

Broad Bipartisan Support for SJM Arb Award

Push for Full Contracts for All our Units Continues with March 11th Event

This week the Senate and House both overwhelmingly approved the arbitration award on a broadly bipartisan basis, with only a few legislators voting against the bill (see photos of the vote tallies to the right). This award covers three Judicial Branch bargaining units including CSEA Supervising Judicial Marshals (SJM) members for the 2025-2026 contract year, securing a 2.5% General Wage Increase (GWI) plus step/increment.

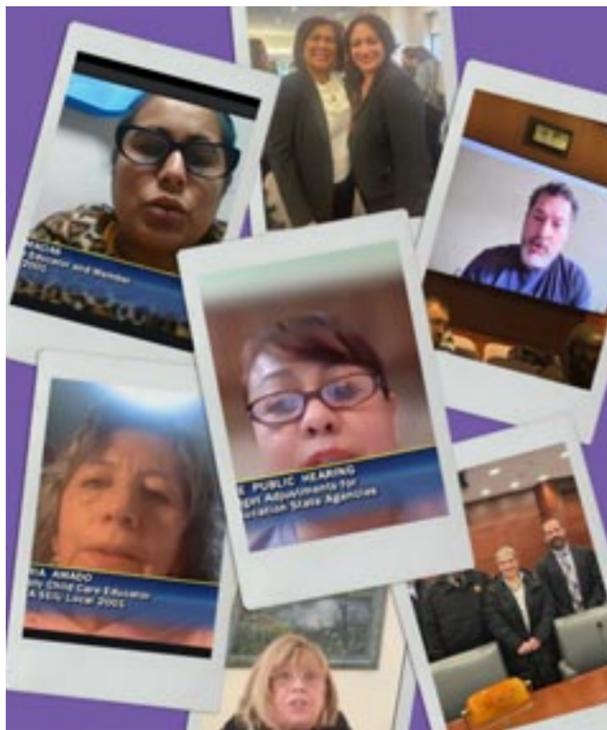
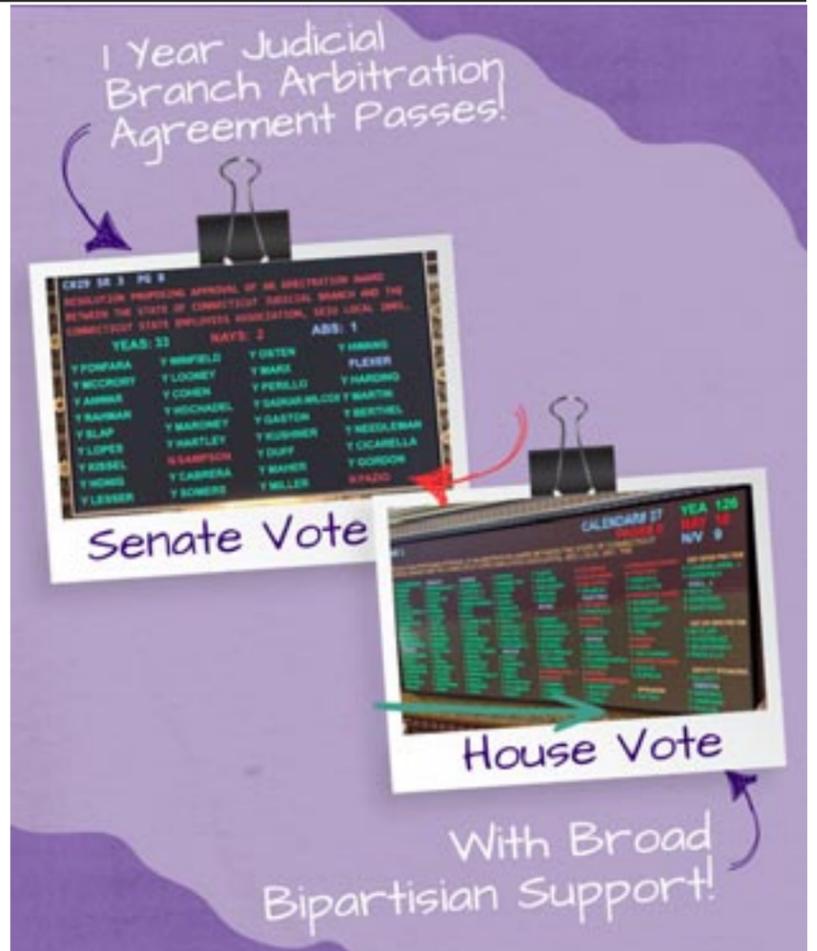
And as we take some time to celebrate this major union victory, we are

not losing sight on our continued fight for a full four-year contract and look ahead to Pension and Healthcare

Agreement negotiations formally starting this year.

