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Legislative Session Wraps Up on Time

Hear the Latest Update from CSEA Political Director, Danny Medress

Since March of last year, we have found ourselves in unprecedented times. A deadly global pandemic has caused disruption on a scale we have not seen in any of our lifetimes. And, we all bore witness to the insurrection in Washington, D.C. on January 6. We have lost friends and loved ones, we have watched our democratic republic challenged like never before, and we have tried to continue on in the hopes that some semblance of normalcy returns. CSEA members, like too many others, have had to put their lives on the line to make sure that the critical work we do gets done.

And, just like we have continued to serve the public, on January 6, members of the Connecticut General Assembly convened their regular legislative session to conduct the people's business. As we are every year, CSEA members were deeply involved in this year's session. From proposing bills to testifying at public hearings to contacting legislators and so much more, CSEA members adapted to the challenges of this legislative session. We fought hard for a legislative agenda that put members first while honoring and

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PICTURED ABOVE (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT): Kelly Santoro, Mike Slamon, Barbara White and Theresa Garcet Pose with their purple shirts!

Members Win at Autumn Bus Yard!

Wethersfield Members Celebrate New Ratified Tentative Agreement

In September of 2020, workers at the Wethersfield Autumn Transportation Bus Yard felt that their concerns around worker safety and protection were falling on deaf ears. During a time of extreme uncertainty and unprecedented risk to the health of not only themselves, but their families they went home to every night, Wethersfield Bus Drivers wanted to know that their voices were being heard. Above all else, these members understood that if they didn't have a seat at the negotiating table, they would be on the menu.

At this point, workers began to stand together and organize a certification vote to join CSEA SEIU Local 2001 and finally hold real worker power through member actions and collective bargaining. Just be-

fore the holiday break in 2020, the members won the election and planned to begin to meet to set bargaining goals, make health and safety demands to their employer and really understand what "being part of a union" would mean for them. Members quickly learned that their power was found in collective action and collective bargaining rather than just being named a "union bus yard".

"The main reason to have a union was to have solidarity, we needed one voice to get stuff done with the company," Theresa Garcet, Wethersfield Bus Driver explained, "I'm glad that we now have better benefits - benefits that I can support my kids and grand-kids with. Many of us live paycheck to paycheck and not knowing if

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SEBAC & The State Sign Temporary Telework Agreement

CSEA is happy to announce that, after discussions between SEBAC and the State, we have reached a **temporary** agreement regarding telework. You can review this agreement on our website at csea-ct.com. This agreement will be in place at least until September 1st, while the parties continue to negotiate a long-term agreement.

This temporary agreement reflects the very positive experience with telework that many of us have had throughout the COVID 19 health crisis and it is a major step forward from the telework agreement that was in place prior to the pandemic. Here are a few highlights:

- If you are teleworking now, you may request to continue teleworking as much as 100% of the time. **You are guaranteed to be granted the ability to telework at least 50% of the time.** If you request more than 50% and you are denied, you may request immediate facilitation to resolve the dispute

through your union steward. Of course in any such facilitation CSEA and SEBAC will represent you. **We strongly encourage any member to request as much they want and deem best, including 100% telework.**

- The pre-pandemic telework application process was complicated and onerous. The process under this temporary agreement includes a very simple and straightforward form. **The link to this quick form will be made available shortly, so please stay tuned.** In the meantime, please be sure to update your contact information at bit.ly/UpdateCSEA so you will receive these important email updates.

- The pre-pandemic telework agreement excluded certain bargaining units and job classifications. The temporary agreement dispenses with those restrictions so long as you have been teleworking during the pandemic. If you can provide documentation that you have a medical

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Don't Miss Another Email! Update Your Information

Please visit bit.ly/UpdateCSEA TODAY to update your contact information for our database!

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



Meetings
And News

Council 400 Election Update

Thank You to the New and Returning Leaders!

The Council 400 elections took place at The Farmington Club Delegates meeting on June 16th. It was the first time the delegates were able to meet in person in 13 months! Here are your newly elected Council 400 officers for the remaining year of the 2020-2022 term. Congratulations to all!

