



Paraeducators at New Fairfield High School snap a picture together before school in support of #BlackOutForSafeSchools

BOE Coalition Members Jump Into Action

Following School Reopening, Members

Fight for Safe Schools for Staff & Students

The return back to school following the holiday break was unprecedentedly difficult. Staff and students faced record high COVID numbers with very little support and even less of a plan. A lack of testing and masks compounded with critical staffing

shortages created an even more dangerous situation for staff and students so CSEA members jumped into action. Working alongside fellow Board of Education Coalition members like CEA, AFT CT, AFSCME Council 4, MEUI and UAW Region 9A, members

participated in three major actions to bring attention to these issues.

Shortly after school restarted, leaders held a press conference to announce the coalition's nine demands:

1) Adopt new, more aggressive testing protocols to closely monitor students and teachers before they enter our schools. As in other facilities, temperatures should be taken outside and anyone with a fever or exhibiting symptoms should not be allowed into our schools;

continue onto page 4

CSEA Members Win Big Telework Arbitration

Finalized Telework Policy Now In Effect

On December 27th, Arbitrator Michael Ricci ruled in favor of the SEBAC Union Coalition regarding the issue of what the post January 1st telework program will be for state workers. As a result of the award, the disputed provision will now read:

"4.10 An employee may request

telework schedules of any amount the individual believes to be consistent with job duties

and operational needs. All such requests shall be reviewed and granted, denied, or modification suggested in accordance with the procedures and standards of this policy, except that the determination of an agency to refuse to grant telework above an amount that would provide one day per

continue onto page 7

Tax Time is Here

Retirees- Don't Forget About Social Security & Pension Deductions in Connecticut

CT STATE RETIREE INCOME TAX EXEMPTION—YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Tax Season is nearly upon us! And while our members will soon begin working diligently to file before the April 18th deadline, many members living in Connecticut now have the opportunity to take advantage of a tax exemption for the third year.

Please continue to read for information about the Retiree Income Tax Exemption for CT State Income Taxes.

What is the Retiree Income Tax Exemption?

All retirees are on a fixed budget—and that soaring medical costs paired with the

increased cost of living makes handling expenses while aging difficult. During the 2018 legislative session, CSEA members advocated for a bill aimed at making that fixed budget a little easier to deal with. The bill increased the threshold for Social Security income exemptions as well as implemented a new exemption, starting at 14% and increasing progressively until it reaches 100% in 2024, for pension and some annuity income at the same increased threshold. The legislature voted to institute this bill to first be implemented starting with your 2019 tax returns.

The schedule on (page 7) impacts pension and annuity income for singles and couples with adjusted gross income (AGI) levels of up to \$75,000 and \$100,000, respectively.

continue onto page 7

Pandemic Pay Event Planned

Members Plan Press Conference to Tell Stories

Private and public unions across Connecticut have been collaboratively fighting for an acceptable deal on pandemic pay since COVID-19 began. The sacrifices to frontline worker's health and safety (as well as their families) cannot go unnoticed and unappreciated. The state has to do more than calling our members heroes when they have worked day in and day out to ensure that vital services remain open and running successfully. From childcare providers and correctional employees to school workers and bus drivers and monitors, CSEA members have joined the hundreds of thousands of essential

workers who have staffed our schools, correctional facilities, hospitals, grocery stores and so many other vital services.

CSEA members have been working alongside the other unions representing frontline workers to make sure that our members get the pandemic pay they deserve. The next step to this escalation plan is a press conference planned for the week of February 14th via ZOOM to announce our demands. An email will be going out with the date and time along with the zoom information, please be sure to join in solidarity. A large showing will be paramount to this event's success.

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

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

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CSEA Leaders Push Child Tax Credit



Meetings And News

MEETING DATES

The Council 400 Delegates Meeting is always held on the third Thursday of the month.