On March 11th at 5:00PM, hundreds of state workers are coming together at the State Capitol to demand that the Administration offer contracts that reflect the importance of the work we do and deliver on the recruitment, retention and reinvestment needs of our state agencies. Register to join this event now, we'll have a shuttle from CSEA. Scan the QR code on page 4 to register.

We'll see you on March 11th as the fight for fair contracts continues.



2026 Legislative Update

The 2026 Legislative Session is in full swing and CSEA members have been showing up to testify at committee hearings on a wide array of bills.

Rocio Peña, a home-based childcare provider in Waterbury, told lawmakers exactly what the Care4Kids waitlist is doing to small providers like her. "When families are placed on the waitlist, I am left

with vacant slots that I cannot fill. Those empty spaces mean lost income." After nine years serving her community, she admitted something no provider should have to say: she has "considered shutting down my business or seeking other employment just to make ends meet..When Care4Kids is not fully funded, everyone suffers. Providers lose income. Parents lose job stability. Children lose access to early learning during

critical years of development." Genesis Lora, another Waterbury childcare provider, echoed that reality. "As a newer provider building my program, every enrollment matters," she explained. "That is not a decision any provider should have to face because a public program is underfunded." She reminded lawmakers that child care "is not just a benefit program. It is a foundation that allows parents

continued onto Page 4

Annual Council 400 Florida Meetings

By: Kevin Sullivan

From February 1 through February 20, I had the pleasure of visiting our seven Florida chapters - Ocala, Clearwater, Sarasota, Fort Myers, Boca Raton, Vero Beach, and Daytona! I'm happy to report that Council 400 is alive, growing, and energized in the Sunshine State. While Connecticut was digging out from snow and freezing temperatures, our Florida retirees

gathered for their annual February chapter meetings.

All seven chapters held well-attended meetings filled with familiar faces, new members, and lively conversations. These February gatherings are always special because they give retirees the chance to reconnect with former colleagues, share a meal, and hear updates that directly affect their pensions and health benefits. As always, our meetings also featured valuable presentations from representatives of Aetna and Cigna, who answered questions and helped clarify important healthcare information specific to State

of Connecticut retirees.

Every even-numbered year means a CSEA election year. In accordance with the CSEA Constitution and Bylaws, we conducted chapter elections in each location and the results were fantastic! Across Florida, retirees stepped up to serve in leadership roles. We saw strong participation, smooth elections, and enthusiastic volunteers ready to keep *continued onto Page 5*

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

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Meetings And News

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

Chapter 401 (Hartford area)
Thursday, April 2nd - 1pm
CSEA Union Hall & Zoom
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Zoom Mtg ID: 83617277918
Patrice Peterson: 860 416-0306

Chapter 402 (Danbury area)
Wed., March 11th - 10am
Speaker: Aetna Representative
United Methodist Church
5 Clapboard Ridge Road
Danbury, CT
Linda Albanese: 860 354-6965

Chapter 403 (Norwich area)
Tues., March 10th - 1:30pm
Speaker: Cigna Dental
Rose City Senior Center
8 Mahan Drive, Norwich
Carol Burgess: 860 303-7267

Chapter 404 (Waterbury area)
Tues. March 10th - 10am
Speaker: Bernadette Conway,
CSEA Retiree Coordinator
Trinity Orthodox Church
937 Chase Pkwy, Waterbury
Tina Franco: (203) 721-4382

Chapter 405 (New Haven)
Thurs. March 12th - 10:30am

Speaker: Aetna Representative
Hamden Government
Center Building, 3rd Floor
2750 Dixwell Ave., Hamden
Sue Pierson (203) 376-7207

Chapter 406 (Middletown)
Tues. March 10th - 12:30pm
Speaker: Cigna Dental Rep.
American Legion Post 75
58 Bernie O'Rourke Dr.
Middletown, CT
Bob Westendorff
(860) 343-0683

Reminder: Chapter 406 will not be meeting in April.