- Council President** - Mike O'Brien
- Council Vice President** - Patrice Peterson
- Regional Vice President of the Eastern Division** - Bob Rinker
- Regional Vice President of the Western Division** - Subby Puglisi
- Council Secretary** - Joan Holley
- Council Assistant Secretary** - Karen Pineman
- Council Treasurer** - John Quinn
- Council Assistant Treasurer** - Roger Ives
- McCusker Trustee** - Don Gladding
- Delegates to the CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Executive Council:**
Mike O'Brien, Ed Daly, Tom Connolly, Don Gladding
- Alternate Delegates to the CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Executive Council:**
Patrice Peterson and Oscar Gomez

A special thanks to our long time Council 400 President, Ed Daly. Ed has served many roles at CSEA and is beloved for his committed service in many capacities during his tenure, as well as for his deep knowledge of the history of CSEA. As well as serving as President of Council 400 for many years, Ed also served as President of CSEA, President of the P4 Council, Chapter 415 president, as well as serving as an Executive Council delegate (and will continue to serve in that role). Please join us in thanking Ed for his continued years of service with CSEA!



PICTURED ABOVE: Ed Daly, long time Council 400 President plans to continue to serve CSEA in a leadership capacity.



PICTURED ABOVE: Council 400's newly elected officers pose at the Farmington Club where they were duly sworn in.

State Retiree Threat Corner

Hear the most recent threats against your benefits & learn how you can stop them!

Over the past several months, Council 400 has highlighted several different op-eds and letters to the editor and articles written by opponents who believe that your pension and benefits should be cut in order to ensure that the ultra-wealthy can continue to profit without the fear of paying their

fair share in taxes.

While we all understand the need to fund public services - state services are what carried our state through the pandemic and what we relied on before COVID was part of the common vernacular. Without public services, and the people who provide them, our State would

be crumbling after this unprecedented year.

It's important that we refute our opponents who try to shift this message through equally persuasive op-eds and letters. Email Drew at DStoner@csea760.com to get started on your next piece!

A Note for State Retirees with State Retiree Spouses:

If you and your spouse are both State of Connecticut Retirees, then you may want to consider who holds your Health Insurance benefit in order to save cash at the pharmacy.

Your date of hire dictates your tier, whereas your retirement date dictates your group—both are important in determining your health

and pension benefit, but the group determines your prescription drug co-pay. And since co-pays are based on the insurance holder, not the patient, you may want to consider having the person with the lowest group number (that is the person who retired first most often) hold the insurance for the both of you.

Council 400 Chapter Meeting Update

We are very much looking forward to meeting in person again for our monthly chapter meetings! As our usual meeting schedule goes, we will not be meeting during the months of July and August, but are expecting to be able to resume the regular chapter meeting schedule in September! Kevin Sullivan has been in contact with chapter presidents to make sure locations are contacted and meetings are scheduled again. We will have the information for you for your chapter meeting in the August edition of the CSEA News!

Council 400 Virtual Meetings Take Summer Break, Plan to Return in Fall

Our Council 400 Monthly Virtual Meetings were a hit! We were happy to be able to meet online with members during COVID and keep them informed with some great speakers!

We will continue the virtual meetings in September, but they may be on a different day of the month and a different time - we'll keep you posted so watch in the CSEA News and your emails for notifications!

If you are not receiving our emails and would

like to be added to our list so you can receive notification of virtual meetings, send an email to email@csea760.com with your name and we will make sure you are added to our email list!

Let us know what you would like to hear about at our monthly meetings and we will do our best to address those subjects! Please contact us with suggestions at KSullivan@csea760.com.

Important numbers to have on hand:

Retirement Division Payroll: 860-702-3528

Retirement Division Life Insurance: 860-702-3537

Retirement Division Health Insurance: 860-702-3533

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

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

UnitedHealthcare: 1-888-803-9217

Caremark: 1-800-318-2572

Cigna: 1-800-244-6224

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



Heading to College Next Fall?