The March Delegates Meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, March 17th at 10am at the CSEA Union Hall

All meetings are subject to change/cancellation depending on the state of the global pandemic

Chapter 401 (Hartford area):
Thursday, March 3rd, 12:15PM lunch,
meeting at 12:45PM
Guest Speaker: Judy Stein,
Center for Medicare Advocacy
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
Patrice Peterson: 860-416-0306

Chapter 402 (Danbury area):
Wednesday, March 9th at 10:00AM
United Methodist Church
5 Clapboard Ridge Rd., Danbury, CT
Linda Albanese: 860-354-6965

Chapter 403 (Norwich area):
Tuesday, March 8th at 1:30PM
Guest Speaker: Kevin P. Sullivan,
CSEA Retiree Organizer
Rose City Senior Center
8 Mahan Dr., Norwich, CT
Carol Burgess: 860-859-3641 (h)
860-303-7267 (c)

Chapter 404 (Waterbury area):
Tuesday, March 8th at 10:00AM
Holy Trinity Greek Community Center
937 Chase Parkway (exit 17 off I-84),
Waterbury
John Quinn: 203-804-0189

Chapter 405 (New Haven area):
Thursday, March 10th at 11:30AM
Hamden Town Office Building Third Floor
2750 Dixwell Ave., Hamden
Ron Osokow: 203-671-7685

Chapter 406 (Middletown area):
Tuesday, March 8th at 1:00PM
Guest Speaker:
United Healthcare Representative
American Legion Post 75
58 Bernie O'Rourke Dr., Middletown, CT
Joe Formica: 860-347-4532

Chapter 407 (Bridgeport area):
Wednesday, March 16th at 1:00PM
St. Joseph's of Stratford
National Catholic Church
1300 Stratford Rd., Stratford (on Rt. 113
toward Sikorsky Airport)
Carol Donofrio: 203-888-2920

Chapter 408 (Willimantic area):
Thursday, March 10th at 12:30PM
Guest Speaker: Kevin P. Sullivan,
CSEA Retiree Organizer
Mansfield Senior Center
303 Maple St., Mansfield, CT
Marleen Dutra: 860-477-0858

Chapter 409 (State University Professors)
Friday, March 18th at 10:00AM
Guest Speaker:
United Healthcare Representative
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
Dave Walsh: 860-684-4773

Chapter 410 (Windsor Locks area):
Monday, March 14th at 1:00PM
Suffield Senior Center
145 Bridge St., Suffield, CT
Amelia Smith: 860-687-1848

Chapter 411 (Rocky Hill area):
Thursday, March 17th 1:00PM
Guest Speaker: Cigna Dental Representative
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
Sebastian Puglisi: 860-529-8336

Chapter 412 (Putnam area):
Tuesday, March 15th at 1:30PM
Guest Speaker: United Healthcare
Representative
Congregational Church of Putnam
175 Main St., Putnam, CT
Don Gladding: (860) 933-9998

Chapter 414 (Torrington area):
Monday, March 21st at 10:00AM
Five Points Center for the Arts
843 University Dr., Torrington, CT
Karen Pineman: 860-354-6727

Chapter 415 (Manchester area):
Monday, March 28th at 1:00PM
Elks Lodge
30 Bissell St., Manchester, CT
Donna McElduff: 860-454-0480

Chapter 416 (New London area):
Tuesday, March 8th at 12:00PM
Guest Speaker: Mike O'Brien,
Council 400 President
Groton Public Library
52 Newtown Rd. Groton, CT
John Knaff: 860-857-4244

Chapter 417 (Plainville area):
Wednesday, May 11th at 1PM
Guest Speakers: United Healthcare
Representative
& CSEA Retiree Organizer: Kevin P. Sullivan
Plainville Public Library
56 East Main St., Plainville, CT

Chapter 418 (Community College Retirees):
* No March Meeting - Lobby Day *
Tuesday, March 1st at 10:00AM
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Ave. Hartford
Bill Searle: 860-745-3692

FLORIDA CHAPTERS MEET IN FEBRUARY WITH UNITEDHEALTHCARE, CIGNA AND CSEA REPRESENTATIVES

Chapter 421 (Daytona, FL Area):
Ruth Finizio
(860) 680-1860

Chapter 422 (Ocala, FL Area):
Hilda M. Spotts
(352) 843-7988

Chapter 423 (Highland Beach, FL Area):
Ron Herzig
(561) 994-6428

Chapter 424 (Sarasota, FL Area):
Bob Mackiewicz.
(941) 387-4408

Chapter 425 (Dunedin, FL Area):
Hank and Ursula Bracker
(727) 848-0089

Chapter 426 (Ft. Myers, FL Area):
Linda Benoit
(239) 489-1787

Chapter 427 (Vero Beach, FL Area):
Tim and Martha Jurek
(321) 452-7843

MARCH SOUTH CAROLINA MEETING WITH UNITEDHEALTHCARE, CIGNA AND CSEA REPRESENTATIVES

****Details will be sent to chapter members****

Chapter 431 (Myrtle Beach, SC Area):
Tuesday, March 15th 11:00am-1:30pm
Golden Corral Restaurant 688 Oak Forest Lane, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
Buffet will be available for \$10 per person
Checks should be made payable to "Chapter 431" and mailed to:
Virginia Nolan, Treasurer, Chapter 431
3204 S. Memorial Ave.,
Nags Head, NC 27959
John Yopp: 704-246-7195