Chapter 407 (Bridgeport area)
Wed., March 18th 1pm
Speaker: Cigna Dental Rep.
St. Josephs of Stratford
National Catholic Church
1300 Stratford Rd., Stratford
Zoom ID: 872 4952 3823
Passcode: 000891
Liz Anderson (203) 676-0659

Chapter 408 (Willimantic)
Wed., March 11th, 12:30pm
Speaker: Kevin Sullivan;
CSEA Council 400 Organizer
Mansfield Senior Center
303 Maple Rd., Storrs
Doug Racicot (860) 234-2537

Chapter 409 (Retired
State University Professors)
Speaker: Cigna Dental
Friday, March 20th - 10am
CSEA Union Hall & Zoom
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford

Zoom ID: 868 8922 7158
Dave Walsh (860) 684-4773
Chapter 410 (Windsor area)
Monday, March 9th - 1pm
Speaker: Cigna Dental Rep.
Kent Memorial Library
50 N Main St, Suffield
Amelia Smith 860 687-1848

Chapter 411 (Rocky Hill area)
Thursday, March 19 at 1pm
Speaker: Cigna Dental Rep.
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
And online via Zoom.com
Meeting ID: 848 1334 1668
Passcode: 507358
Subby Puglisi 860 529-8336

Chapter 412 (Putnam area)
Tues., March 17th - 1:30pm
Speaker: Bernadette Conway,
CSEA Retiree Coordinator
New Putnam Town Hall
200 School Street, Putnam
Don Gladding (860) 933-9998

Chapter 414 (Torrington area)
Monday, March 16 at 10am
Five Point Extension Bldg
852 University Dr., Torrington
Kathryn Doan 860 324-8300

Chapter 415 (Manchester)
Mon., March 24th - 1pm
Elks Lodge in Manchester
30 Bissell Street
Stu Clark: (860) 205-0657

Chapter 416 (New London)
Tues. March 10th at 12pm
Speaker: Aetna Representative

Waterford Public Library
49 Rope Ferry Rd, Waterford
John Knaff: 860-857-4244
Chapter 417 (Plainville area)
Wed., March 11th - 1pm
Plainville Public Library
56 East Main St., Plainville
Mark Kirschner
(860) 882-2717

Chapter 418
(Community College Retirees)
Tues., March 10th - 10am
Speaker: Sebby Puglisi,
Council Regional Vice Pres
4C's Union Hall in Hartford
907 Wethersfield Ave
President Colleen Richard
(860) 202-4128

Chapter 431 (Myrtle Beach)
Tues., March 10th at 12pm
Golden Corral
Pay at the Door - Cash or
Check \$10 per person
868 Oak Forest Lane
Myrtle Beach, SC
President John Yopp
(203) 507-1022

Chapter 441: Cape Cod, MA
Wednesday, May 13 at 10am
Speaker: Kevin Sullivan,
CSEA Retiree Organizer
President Richard Peterson
(203) 507-1189

CHANGE OF DATE FOR QUARTERLY VIRTUAL MEETING!

NEW DATE: March 25th | 4PM | Detective Matthew Hogan of the Connecticut State Police

CHECK YOUR EMAILS FOR THE LINK TO THE MEETING IN THE COMING WEEKS!

Zoom Meeting
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83868018842>
Meeting ID: 838 6801 8842
1-929-205-6099, 83868018842#

Detective Matthew Hogan of the Connecticut State Police, who is a member of the USSS Financial Crime Task Force, will be discussing and presenting information about fraud and online crimes, focusing on the crimes against retirees. We hope you can join this important meeting, but if you are unable to, it will be recorded and you will be able to view it online afterwards.

Our Quarterly Virtual Meetings are now recorded, and you can view them at our CSEA website! Go to www.csea-ct.com, click on Member Resources, then click on Retirees, then click on Quarterly Virtual Meetings!



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>



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* Annual Percentage Rate



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www.CSECreditUnion.com

Dividend Rates - Fourth Quarter 2025 Rates

	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

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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 family, friends and loved ones.