Take your CSE Student VISA Credit Card and Begin Building Your Credit

Our Student VISA Credit Card is a secured credit card designed to help you build good credit and manage your account responsibly. Building good credit is a must! It will help you qualify for loans, auto insurance, rental applications, cell phone plans and more.

A secured credit card requires funds that you provide as a security deposit. These funds earn interest but are not available for withdrawal.

Features:

- \$250 minimum credit limit
- \$2,000 maximum credit limit
- No credit history needed
- No income requirement
- No annual fee
- No foreign transaction fees
- Must be 18 years of age or over
- 12.40% Annual Percentage Rate
- Automatic payment options
- Free fraud monitoring

Open a Student VISA Credit Card by September 15, 2021 and receive a free order of basic checks (an \$18 value) and a complimentary \$10.00 Starbucks card.*

For more information, call us at **866-522-7147** or visit any of our offices.

* While supplies last. One gift card and one set of checks per member.

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 4th of July
Monday, July 5, 2021 (Observed)**

Dividend Rates - First Quarter 2021

	Dividend Rate	Annual Percentage Yield
REGULAR SHARES	0.60%	0.60%
SHARE DRAFTS (Checking)	0.25%	0.25%
CLUB ACCOUNTS	0.40%	0.40%

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	SOUTHURY 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, 8:30 am-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.

- Adams, Mary
- Alvord, Mary
- Ambukewicz, Cynthia
- Atkinson, Marjorie
- Barr, Charles
- Bassham, Charles
- Batista, Raquel
- Blumberg, Phillip
- Booth, Kevin
- Boros, Barbara
- Bradford, Earl
- Brown, Antoinette
- Cienci, Joseph
- Ciotto, Biagio
- Cricco, Anthony
- Davis, Raymond
- Delude, Mildred
- Diaz, Luis
- Dilullo, Michael
- Dobbin, Joseph
- Driscoll, Thomas
- Duffy, Robert
- Fasano, Roland
- Fitzgerald, Edward
- Floyd, Joy Marie
- Gamboa Md, Jovito
- Gomez Gil, Orlando
- Goode, Carmen
- Gorman Benson, Mary
- Granquist, Katharine
- Grigorian, Charles
- Haigh, Charles
- Harvin, Sally
- Hoffmeister, Mary
- Hunt, Edward
- Hunt, Lucille
- Jensen, Helen
- Kahkedjian, George

- Koltracht, Marina
- Lemke, Joseph
- Leone, Helen
- Lewis, Eric
- Lowndes, Robert
- Martin, Tracee
- Mastronunzio, Edward
- Mayo, Roland
- Mcmahon, James
- Mcnamara, Mary
- Mcqueeney, William
- Mendenhall, Rose
- Messner, Robert
- Moore, Stephanie
- Munro, Charles
- Murphy, William
- Negrelli, Joseph
- Parlee, Geraldine
- Pasternak, William
- Pinto, Nancy
- Pinton, Giorgio
- Provera, Aldo
- Pudlin, David
- Riddick, William
- Roccio, Julieann
- Rochon, Marie
- Rochow, Walter
- Ryan, Kathleen
- Sage, Donald
- Sansone, John
- Silva, Maximo
- Sutton, Charles
- Tuey, Lois
- Tupper, Eileen
- Vetare Sr, Richard
- Viens, George
- Warner, Angela
- Waugh, Robert
- Webster, John
- Williamson, Helen
- Wisneski, Mary
- Wolf, Guy
- Wopschall, Carmell
- Yalof, Kathy
- Zito, Scott



CSEA NEWS

The Voice of Connecticut's
Public Service Employees & Retirees

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- Roland Bishop.....Secretary/Treasurer
- David Glidden.....Executive Director
- Drew E. Phelan.....Communications Specialist
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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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Meet Our Members: Justin Wiggins

Justin Wiggins is the coordinator of the Fisheries Division - Connecticut Aquatic Resources Education (CARE) program. The CARE program has introduced over 230,000 people to the sport of fishing since 1986! CARE staff, along with hundreds of certified volunteer instructors, use fish and fishing as a medium to create the next generation of fishing participants and environmental stewards. CARE is funded entirely through Federal Sport Fish Restoration monies and the Sport Fish Restoration Program (SFR) provides grant funds to the state fish and wildlife agencies for fishery projects, boating access and aquatic education. Funding for SFR comes from people who fish! Through the purchases of fishing equipment, motorboat and small engine fuels and import duties the SFR Program is one of the most successful user pay, user benefit programs.