Important numbers to have on hand:

Retirement Division Payroll: 860-702-3528

UnitedHealthcare: 1-888-803-9217

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 x118

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

CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEES CREDIT UNION

You are always a winner at CSECU!

Get a Wheel of a Deal With a CSE Auto Loan

Right now is the perfect time to combine end-of-year car deals with a low-rate CSE auto loan! You can get up to 125% financing on the selling price, including Tax, Title, Warranty and Conveyance Fee.

2.49% APR* NEW AUTO	2.99% APR USED AUTO <i>(up to 6 model years)</i>
5.90% APR USED AUTO <i>(over 6 model years)</i>	6.49% APR NEW AUTO <i>(Impaired Credit)</i>

*Annual Percentage Rate. Certain restrictions apply. Cannot be applied toward existing CSE loans. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Visit www.CSECreditUnion.com for complete list of rates.

Visit Our Website: www.CSECreditUnion.com

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

**Closed President's Day
Monday, February 21st**

**Closed Lincoln's Birthday
Friday, February 11th**

Dividend Rates - Fourth Quarter 2021

	Dividend Rate	Annual Percentage Yield
REGULAR SHARES	0.60%	0.60%
SHARE DRAFTS (Checking)	0.25%	0.25%
CLUB ACCOUNTS	0.35%	0.35%

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.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Allen, Judith | Lawlor, Thomas |
| Baker, Jessie | Macdonald, Virginia |
| Beckwith, Milton | Martinez, Alfred |
| Bobbitt, James | McMahon, Paul |
| Bobrowski, Roger | Morano, Theresa |
| Budziszewski, Carolyn | Mortensen, Linda |
| Caron, Joseph | Morton, Frederic |
| Carvalho, Patricia | Natter, Susan |
| Chagnon, William | Niesz, Helga |
| Cote, Leroy | O'Neill, John |
| Dempsey, Alexandra | Paszowska, Danuta |
| Fenn, Abigail | Peterson, Dennis |
| Fezio, James | Romanowicz, Michael |
| Flanagan, Helen | Sells, Geraldine |
| Gogan, Ruth | Smith, Marian |
| Grayeb, Joseph | Smith, Roberta |
| Grubb, Laverne | Tripp, Marilyn |
| Healy, Kent | Verravas, Kulli |
| Higgins, Jane | Vogel, Ronald |
| Hunter, Frederick | Wallace, Lenzy |
| Jackson, Isaac | Whittlesey, Lyle |
| Kenney, Thomas | Wiltsie, James |



CSEA NEWS

The Voice of Connecticut's
Public Service Employees & Retirees

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Published Monthly by:

CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

Local 2001, Service Employees International Union, CTW/CLC

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Travis Woodward |President |
| Milagros Brown |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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BOE Coalition Members Jump Into Action

Following School Reopening, Members Fight for Safe Schools for Staff and Students

continued from Page 1

- 2) Provide cost-free access to COVID-19 testing at all schools, including weekly pool testing;
- 3) Provide N95 masks and in-home test kits to all school districts for distribution to students and school staff;
- 4) Require N95 masks be worn in school by all, regardless of vaccination status;
- 5) Continue with other established mitigation efforts including social distancing, no large group gatherings, and improved ventilation;
- 6) Prohibit the combining of classes due to staff shortages;
- 7) Prohibit the unsuccessful practice of dual teaching;
- 8) Provide access to COVID-19 vaccinations at all schools; and
- 9) Ensure that staff do not have to use their sick time during quarantine periods.

These nine demands were the result of several conversations with rank-and-file members throughout the BOE Coalition. Items of particular importance to our paraeducators, tutors and bus drivers and mointors were the assurance that

staff would not be required to use sick time when they are mandated to quarantine and that COVID tests would be widely available for staff and students.