- | | |
|---|---|
| Adams, Madaline, Administrative Clerical | Knight, Arthur, Engineer, Scien, Tech |
| Aeschlimann, Albert, Service & Maintenance | Krasinski, Bernard, Correctional Officer |
| Bacon, Stephen, State University System | Laporte, William, Correctional Officer |
| Barbieri, Leonard, Judicial Branch | Letitia, Italia |
| Blanchette, Roger, Judicial Branch | Light, Donald, Judicial Branch |
| Caccavale, Ettore, Protective Services | Lopez, Sylvia, Service & Maintenance |
| Calo, Thomas, State Police | Mahoney, John, Criminal Justice Inspector |
| Cantalupo, Rocco, | Malicki, Geraldine, Admin And Residual |
| Carey, Lois, Healthcare | Mancino, Robert, Comm College Faculty |
| Chrostowski, Gary, State Police | Mazzorana, Mirella, Healthcare |
| Conti, Sophie, Healthcare | Morgan, Mary Lou, Dept. Of Developmental Services |
| Curtin, Margaret, Uconn Health | Paesani, Judith, Uconn |
| Cusson, Gary, Service & Maintenance | Painchaud, Joseph, Engineer, Scien, Tech |
| Dave, Ajitkumar, Administrative Clerical | Perleone, Donna, Administrative Clerical |
| Derwin, John, Protective Services | Perrone, Richard, Healthcare |
| Devlin, Francis | Pippin, George, Service & Maintenance |
| Dinnie, Charles, Correctional Officer | Prince, Melvin, |
| Dion, Dennis, Judicial Branch | Ribisl, Richard, Healthcare |
| Dobkins, Suzanne, Healthcare | Rinaldi, Evelyn, St Vocation Federation Teacher |
| Ferguson, Diane | Ruffino, Louis, Engineer, Scien, Tech |
| Frascione, Carol Ann, Administrative Clerical | Rushford, Richard, Correctional Officer |
| Giacalone, Dominic, Administrative Clerical | Sandstrom, Joan, Uconn Health |
| Glahn, Margaret, State University System | Scricca, Madeleine, Administrative Clerical |
| Griffiths, Brian J, Escu Retiree | Sexton, Richard, Protective Services |
| Gruenberg, Ann, State University System | Shore, Roberta |
| Harris, Patricia, Healthcare | Shukis, Edward |
| Hawkins, William, State University System | Sousa, Sonja, Healthcare |
| Heikkinen, Kenneth, Correctional Officer | Tokarz, John, Exempt/Elected/Appointed |
| Huckaby, Willamae, Judicial Branch | Trcka, Patricia, Healthcare |
| Hughes, Abigail, Managerial | Vazquez, Julio, Social And Human Services |
| Jenkins, Jacqueline, Administrative Clerical | Weston, Thomas, Uconn |
| Johnson, Laura, Correctional Officer | |
| Jones, Rudolph, Managerial | |
| Kelleher, Helen, Uconn Health | |
| Kenny, Eugene | |
| King, Fairella, Administrative Clerical | |
| King, Robert, Service & Maintenance | |

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

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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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Three Decades of Union Values in Public Office

Warren Packer Leads in Manchester as Constable

When Warren Packer talks about politics, he doesn't start with headlines or talking points. He starts with the union.

"I learned leadership in the union," he said. "You listen first. You figure out what people need. Then you speak up."

A retired state employee and longtime CSEA member, Warren was first elected Constable in Manchester in 1995. Now in his 31st year, he's one of the longest-serving elected officials in town — and he still approaches the job with the mindset he developed as a union activist.

Before running for office, Warren was deeply involved in his local. He served as chapter president, worked on negotiating and reclassification

committees, participated in legislative action efforts, and helped build political connections across unions.

"That's where you really learn how things work," he said. "You build relationships. You realize we're stronger when we move together."

That thinking carried over into his work in Manchester. Early on, he pushed for local unions — firefighters, teachers, judicial employees, municipal workers — to coordinate their political endorsements instead of working separately.

"We stopped going one by one," he explained. "We went as a group. One voice. That changes things."

The role of constable goes back to colonial times. In Manchester, Warren's primary responsibility is serving

delinquent tax warrants and other official town paperwork.

"It's not flashy," he said. "But it's important. It's about making sure the town can function."

After 30 years in office and decades in the labor movement, Warren's advice to newer CSEA members is simple.

"Start small," he said. "Go to meetings. Join a committee. Listen. You're not doing this alone." He's especially mindful of younger members balancing work and family.

"We all want the same thing," he said. "A steady job. Good health care. The ability to go home at night and not worry about what's coming next."

That stability, he believes, doesn't happen by accident.

"It comes from showing up," Warren said. "It comes from sticking together."

And after three decades of doing exactly that, he's proof that local engagement — grounded in union values — can make a lasting difference.



For 30 years Warren Packer has served the City of Manchester, a role he is honored to hold.

Members Testify at Public Hearings

continued from Page 1 to work and small businesses like mine to survive."