CARE instruction and activities are designed to provide aquatic education opportunities, to increase the public's interest,

understanding, and stewardship of aquatic resources, and to inspire adults and families to adopt fishing as an activity of choice. The angling public, as a group, is among the most dedicated stewards of the environment, and this is critical to support DEEP's mission of "conserving, protecting and improving the natural resources and environment of the state."

If you attend one of the many CARE classes you can expect to learn all the basics to get started fishing safely, legally, and successfully! We strongly encourage participants to attend a CARE Introduction to Fishing ZOOM class first to learn about proper fishing equipment, bait, and the fish you will catch before attending the fishing trip. At the Special Fishing Events, CARE staff and volunteers will teach hands-on skills like setting up a fishing rod, casting, baiting a hook, and provide additional support as needed! Full schedule of Introduction to Fishing classes and Special Fishing Events can be found at <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEPCARE> The Fisheries Division works

hard to create diverse fishing opportunities for residents all over the state. Beginning in 2006, the Community Fishing Waters program was established to promote natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities within Connecticut's major population centers and urban neighborhoods. By partnering with civic groups, municipal leaders, and local citizens, the program also maximizes community involvement. Since the inception of these Community Fishing Waters, thousands and thousands of anglers have taken advantage of the great fishing opportunities, right in their own backyard! The Fisheries Division works to enhance fishing opportunities within our Community Fishing Waters by stocking trout and/or channel catfish in them and offering dozens of CARE Special



PICTURED RIGHT: CSEA Member Justin Wiggins poses with his son's fresh catch from a day of ice fishing!

Fishing Events! For more information visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Freshwater/Community-Fishing-Waters>

Justin Wiggins is just one example of the dedicated and knowledgeable members of our state workforce. Interested in being profiled? Reach out to Drew Stoner at DStoner@csea760.com!

Staff & Leaders Attend Storytelling Trainings

Participants Learn of the Importance of Effective Storytelling in Contract & Legislative Fights

Throughout the month of June, CSEA member leaders and staff took part in a multi-day series of workshops aimed at sharpening our organizing tools through the use of effective storytelling hosted by the SEIU International through the Berlin Rosen Communications Group.

Each session provided an opportunity for participants to practice telling their story through the frame of "Challenge. Choice. Outcome". Members were encouraged to find a story about their time in a union and identify the challenges, the choices and the ultimate outcome of the story. These stories are crucial in both organizing and legislative fights to ensure

that we put faces behind our work.

These workshops created a place for participants to learn how to organize and build worker-power through value-based storytelling, but there is always a time for members to learn effective storytelling. Reach out to Drew Stoner at DStoner@csea760.com to learn more about

how your story can be a central part of CSEA's organizing efforts. Don't wait, tell your story today!



PICTURED ABOVE: Staff and Member Leaders learn the importance of effective story-telling in labor organizing efforts.

Recovery For All Wraps Up Legislative Session with Flurry of Member Actions

Recovery For All has developed into one of the most effective coalition groups that CSEA has ever been involved in. Since its inception in 2020, member actions and events have ramped up to involve more and more community members from across our State. In just the last week of session, Recovery For All has hosted five events aimed at a wide array of legislative initiatives from Hero Pay and anti-privatization to demands for the ultra-wealthy to pay their fair share in taxes.

On June 2nd members picketed at the Legislative Office Building to

stand in solidarity with home care and group home workers as they fought for a long-term care bill of rights which would allow them to provide the best care for patients while acknowledging their hard work by providing basic benefits like affordable health care, paid sick leave and an ability to retire with dignity.