CSEA Paraeducator Council President Cynthia Ross-Zweig spoke at the press conference and did interviews with the press afterwards to continue amplifying the message. But that was just the beginning.

A few days later, members participated in a statewide survey broken out by position to assess the conditions at our schools throughout Connecticut. It was clear that all members - paraeducators, bus drivers and monitors, custodians, school nurses, support staff, and teachers - were struggling with the return to school.

Over 5,500 school workers responded to this survey in a three day period and the results were startling. Over 60% of respondents said that they didn't have enough supplies and protocols in place to feel safe performing their job responsibilities and nearly 60% said that they were being required to use sick time for mandated quarantine. Only 24% of respondents



Paraeducator Council President, Cynthia Ross-Zweig, (bottom left) along with other BOE Union Coalition leaders and members, demand more safety standards for students and staff.

believed that they were going to be able to implement their assigned student's IEP and 504 plans without being impacted by staff shortages.

Results of this survey pushed our members to participate in a "Black Out" just a few days after. Members showed up to school wearing black and posted to social media for #Black-Out4SafeSchools while also doing media interviews to further amplify our message. The action was wildly successful and led to a direct response from Governor Lamont and a promise to "hand deliver" masks to any school district that was inadequately supplied. Leaders continue to work together to ensure that our schools become the safe and enriching environment our students and staff deserve.

the first two weeks of school following the holiday break was expertly executed and only successful because of the members driving the actions. Our schools are safer and more successful because of our members' dedication.



Danbury Paraeducators/ Tutor Chapter President Missy Cole (pictured bottom left) along with Danbury Paraeducator Carol Stavola and Danbury Tutor Jackie Suzanne stand together in support of #BlackOutForSafeSchools



Thousands of educators participate in 'blackout' to protest safety protocols; Others wear red to sound alarm for students' well-being

Just one of the several news outlets that covered the press conference, survey and #BlackOut4SafeSchools action.

Don't Miss Another Email! Update Your Information for the New Year!

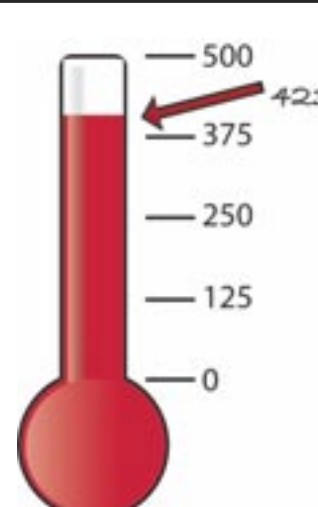
Please visit bit.ly/UpdateCSEA TODAY to update your contact information for our database. Throughout 2022 we'll be keeping you up-to-date on all things CSEA through your email inbox, the CSEA News and our website at CSEA-CT.com

Council 400 Membership Drive

Although the weather outside might be getting cooler... Council 400 has turned up the heat on Organizing New Members!!

We have seen a huge increase in State of Connecticut Employees interested in Retiree Membership and decided it was time to stoke that fire!

We have set a goal of 500 new members signing up for Council 400 during the next fiscal year. Help grow our membership during this Quarterly Membership Drive to ensure Council 400 continues to be the largest and strongest Retiree Union in Connecticut!



- ### Ways YOU can help:
- Talk to your friends/former co-workers, ask them if they are interested in joining us in the fight to protect pensions and healthcare!
 - Have your spouse sign a Spousal Membership card!
 - Volunteer to make calls to your former co-workers!

Order Your FREE COVID Test! Federal Government Offers 4 Free Covid Tests Per Household

The Biden administration has launched a website where Americans can order four free COVID-19 testing kits per household.

The tests, part of the Biden administration's purchase of 500 million tests last month to help tackle a record surge in infections, will be available at www.COVIDTests.gov and mailed to homes within 7-12 days through the U.S. Postal Service. President Joe Biden announced earlier this week the administration would double its order to 1 billion at-home COVID-19 tests amid a

shortage of tests nationwide as U.S. cases spike. The second batch of testing kits will also be distributed for free through the website, officials said.

The site also has information on where you can get tested immediately if you cannot wait to receive your tests in the mail.

The site is simple and easy to use. Please note that this is a website run by the federal government, so if you have questions or issues, we are not able to assist.