At the State Department of Education (SDE), Diane Murphy (P3A President and CSEA Treasurer/ Secretary) described what underfunding means behind the scenes. "When we are given the resources and support we need, state employees do it better, faster, and for less than anyone." But she warned that low staffing levels "potentially compromise all of these important systems and tasks" from special education compliance to educator certification to grant oversight. "Our ability to adapt quickly and effectively to the changes anticipated in

the coming year will depend on a fully staffed Department of Education."

In the Education Committee, Paraeducator Council President Cynthia Ross-Zweig gave legislators a lot to think about, "When nearly 14,000 positions statewide are filled by individuals struggling to survive on poverty-level wages, that is not merely a staffing issue — it is an equity issue." She described earning roughly \$21,640 a year before taxes and asked lawmakers plainly: "Is it not the role of this Committee — and the State — to ensure every child receives a fair and equitable education?" Then she reminded them, "Equity without enforcement is only rhetoric."

Before the Housing Committee, Daniel Wagoner, a P-4 Project Manager with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) warned about the dangers of privatizing building inspections. SB 255, he said, "is full of unintended consequences that will put the safety of people at risk while, simultaneously, wasting taxpayer dollars." He asked the questions lawmakers should be asking: "Will the third-party inspector give their report to the builder and then members of the public will just have to trust that everything is safe?" And in the Finance Committee, CSEA President Travis Woodward

connected the dots between revenue and public services. "Raising revenue is necessary to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of people in Connecticut in an equitable and sustainable manner." In the wealthiest state in the country, he argued, we should be "a shining example for the nation — a place where every family has what we need to live a good life."

Members are not waiting for someone else to tell their story. They are walking into hearings — on Zoom, in person, and in writing — and making it impossible for lawmakers to ignore what these decisions mean in real life.

Good Works Committee New Opportunity!

Last month, sixteen members from P3A, P3B and P4 councils came together at the Bloomfield Eversource Campus for the Annual Winter Special Olympics. Members volunteered with the Snow Shoe Loop, Cross Country Straight and Loop events and others helped escort athletes throughout the event.

This is a great event that the Good Works Committee looks forward to volunteering at every year.

The CSEA Good Works Committee is now turning it's sights on the next event, the Habitat for Humanity Build taking place on Saturday, May 2nd.

Donations are needed to sponsor a team of eight volunteers.

This is the third year that CSEA members have participated in this wonderful event helping a community. If you would like to participate by donating, you can make the check payable to: CSEA Good Works, and send it to CSEA, 760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT 06106, Attention Good Works Committee.

If you would like to participate in another way, contact Bernadette Conway at bconway@csea760.com, or 860-951-6614, ext. 112 by March 25th!



**Recruit
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**A Fight for Fair
Contracts & Strong
Public Services**

Register Now!




Wednesday, March 11th 5:00PM

State Capitol, Hartford

Family Child Care Provider News

Noticias para Proveedores de Cuidado Infantil

Highlights from this session's first night of testimonies!

Over 75 members, providers, educators (and even some parents) shared their story of the Care4kids wait list impact to provide testimony.

Our Council President, Maria Reyes, connected with the OEC Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner to discuss the importance of fully funding our childcare contract and addressing the waitlist. BTW..did you know the Commissioner is fully bilingual?! That means more access for our monolingual Spanish speaking members.

Three of our very own union leaders (Angelica Cervantes, Maria Robles-Macias, and Maria Robles) addressed the Appropriations Committee about fully funding child care in our state, eliminating the waitlist and increasing support for Birth to Three services. Extra shoutout to Maria Amado for staying up until 11:30pm to wait her turn.

Lastly, through our union's power we killed a Republican concept bill that directly attacked our child care union .The bill would have prohibited child care providers from voluntarily deducting union dues from their subsidy payment. Member dues contributions make up our war chest, it's a resource that empowers us to con-

tinue advocating for better working conditions and rate increases. We sent a strong message: **HANDS OFF OUR UNION!**

We look forward to continuing to escalate our campaign on our path to address the Care4Kids wait list, increase access for special services and win our next contract with rate increases for providers and educators! Thank you to all who shared your story.

¡Lo más destacado de la primera noche de testimonios de esta sesión!

Más de 75 miembros, proveedores, educadores (e incluso algunos padres) compartieron su historia del impacto de la lista de espera de Care4kids para proporcionar testimonio.