Just a day after, members packed the South Lawn of the State Capitol to call on Governor Lamont to show courage in this moment of unprecedented crisis and include progressive revenue in the budget to fund investments in the

hundreds of thousands of working people who are struggling statewide.

The next day we returned back to the State Capitol to occupy Governor Lamont's parking spot for a prayer vigil with Recovery For All faith leaders to remind the Governor that systemic inequalities and status quo state budgets are morally unacceptable.

This week of action ended as the legislative session wrapped up with a press conference where Recovery For All responded to the budget agreement that missed an unprecedented opportunity to re-

duce our state's long-standing racial and economic disparities.

CSEA was a proud participatory member of this coalition and was seen at all of the various rallies, vigils, press conferences, pickets and protests. Member action was paramount to making our voices heard and while we are not satisfied with the ultimate budget that was passed, Recovery For All is not going away. We will continue to bring action to the streets and demand that our State doesn't just create a recovery for the few, but a recovery for all!



Correction Supervisors Council Welcomes New and Returning Officers

On July 1st, the Correction Supervisors Council held their council elections to vote in this term's President, Executive Vice President, Secretary, Vice President of Captains and Counselor Supervisors, Vice President of Lieutenants and Chief Steward

Members were invited to the union headquarters where they were able to cast their vote in-person for each of these positions.

Last year's election was pushed off due to COVID-19, so these officers will be in their position for just one year until an election next year.

PICTURED ABOVE: CSC elects a new executive board, (Front Row, from Left to Right): Millie Brown, President; Tara Keaton, Executive Vice President; Tawanda Kitt, Secretary; (Back Row, from Left to Right): Israel Rodriguez, Vice President Captains and Counselor Supervisors; Brandon McCloud, Chief Steward; Stephen Cross, Vice President Lieutenants; Beverly Lee, Treasurer

State & SEBAC Reach Temporary Telework Agreement

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condition that makes you COVID-fragile, you will be able to maintain your current telework arrangement, including 100% telework. If members run into any problems

regarding this issue, please contact your steward right away and we will work with you to resolve the problem.

Despite the positives of this agreement, it is far from perfect.

The most problematic aspect is the very temporary nature of this arrangement and the possibility that, if a new agreement is not reached by September 1, that unnecessary uncertainty and disruption will be created which is neither in the interests of the

membership nor the public we serve. As such, in the meantime, please work with union leaders in your workplaces to document your positive experience with telework and to pressure agency heads to embrace a fair, long-term solution on this issue that incorporates the lessons learned over the last year and a half.

Members Win at Autumn Bus Yard!

Wethersfield Members Celebrate New Ratified Tentative Agreement

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something could happen to us is a concern for our families, but now we have better wage security. The main takeaway for us was that a union means unity."

After many months of bargaining and drafting their first union contract, members celebrated their first ratified Tentative Agreement with their employer on June 11th of this year! Their first union contract not only grants these members a seat at the table to address worker health and safety issues, but it also includes a

number of new economic benefits like paid time off, sick time payouts, additional paid holidays and many bonuses. Most notably though, these workers fought for a retirement plan with employer contributions and a 13% raise over the

course of three years, with a retroactive raise back to the start of the school year. These benefits were not achieved simply because the members formed the union back in 2020, they were achieved through worker solidarity, member action and by speaking to fellow co-workers in the bus yard about the right to have a voice at the table as a union yard. Without this intense member organizing, these massive achievements would not have been realized.



PICTURED ABOVE: Wethersfield Bus Drivers Victoria Garcet & Theresa Garcet working the ballot box.

Recovery For All Wraps Up Legislative Session with Flurry of Member Actions



PICTURED ABOVE: Members protested at the State Capitol to demand that the State pass the much-needed Pandemic Pay.



PICTURED ABOVE: Members occupied Governor Lamont's parking spot at the Capitol for a prayer vigil before the legislator voted on the final budget proposal.



PICTURED ABOVE: Members picket in front of the Legislative Office Building (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT): CSEA Staff Representative Otis Dancy, P-4 Member Paul Martin, P-4 President Travis Woodward, CSEA Executive Director David Glidden and CEUI President Carl Chisem.