WHAT IS THE UNION DIFFERENCE?

AND WHY ANTI-WORKER GROUPS WANT TO DESTROY UNIONS

WHEN UNION WORKERS STAND TOGETHER WE WIN:

- Higher Wages
- Stronger Benefits
- Secure Pensions
- Low Cost Health Care Options
- Paid Time Off
- Improved Working Conditions
- Consistent Pay Increases

WHAT BILLIONAIRE-FUNDED SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS WOULD LIKE TO SEE:

- Workers lose their voice on the job
- Increased contracting out
- Cuts to Pensions
- Delays for Wage Increases
- Mass Layoffs
- Purging of Departments and Programs
- Expensive Health Care Costs
- Retirement Age Rise



SO WHEN THESE GROUPS COME KNOCKING, BE SURE TO ASK:

1. Will you negotiate wage increases?
2. Will you protect my pension?
3. Will you fight for a safer workplace?
4. Will you file grievances against my employer?
5. Will you represent me on the job?

AND WHEN THEY SAY **NO, TELL THEM TO GO, AND LET THEM KNOW: "I'M STICKING WITH MY UNION!"**

Family Child Care Provider News

Noticias para Proveedores de Cuidado Infantil

Child Care Retreat

After two years of virtual meetings the Child Care Council finally had its first convening this last December. With over 60 in attendance, providers enjoyed motivational words from Dr. Elizabeth Dominguez, a life coach and speaker, followed by games and raffles. The Child Care professionals came from around the state to learn, share, grow, and connect. Dr. Dominguez shared helpful tips on how to manage your time and reach new goals. With members considering new resolutions for the year, it's helpful to remember any goal is worth trying. As Dr. Dominguez mentioned in her presentation as long as you break your goals into small attainable steps anything is possible.

We hope to organize more in person events in 2022 as soon as COVID rates are lower. We still expect to have our annual tax management and financial planning seminar in at the end of February but virtually. Please be on the look out for details and additional event dates through email.

Retiro de Cuidado Infantil

Después de dos años de reuniones virtuales, el Consejo de Cuidado Infantil finalmente tuvo su primera convocatoria. Con más de 60 asistentes, los proveedores disfrutaron de las palabras motivadoras del Dr. Elizabeth Dominguez, una entrenadora de vida y oradora, seguidas de juegos y rifas. Los profesionales de cuidado infantil vinieron de todo el estado para aprender, compartir, crecer y conectarse. El Dr. Dominguez compartió consejos útiles sobre cómo administrar su tiempo y alcanzar nuevas metas. Con los miembros considerando nuevas resoluciones para el año, es útil recordar

que vale la pena intentar cualquier objetivo. Como mencionó la Dra. Domínguez en su presentación, siempre que divida sus objetivos en pequeños pasos alcanzables, todo es posible.

Esperamos organizar más eventos en persona en 2022 tan pronto como las tasas de COVID sean más bajas. Todavía esperamos tener nuestro seminario anual de administración de impuestos y planificación financiera a fines de febrero, pero de manera virtual. Esté atento a los detalles y fechas de eventos adicionales por correo electrónico.



Childcare Providers enjoy convening together for the first time in two year to discuss experiences and hear from Dr. Dominguez.

MetLife RetireWise Seminars for CSEA Active Members!

Get your finances on track with the award-winning Retirewise Workshop Series.

With Retirewise, you'll be on your way to making smarter financial decisions and creating an action plan that works for you. From budgeting and building an emergency fund to determining your investment options and creating a will, there's something for every-

one to learn.

Each Retirewise session has different topics that build on each other.

- Building the Foundation
- Creating & Managing Wealth
- Establishing Your Retirement Income Stream
- Making the Most of What You Have

Join your colleagues for the

complimentary Retirewise workshop series. Still on the fence? Visit bcove.video/3DriUYv for a sneak peek of what to expect. Spouses and partners are welcome!

Reserve Your Spot at: bit.ly/3ldCYzj (case-sensitive)

Workshop details

Session 1: Tuesday, April 19, 2022

Session 2: Tuesday, April 26, 2022
Time: 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm EST
If asked for company name, enter CSEA SEIU 2001

Can't attend but still need help with financial questions? You can still sign up for a free personal consultation.