Nuestra presidenta del Consejo, María Reyes, se conectó con el Comisionado de la OEC y el Comisionado Adjunto para discutir la importancia de financiar completamente nuestro contrato de cuidado infantil y abordar la lista de espera. Por cierto... ¿sabiste que el Comisionado es totalmente bilingüe? Eso significa más acceso para nuestros miembros monolingües de habla hispana.

Tres de nuestros propios líderes sindicales (Angelica Cervantes, María Robles-Macias y María Robles) se dirigieron al Comité de Asigna-

ciones sobre la financiación completa del cuidado infantil en nuestro estado, eliminando la lista de espera y aumentando el apoyo a los servicios de Nacimiento a Tres. Un saludo extra a María Amado por quedarse despierta hasta las 11:30 p. m. para esperar su turno.

Por último, a través del poder de nuestro sindicato, matamos un proyecto de ley conceptual republicano que atacó directamente a nuestro sindicato de cuidado infantil. El proyecto de ley habría prohibido a los proveedores de cuidado infantil deducir voluntariamente las cuotas sindicales de su pago de subsidios. Las contribuciones de las cuotas de los miembros forman nuestro cofre de guerra, es un recurso que nos empodera para seguir abogando por mejores condiciones de trabajo y aumentos de tarifas. Hemos enviado un mensaje fuerte: **¡QUITA LAS MANOS DE NUESTRA UNIÓN!**

¡Esperamos continuar intensificando nuestra campaña en nuestro camino para abordar la lista de espera de Care4Kids, aumentar el acceso a servicios especiales y ganar nuestro próximo contrato con aumentos de tarifas para proveedores y educadores! Gracias que compartió tu historia.

Council 400 Heads South: Florida Chapters Show Strong Turnout and Even Stronger Solidarity

continued from Page 1 their chapters active and organized. Leadership succession is one of the keys to keeping our retiree voice strong, and Florida delivered.

We had new members sign membership cards to join Council 400, including some spouses of state retirees. Many retirees also signed up to contribute to our Political Action Committee knowing their support will make an impact in Hartford - even from 1,200 miles away.

During these meetings, we discussed the five pillars of retirement security and how we need to fight to protect them. They are the State Pension, Healthcare, Social Security,

Medicare, and Medicaid. All five face potential threats in the coming years. But CSEA Council 400 remains the leading voice defending retiree benefits. The energy and engagement shown at these Florida meetings prove that retirees understand what's at stake and are ready to stand together.

A heartfelt thank you to the local chapter leaders and members who hosted these meetings — and for scheduling them in February instead of August! Your hospitality, organization, and enthusiasm made this trip both productive and enjoyable. Council 400 sincerely appreciates everyone who was elected or re-elected to leadership roles to help keep our Florida

chapter members informed, connected, and active. For members who live out of state, gatherings like these are especially vital, ensuring that all retirees remain engaged, informed, and empowered - no matter where they call home.

If the momentum we saw in February is any indication, 2026 is shaping up to be a strong year for retiree engagement. Distance does not weaken our voice - it strengthens it when retirees remain organized and engaged.

Kevin Sullivan
Retiree Organizer
CSEA Council 400



Scholarship Opportunities for Kids & Grandkids of Members!

Throughout the 50+ year history of the Bernard McCusker Memorial Scholarship, CSEA has awarded approximately 1,000 scholarships totaling over \$1,000,000.00! We give great thanks to all the CSEA councils, chapters and individuals that have contributed over the years.

The 2026 Bernard McCusker Memorial Scholarship is now available.

Applications will be accepted through April 30th at 4:30PM when all materials are due.

The Connecticut AFL-CIO Health and Safety Committee is excited to announce the return of our Scholarship Essay Contest for high school seniors in Connecticut!

This contest invites students to thoughtfully explore the real world impact of workplace hazards on workers and their families. Students are asked to submit an original essay of 1,000 words or less, responding to one of the scenarios listed below.

Essays should reflect serious thought, research, and

most importantly, an understanding of the true cost of unsafe working conditions. All entries will be judged anonymously on content, originality, and clarity of vision. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) may not be used to write or edit your essay!

This year's essay topics include:

- Improving worker safety on our roadways
- The impact of PTSD on public safety workers
- The impact of workplace

violence on health care workers

Students are asked to think critically about the importance of workplace health and safety, and the consequences that arise when workers are forced to toil in unsafe working conditions.

Scholarship Awards:

1st Prize: \$2,000

2nd Prize: \$1,500

3rd Prize: \$1,000



Notice to State Members on Dues Cap Structure

Over the course of CSEA's long history, we have fought together to win strong contracts, protect public services, and defend the rights of working people. But while wages and the cost of nearly everything around us have gone up, our dues structure has not kept pace in a fair or sustainable way.