A Tale of Two Budgets: State Contracting Standards Board

BEFORE THE SPECIAL SESSION

The State Contracting Standards Board has received an appropriation in the recently adopted budget that will allow it to fill five positions, *finally*. The five positions are as follows: Chief Procurement Officer, Staff Attorney, Accounts Examiner, Research Analyst and Trainer. The Chief Procurement Officer is a statutory position that remained vacant after a former Chief Procurement Officer left State Service and the Malloy administration defunded the position. The other positions are new to the Board. Currently, the Board has one employee, its Executive Director, David Guay.

At its June 11th meeting, Board Chairman Lawrence Fox stated this "... is an opportunity to accomplish the mission it was set up to do." The mission of the State Contracting Board is to require that state contracting and procurement requirements are understood and carried out in a manner that is open, cost effective, efficient and consistent with State and Federal statutes, rules and regulations.

The State Contracting Standards Board was established in 2007 after 15 years of CSEA member lobbying to bring about cost benefit analysis to state contracting. The Board's formation came on the heels

of the I-84 storm drainage fiasco. The private consultant inspector allowed the construction company to not properly install the drains on the construction of I-84 heading West into Waterbury. A DOT engineer from CSEA SEIU Local 2001 discovered this \$24 million dollar error from not connecting the storm drains that would have eventually led to the highway caving in. Travis Woodward, P-4 Council President and DOT engineer stated, "If the inspection had been conducted by State employees this disaster would never have happened."

Following the incident, former Governor Rell established by Executive Order, a State Contracting Standards Board. Since an Executive Order does not have statutory authority, CSEA continued to press for a legislative solution. Rell then dispatched Al Ilg, former Windsor Town Manager and current State Contracting Standards Board member to negotiate legislation with then CSEA Executive Director, Bob Rinker, to create a statutory Board and its accompanying responsibilities. An agreement was reached between the Rell Administration and CSEA and then the General Assembly enacted legislation known as the Clean Contracting Bill that provided for the State Contracting Standards Board.

As initially envisioned, the Board was to have ten em-

ployees and a volunteer board of fourteen members appointed by various political leaders including the Governor. The first employee of the Board was David Guay, its current Executive Director and subsequently, the Board hired its second employee, the State's Chief Procurement Officer. These hires occurred five and seven years after the creation of the Board, respectively. The appointments of Board members were also slow to be made and as a result the Board was virtually dormant for its first six years. Beginning in 2013, then-Governor Malloy made a number of appointments that allowed the Board to achieve its statutory quorum and began meeting. The statutory language on quorum requirements was subsequently changed from an absolute minimum of eight members to a majority of members appointed to the Board.

The Board's work for the past eight years had been accomplished by its activist volunteer members, its Executive Director and interns from the UConn School of Public Management.

Rinker, now a Board member, stated, "We are excited about the additional staff. We will be able to pursue whether contracting out of State service is cost effective and provides quality services to the residents of Connecti-

cut."

AFTER THE SPECIAL SESSION

In section 235 of a more than 800 page bill to implement the State budget, the Governor insisted that funding for the State Contracting Standards Board be deleted from the yet to be implemented state budget from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023. Subsequently, an amendment in the House of Representatives to restore the funding to the State Contracting Standards Board failed by a mere two votes.

In an interview by Jon Lender in the *Hartford Courant*, David Glidden, CSEA Executive Director, said, "By killing this funding, the Governor broke a promise to us, and he rubber-stamped the existing broken system of contracting." Glidden's remark was related to a question asked of then gubernatorial candidate Lamont, "Do you support fully funding and staffing the State Contracting Standards Board?" Lamont's answer was "Yes." Glidden continued, "We took him at his word that he'd help make the Contracting Standards Board live up to the immense promise by finally funding and staffing it, and in part, because of that answer, we endorsed him and CSEA members worked hard for him to get elected. That's why it was an enormous gut punch."

This administration like previous administrations object to the State Contracting Standards

Board by claiming its work is duplicative. That claim is false and misleading. The real reason, most likely, is that the Administration would prefer not to have anyone looking over their shoulder while they make bad contracting decisions. Their motives are problematic.