For more information at metlifepiansmart.com/website/24112/

From the President's Desk:

The 2022 labor movement has kicked off and members across our state and country are raising their collective voices to demand a better future for themselves and their families. CSEA is no different.

This month we saw Board of Education members stand together to demand safe schools for our staff and students. As a parent of two school aged children myself, I deeply understand the importance of ensuring that schools continue to be the safe and enriching environment that our children rely on. I was proud to see so many different news articles from papers and news stations across Connecticut lifting up this fight. Did you see that this fight was even covered on the NBC National Nightly news?

I was also proud to join the fight to continue the Child Tax Credit which ended on December 15th of last year and will not be continued unless the Build Back Better bill is passed in the Senate. Childcare Council President, Queen Frelove, and I joined Congressman Larson, Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin and SEIU 1199 President Rob Baril to demand that the US Senate take immediate action to reinstate this crucial tax credit for poor and working-class families.

As the Legislative Session kicks off it is increasingly important that we engage members in the fights we will be having at the Capitol. To that end, CSEA hosted the first of a two-part Activist Training Session on January 26th. Did you miss it? Join us for the second session on February 19th at 5:00PM via Zoom.

Other labor news highlights in Connecticut come from our SEIU sister local, 32Bj which has been working to organize service plaza McDonalds employees. 32Bj had a big win when a National Labor Relations Board Administrative Law Judge reinstated four workers who were laid off in 2020 as a result of their union activity. The judge's lengthy opinion highlighted the egregious violation of the employer, "[the employer] kept track

of and was aware of various union rallies, events and press releases

which included quotations and even photographs of the four union supporters. I find based on the totality of the circumstances, including the almost complete unreliability of Respondent's witnesses, that their arguments are without merit and that their reasons for their actions are based on pretext."

CSEA members attended a rally at the Branford Service Plaza back in July of 2021 and continue to offer our solidarity as 32Bj continues to fight for the rights and safety of these workers.



SEBAC Racial Justice Team Eyes 'Silver Tsunami' Retirements Offer Chance for Diversity

As has been widely reported, this year Connecticut is projected to experience a "silver tsunami" of state workers looking to retire.¹ The departure of so many workers presents both a crisis and an opportunity for Connecticut. Especially during the pandemic, the need for public services has grown exponentially. Will those vital services be diminished with so many workers retiring? Additionally, careers in state service have been the most reliable path for black and brown workers to enter the middle class. Will 2022 bring a further shrinking of public service jobs and therefore less opportunities for citizens of color? Together, we must ensure that the answer to both questions is a resounding "NO." 2022 must be the year where we ensure that retiring state employees are replaced and desperately needed state services are expanded.

In 2021, the General Assembly established a task force to study and make recommendations regarding the anticipated 2022 retirement wave. The work of the task force is critical to the future of our state. The task force should press the legislature to reverse the continued lack of representation for women in male-dominated industries such as police services, highway operations, engineering, construction inspection and corrections. The task force should push for the elimination of the salary gap between white employees and employees of color. And, the task force must insist that, in order for Connecticut to have a robust recovery from the pandemic, all retiring employees must be replaced and critical services must be expanded to meet the rising needs of

Connecticut's families.

SEBAC's Racial Justice Committee has been eyeing this pressure point as an opportunity to advocate for more diversity-driven recruitment strategies. SEBAC and CSEA have been pushing for automatic refills and continuous recruitment legislation to ensure that state services are not diminished. Additionally the SEBAC Racial Justice Committee has been pushing three major internal demands:

1. A Zero Tolerance Policy to ensure that current state workers are working in a healthy environment where discrimination and acts of retaliation are not tolerated.
2. A Labor-Management Career Training Fund to ensure that historically underrepresented groups would be given opportunities to advance in their careers.
3. A Racial Justice Advocate which would be accountable for making constant progress towards eliminating systemic racism in state government.

These measures represent just the first few steps that we must take in order to address the long-term impacts that racial injustice has had on our state workforce and the services we provide.

1. Many CSEA members have discovered that retiring this year may not be the best financial choice. CSEA has been hosting monthly workshops on retirement issues where members get the chance to really dig into the issues. As a result, many CSEA members have concluded that retiring early to avoid the minor COLA changes that go into effect on July 1 would actually lead to a significantly smaller pension benefit in the long run.

Correction Supervisor's Council (NP-8 Unit)

Good Works Committee

CSC Good Works Committee will be holding several fun and social events in 2022 for its members, family and friends.