The last time we adjusted dues was in 2020. Since then, inflation has risen and the cost of bargaining, organizing, legal defense, communications, and member support has increased significantly. Yet our dues cap has remained frozen. The result is a system that no longer reflects our values or our reality.

Members who have not reached the cap pay a straight percentage of their salary. When they receive a raise, their dues increase accordingly. But members who have reached the cap stop paying a percentage. Their dues stay flat, even as their salaries continue to grow.

In other words, those with

the greatest ability to contribute have not seen their dues increase in at least six years, while lower-paid members continue to pay a true percentage of every raise. Meanwhile, overall dues revenue has remained essentially flat as costs rise.

By removing the cap, we are aligning our dues structure with the same principles we advocate for in public policy: fairness, progressivity, and shared responsibility. Just as we support lifting the Social Security cap so that higher earners pay their fair share to strengthen the system, we believe our union's funding structure should reflect that same value.

This change is about sustainability. It is about ensuring we have the resources necessary to negotiate strong contracts, enforce them, organize new members, and defend public services in an increasingly challenging political environment.

WHY SPOUSES OF CT STATE RETIREES SHOULD JOIN CSEA COUNCIL 400

As the spouse of a Connecticut state retiree, you benefit directly from the hard-earned healthcare and pension protections your family relies on. By joining CSEA Council 400 for just \$60 per year, you help strengthen the voice of retirees and their families at the Capitol and in negotiations that affect your healthcare, cost-of-living adjustments, and long-term retirement security.

You don't need to have worked for the state — if you're receiving benefits through your spouse's retirement, you have a stake in protecting them. Your membership supports advocacy, representation, and access to helpful information and resources all year long. It's a small investment that helps protect what you've earned together.

Contact Kevin Sullivan at
ksullivan@csea760.com or
 860-951-6614 ext. 118 to join!

Dependent Eligibility Verification Audit (DEVA)

Last Summer, the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) launched a Dependent Eligibility Verification Audit (DEVA) for all members (under the age of 75) with dependents enrolled in the State of Connecticut's health-care plan. This audit was conducted by a private firm, Part D Advisors (PDA), selected by the State to confirm that all covered dependents meet eligibility requirements.

The vast majority of members have successfully completed verification of all eligible dependents by providing the needed documents or signing an attestation confirming eligibility. However, you may be among those who have not yet completed verification, and we want to make sure you know how to correct the situation if an error has been made.

If your verification was not complete, you and your relevant adult dependent would have received COBRA notices indicating they'd been removed from coverage effective February 1st. It will be important to correct an error that was made. Any such correction will be retroactive to February 1st as long as it's completed before April 30th, so there will be no loss of coverage for any dependent so corrected.

The first step in correcting any error is to contact Part D Advisors, the vendor that conducted the audit. They can be reached two ways:

1. Via their secure web portal at <https://rev.partdadvisors.com/SOC>. If you have not already registered there using the personalized information you should have already received by mail.

Or

2. Via phone using the number that corresponds to your last name.

- Last Names
A – D
(833) 839-8800**
- Last Names
E – K
(833) 806-2202**
- Last Names
L – Q
(833) 412-3413**
- Last Names
R – Z
(833) 438-6744**

Representatives are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday. You can also visit the PDA secure web portal at <https://rev.partdadvisors.com/SOC> and register using the personalized information you should have received by mail.

If this does not solve the problem, it is important to contact your Union representative who can get your information to the Health-Care Cost Containment Committee and through them to the Comptroller's office. Since it takes about 14 days for your proof of coverage (back to February 1st) to show up in the insurance computer systems, you should also contact your union representative if you need proof of insurance for your dependent sooner than the 14 days.

Does CSEA have your correct contact info on file?

Update your info by scanning the QR code below.



Social Activities Committee Adds More Trips!

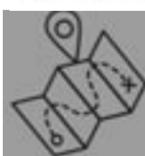
Day Trips

Saturday May 16	Encore Casino
Sunday, June 28	Newport Playhouse & Cabaret Restaurant
Saturday, July 18	Yankees v. Dodgers
Sunday, July 26	Baseball Hall of Fame
Saturday, August 22	Red Sox v. Giants
Saturday, September 5	Hartford Yard Goats Labor Day Game
Sunday, September 20	Resorts Catskills Casino

Overnight Trips

September 21-23	Margaritaville Resort - Cape Cod
October 27-29	Tropicana Atlantic City on the Boardwalk

The CSEA Social Activities Committee has planned several trips for 2026! Trips across New England and beyond are reflective of the member feedback the committee has received over the past few years. Please scan the QR code to earn more about each trip and download the registration form. If you have any questions, please contact SAC Chair Tina Franco at 203-721-4382 or txfranco@gmail.com.



SOCIAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE (SAC)

Review the latest trip offerings on our website or contact SAC at CSEATrips@gmail.com



Scan me



The Headlines Say the Economy is Strong. So Why Don't Working Families Feel it?

If you listen to the nightly news, you'll hear that "the economy is doing well." Markets are up. Corporate profits are strong. Politicians point to growth numbers as proof that things are on track.

But the reality for working families looks more red than green. The top 10% of Americans own 87% of all stocks. The top 1% alone owns about half of the entire market. For most of us, our financial well-being isn't tied to Wall Street. It's tied to wages, healthcare costs, housing prices, childcare, and whether our paycheck lasts until the next one.

So it's no surprise that, according to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, under the current tax changes in 2026, nearly every income group except the richest 1% is paying more in taxes this year.

The poorest 20% are paying about \$480 more.

The second 20%: about \$860 more.

Middle-income families: about \$850 more.

The fourth 20%: nearly \$1,000 more.

Even the next 15% are paying more.

Meanwhile, the richest 1% receive an average tax cut of roughly \$8,850.

At a time when groceries cost more, rent is up, insurance premiums are rising, and families are juggling multiple jobs, working people are being asked to pay more — while those at the very top get substantial tax breaks. Since 1975, an estimated \$79 trillion has shifted from the bottom 90% of Americans to the top 1%. That didn't happen by accident. It happened

through policy choices — tax structures, deregulation, weakened labor laws, and repeated decisions to prioritize capital over workers.

This helps explain why so many people feel like the economy isn't working for them, even when headlines say otherwise.

When politicians say "the economy is strong," they often point to GDP and the stock market. But those numbers don't measure whether families can afford childcare. They don't measure whether someone can retire with dignity. They don't measure whether public services are funded or understaffed.

The stock market is not the economy. A rising index does not mean rising stability for working families. If nearly all stock wealth is concentrated at the top, then market performance alone cannot define economic health.

An economy should be judged by whether working people can build secure lives. By whether public schools are funded. By whether healthcare is accessible. By whether retirement is realistic. By whether families can save instead of constantly scrambling.

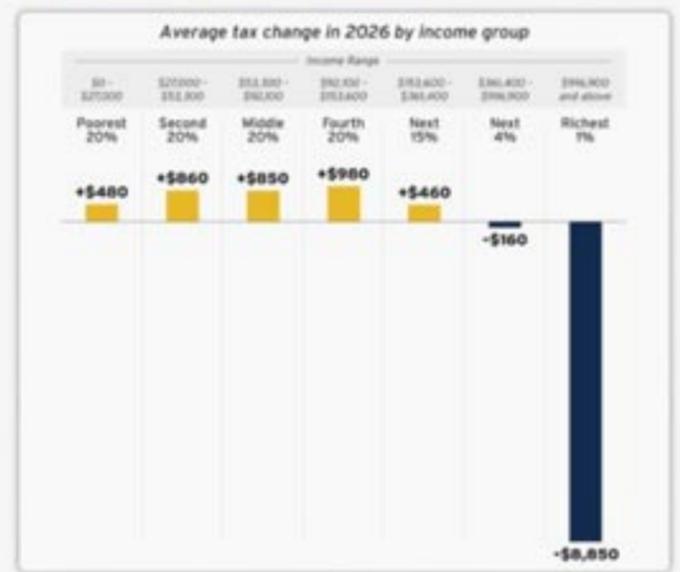
If your paycheck feels stretched thinner, you are not imagining it. If the headlines don't match your household budget, you

are not wrong.

Unions remain one of the most effective tools working people have to push back against decades of upward wealth transfer. Through collective bargaining, political engagement, and solidarity, we can fight for tax systems and economic policies that reward work — not just wealth.

The question isn't whether the economy is growing, but who is it growing for? And until working families share fully in that growth, our work isn't done.

The combined impact of President Trump's tax policies has resulted in higher taxes this year for every income group except the richest Americans.



Source: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, February 2026

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[†]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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