, as balance billing is not applicable to your plan.

What is Balance Billing?

Balance billing occurs when dentists charge more for a service (e.g., cleaning, x-

ray) than what your insurer, such as Cigna, agrees to cover. The dentist then bills you for the difference. However, if you are covered by the Basic Plan and receive such a bill, do not worry. Simply pay the dentist, and Cigna will reimburse you for the balance billed amount.

No Balance Billing in the Basic Plan

The Basic Plan protects its members

from balance billing. You are only responsible for your designated coinsurance levels. Should you encounter balance billing from an out-of-network dentist, Cigna's customer support is available to assist with these concerns.

For any questions or to obtain a reimbursement form, you can contact Cigna directly at (800) 244-6224.

BOE Budget Cuts Plaguing Connecticut

Threats of layoffs and program cuts to K-12 public schools across the state

continued from page 1 voted to reduce the education budget by \$700,000, a decision that has raised concerns among educators and parents. This reduction comes after a failed referendum which led to further financial scrutiny and adjustments. The impact of these cuts will be felt across various school programs, potentially affecting the quality of education provided to students. Parents and community members are worried that such cuts will diminish the resources available to students, including essential support services and extracurricular activities.

Danbury Schools were initially projected to have a reduction of at least 100 staff members due to budget constraints. In a district with hundreds of vacancies already directly impacting student success, an additional 100 would have been a nail in the coffin. After much member engagement from

CSEA paraeducators and tutors, the district ultimately managed to retain most positions, losing only two staff members. This outcome, while better than anticipated, still reflects the precarious financial situation that the district is navigating. It is a clear indication that without increased state funding, even larger districts with significant needs will continue to struggle to provide high-quality education to all students.

The impending end of ARPA and ESSER funds adds another layer of urgency to these local crises. These federal funds have been pivotal in helping districts like Brookfield and Danbury manage the impacts of the pandemic, providing much-needed resources to support student learning and wellbeing. As these funds dry up, the need for state intervention becomes even more critical. Connecticut must step up to fill the funding gap

fiscal guardrails, which Governor Lamont champions. These guardrails, intended to maintain fiscal discipline, are preventing the state from appropriating the billions in surplus funds that could be used to support our public education system. Adjusting these guardrails makes economic sense and is essential for the well-being of our students and the future of our state.


We cannot continue to justify historic savings for future generations when our current generation is being so immensely divested.

Throughout the summer, board of education union members, community and parent groups will be planning a coordinated, statewide approach to addressing this crisis. In order to be successful we must have members from across councils join in on this work. If you are a parent in one of the districts across the state facing budget cuts or layoffs, please reach out to Drew Stoner, Communications Director, at DStoner@csea760.com to share your story and learn about ways to get involved in this fight.

to prevent further educational decline. One of the biggest obstacles to that funding are the state's



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



CSEA Call for Constitutional Amendments

Date: June 1, 2024
To: CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Chapter Presidents
From: Beverly Lee, Secretary/Treasurer
Re: 2024 Call for Constitutional Amendments

CSEA SEIU Local 2001 will hold its 83rd Anniversary Biennial convention on Friday, October 25, 2024, at Central Connecticut State University, 105 Ella Grasso Blvd., New Britain, CT.

According to the CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Constitution, Article 9 - Constitutional Amendments, Section 9.1 - Regular Procedure:

9.1 Amendments to the constitution may be proposed by any member of the association and shall be submitted, in writing, to the secretary/treasurer of the association at least sixty (60) days in advance of the annual or special convention and thereafter submitted by the secretary/treasurer to the chapters at least thirty (30) days in advance of such convention. The secretary/treasurer shall refer said proposals to the constitution and by-laws committee for its recommendations to convention delegates. 9.2 These proposed amendments shall be voted upon at the convention.

Therefore, I am advising you that any proposed constitutional amendments must be received by me at CSEA Headquarters, 760 Capitol Ave, Hartford, CT 06106 no later than close of business on August 25, 2024.

Finally, as a reminder, if you have not yet conducted elections for your chapter delegates to attend the convention, please contact your staff representative for the number of delegates your chapter is eligible to elect. More information regarding the convention will be sent to you in the near future.

Thank you for your work on behalf of the union.



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Solidarity Season

Wisconsin Public Unions Fight Back, UAW Update & Attacks on Florida Unions

Across the country, unions are standing up against unjust legislation, pushing for fair working conditions, and striving to secure the rights and dignity of workers. This "Solidarity Season" is a testament to the power of collective action and the unwavering commitment of unions to improve the lives of the working class.

In Wisconsin, a significant legal battle is unfolding that could have far-reaching implications for labor rights across the country. A coalition of unions has filed a lawsuit challenging a set of restrictive laws aimed at curbing collective bargaining. These laws, which have been seen as an attempt to weaken the bargaining power of unions, are being met with fierce opposition. The unions argue that these regulations violate workers' rights to freely associate and negotiate the terms of their employment.

The lawsuit is more than just a legal maneuver; it is a rallying cry for workers everywhere who are facing similar legislative threats. A victory in Wisconsin could set a powerful precedent, encouraging other states to reconsider their anti-union stances and reinforcing the importance of collective bargaining as a fundamental right. This case highlights the critical role that legal action plays in defending workers' rights and the importance of solidarity in the face of

legislative adversity.

Despite a loss in Alabama, the United Auto Workers (UAW) are making ground-breaking strides in the South, a region historically resistant to unionization. Under the dynamic leadership of Shawn Fain, UAW has launched ambitious efforts to organize workers at major automotive plants, including Mercedes and Volkswagen. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to extend union benefits to workers who have long been denied fair wages, reasonable working hours, and adequate health benefits.

The UAW's efforts in the South are not just about improving conditions for auto workers; they represent a broader push to uplift entire communities and set new standards for labor practices in the region. The potential success of these campaigns could signal a significant shift in the labor landscape, challenging the status quo and inspiring similar movements in other traditionally anti-union areas.

In Florida, public sector workers are facing one of the most aggressive attacks on their rights in recent history. Senate Bill 256, signed into law by Governor Ron DeSantis, aims to decertify unions that do not meet stringent new membership requirements. This legislation specifically targets teachers and other public sector employees,

undermining their ability to collectively bargain for better working conditions and fair wages.

Unions in Florida are not taking this assault lying down. They are mobilizing a robust response, organizing rallies, and engaging in public advocacy to educate citizens about the detrimental effects of this law. The campaign against Senate Bill 256 is a powerful example of how unions can rally together to resist unjust policies. It underscores the importance of solidarity, not just within individual unions, but across the entire labor movement. By standing together, Florida's public sector workers are sending a clear message: attacks on workers' rights will not go unchallenged.

The courage and determination displayed by unions across the country serve as a powerful reminder of what can be achieved through collective action. Whether it's fighting in the courts, organizing workplaces, or resisting harmful legislation, the labor movement is proving that solidarity is our strongest asset. As members of this great movement, let us continue to support each other, stand up for our rights, and work tirelessly to build a more just and equitable society for all.

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^{**}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.

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