Please check your personal email periodically for more information.

Tax Season Is Almost Here

Connecticut Retirees - Don't Forget About the Social Security & Pension Deduction

Continued from Page 1

TAX YEAR	% EXEMPTION
2019	14%
2020	28%
2021	42%
2022	56%
2023	84%
2024	100%

The legislation also increases the threshold for 100% exemption for income taxes on Social Security from \$50,000 to \$75,000 for singles and \$60,000 to \$100,000 for couples.

What is eligible under the tax exemption?

Social Security income is eligible for at least a 75% exemption (100% depending on your income), and employer-based pensions, and some annuities are eligible for a 42% tax exemption this year (depending on your income) which include: 401(k), 403(b) and Governmental 457(b) plans reported on line 4D on the Federal 1040-form.

Who is eligible for the tax exemption?

First off, this legislation only covers Connecticut residents filing their Connecticut State Income Taxes. Historically, in Connecticut, pension and annuity income was taxed 100% (or with a 0% exemption), however, starting in 2019, for those that have a Federal AGI below \$75,000 for single filers (\$100,000 for joint filers), retired Connecticut residents will be able to deduct a percentage of their pensions and annuity income when calculating their State AGI. The deduction is 42% for this year and will continue to increase annually until 2025 when it reaches 100%

exemption.

If your Federal AGI is at or above this amount (either as a single or joint filer) you will not be eligible for any exemption.

Now, let's discuss the Social Security portion. Historically, Connecticut exempted income tax from Social Security income that the federal government exempts, as well as some of the Social Security income the federal government taxed for those who had a Federal AGI under \$50,000 for single filers and \$60,000 for joint filers. For those with Federal AGI's over these thresholds, Connecticut offered a 75% exemption, rather than the full 100%. Starting in 2019, however, the legislature raised this threshold from \$50,000 to \$75,000 for single filers and from \$60,000 to \$100,000 for joint filers.

If your Federal AGI is at or above this amount (either as a single or joint filer) you will still be eligible for a 75% exemption.

Where can I find the exemption line on the CT Form-1040?

If you are working with a professional, or filing by yourself, you can find the 42% tax exemption for pension and some annuity income on line 48b of the CT Form-1040.

How can I be sure to get the exemption if I'm eligible?

When filling out your 2021 Form CT-1040, Line 48b: 42% of Pension or Annuity Income. If your filing status is single, married filing separately, or head of household with federal AGI for the taxable year of less than \$75,000 or married filing jointly with federal AGI of less than \$100,000, and you receive income from certain pensions and annuities, such as from a defined

benefit plan, 401(k), 403(b) or 457(b) plans, you qualify for this subtraction modification. To determine the amount to enter on this line, begin with the amount reported on federal Form 1040, Line 4d, or federal Form 1040-SR, Line 4d, Taxable amount of pensions and annuities. From the amount on Line 4d, subtract military retirement pay, Tier 1 and Tier 2 railroad retirement benefits, and Connecticut teachers' retirement pay. Multiply the result by 42%. Enter the amount on this line. Military retirement pay and Tier 1 and Tier 2 railroad retirement benefits are fully exempt from Connecticut income tax, and should not be included in this calculation. The subtraction modifications for these benefits are reported on Lines 44 and 43, respectively, on the Connecticut return. Taxpayers who receive income from the Connecticut Teachers' Retirement Board are already allowed to exempt 25% of that income from Connecticut income tax on Line 45 of the Connecticut return.

As a reminder, CSEA does not have tax professionals on hand, and are therefore unable to advise our members on their individual filing, so if you have specific tax questions you need to consult a tax professional or contact the Department of Revenue Services directly at (860) 297-5962. It is recommended that you call during off-peak hours to minimize your wait time throughout tax season which are Tuesday-Friday from 8:30am-10:00am and 3:00pm-4:30pm, Mondays are their busiest call days.

A Note From Our Political Director Danny Medress

In last month's edition of the CSEA News, you read about our union's agenda for the legislative session of the Connecticut General Assembly scheduled to begin on February 9. From protecting the jobs we do, the services we provide, and the benefits we have earned, there is lots to do and many different ways for you to be involved.

Whether it's testifying at a public hearing about an important piece of legislation or contacting your Representative or Senator, there are many opportunities for you to help out. No experience or special skills are necessary, just a willingness to

stand with your fellow members as we fight for good bills and work against dangerous proposals.

Due to the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic, General Assembly members are currently evaluating whether this session will be in-person or virtual. No matter what decision they make, we can help influence what happens in the Legislative Office Building and State Capitol. To learn more about how you can help and all the different volunteer opportunities, please visit CSEA's volunteer signup page at bit.ly/3qBRXNh (case sensitive).

Telework Arbitration Rules in Favor of SEBAC

Long-term Fight Results in Powerful Final Telework Policy for State Workers

Continued from Page 1

workweek at the worksite shall not be subject to arbitration under this policy."

The result was due to the hard work of the members of SEBAC's statewide telework committee, which includes several CSEA members, as well as to the many witnesses who testified in the binding arbitration hearing that completed in November.

As per the agreed upon language and the award, any denial or modification of a telework ap-

plication that would result in a member being required to be at the work site more than one day per week is appealable. Members seeking to appeal should email teleworksebac@gmail.com. As a reminder, you can apply for the six-month telework period which began on January 1st, at: bit.ly/3FtE3B7 (case-sensitive)

State Retirees: Don't Forget Part B Reimbursement

The monthly basic amount for Medicare Part B for 2022 will be \$170.10, which is what most retirees will be paying.

If that is the amount listed on your Social Security statement, there is no need for you to do anything further, the Comptroller's Office will automatically make that adjustment and your reimbursement will be increased in your January pension check.

If your Social Security statement shows that you are paying an amount different from \$170.10 (higher or lower), or that you are paying an amount for Part

D, then you will need to submit a copy of your Social Security statement to be reimbursed the correct amount. **You must do this by February 28th to receive retro back to January 2022.** You should make a copy of the front page showing the amounts you pay and write your State Employee ID number above your name (you can find your state employee ID number on your pension pay stub).

You can submit it two ways, by sending it in the mail or by email. To send it by mail, send it to:

**UnitedHealthcare Benefits Services
PO Box 740221
Atlanta, GA 30374-0221**

It is a good idea to send it certified so you have proof that you sent it and the date you sent it. You can also send it as an attachment by email to Direct-Bill_KYOperations@uhc.com. Sending it by email is also proof of when you sent it. You can call to confirm they received it at 1-866-747-0048 Monday-Friday 8am-8pm.

CSEA Joins the Fight to Continue Child Tax Credit

Leaders Join Congressman Larson and Mayor Luke Bronin

On January 17th, Congressman Larson hosted a press conference with Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin, SEIU 1199 President Rob Baril and CSEA leaders Travis Woodward (President) and Queen Freelove (Childcare Council President) to call on the Senate to pass the Build Back Better Act to ensure that the Child Tax Credit is continued. Passed last year as part of the American Rescue Plan, the expanded Child Tax Credit provided \$180 million in tax cuts for over 583,000 children in Connecticut. This expansion is one of the largest-ever single-year tax cuts for families with children and served as a direct and successful method for the federal government to put money in the pockets of lower-and-working class families.

By allowing half of this tax credit to be distributed in advance via monthly payments, families were able to meet their financial obligations in real time,

rather than waiting for tax season to see this money. The success of this program is clear.

But families received their final check on December 15th and will not see another check unless the Senate passes the Build Back Better Act which includes a continuation of this vital tax cut.

Travis Woodward, a recipient of the Child Tax Credit, told reporters about his experience, "I am the proud father of two beautiful girls, and when President Biden, with the help of champions like Congressman Larson, passed the American Rescue Plan in March of 2021, they were two of over 583,000 children in Connecticut who were eligible for the expanded Child Tax Credit. In my house, like many others across the United States, we used this money to help pay for the ever-growing expenses of food, utilities and childcare."

Even those who didn't receive the tax credit benefited indirectly,

"Even though I wasn't eligible for the tax credit because my children are older, I still benefited. The parents whose children I care for used some of the money to pay me for childcare so that they could continue to work," explained Queen Freelove, President of the Childcare Council.

CSEA members will continue

to pressure the Senate to pass Build Back Better to ensure that vital tax credits like this are continued to be put in the pockets of working families.



PICTURED ABOVE: CSEA President Travis Woodward and Childcare Council President Queen Freelove join Congressman Larson and Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin for a press conference on the Child Tax Credit.

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