The Board does not do any procuring or contracting out of state services. The mission of the Board is to be a watchdog agency overseeing billions of dollars spent each year by state agencies and quasi-public agencies on goods and services. The Lamont administration position would be akin to having a Freedom of Information Act without a Freedom of Information Commission to enforce the law, or State Ethics laws without an Office of State Ethics, or State Election Enforcement Commission run by politicians' campaign managers. The difference between these three watchdog agencies and the State Contracting Standards Board is that the Governor and his or her administration cannot mess with their budgets once approved by the General Assembly. That may be the answer for the State Contracting Standards Board.

As President Joe Biden said recently at the conclusion of his trip to Europe to meet with our allies and our adversary, Vladimir Putin, "As long as I'm president, we're going to stick to the notion that we're open, accountable and transparent." Perhaps, there is a lesson in there for Governor Lamont.

Biennial Convention

Friday, October 15, 2021

The **80th Biennial Convention of the Connecticut State Employees Association, SEIU Local 2001** will convene on **Friday, October 15, 2021** at the Aquaturf Club in Plantsville, CT.

SAVE THE DATE!

Registration will open at 8:00 am.

The convention will convene promptly at 9:00 am.

- Elect President and Secretary/Treasurer
- Vote on any Constitutional Amendments
- Guest Speakers

CSEA Chapters and Councils should be conducting their elections in the coming months. Please contact your staff representative at (860) 951-6614 for information about chapter/council officer and delegate elections.

The CSEA SEIU Local 2001 main office must receive the results of your chapter elections not later than Friday, October 1st in order to properly register and furnish credentials for elected delegates. Only elected delegates and elected alternate delegates are eligible to attend.

Any elected delegate who attends the convention will be compensated for travel, parking and any lost wages.

End-of-Session Wrap Up!

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respecting the important work we do.

2021 General Assembly Session Highlights

The Budget: At the top of CSEA's 2021 Legislative Agenda was passing a fair budget that increases revenue through taxes on Connecticut's wealthiest residents, rejects privatization schemes, and funds the services we provide and the benefits we have earned. While the General Assembly was able to pass a biennial budget (House Bill 6689) and a bond package (House Bill 6690), they were not able to pass the so-called "implementer bill" (this is the legislative term for the bill(s) that outline how the money allocated in the budget is spent - the bill implements the budget). As the CSEA News goes to print, we do not yet have a date for the Special Session the General Assembly will hold to pass an implementer bill. During this Special Session, the House and Senate will also take up legislation detailing the distribution of the remaining federal funds received through the American Rescue Plan (ARP). They are also expected to take up legislation to legalize and regulate the recreational use and sale of cannabis; a bill to do this (Senate Bill 1118) passed the Senate, but stalled in the House on the final day of session. **(Editors Note: As this edition of the CSEA News went to print, the Legislature went into special session where they passed the implementer bill which included the problematic State Contracting Standards Board defunding (see page 6). The Legislature also passed legislation to legalize and regulate recreational use and sale of cannabis. A second special session is anticipated for the beginning of September.)**

The \$46 billion budget that covers FY2022 and FY2023 falls short in many areas. As is constitutionally required it is balanced, but, to achieve that, legislators relied on over \$2 billion in money from the ARP. This use of federal money is a one-time thing. Two years from now, Connecticut will not have this resource to balance the books. That was part of the reason why CSEA joined with allies in

the Recovery for All coalition to advocate for a realignment of our current tax system, which places too much of a burden on working people, and instead ask our state's millionaires and billionaires to pay a little more in taxes. Governor Ned Lamont was adamant that this was a policy decision he was unwilling to explore, but the problems of Connecticut's unfair tax system is not one that is just going to go away. Going forward, the work CSEA and other Recovery for All coalition partners do to fix this unequal system will be vital to ensuring that Connecticut has an economy that works for everyone and a budget that is not balanced on the backs of public employees.

The budget does not make progress in addressing short staffing issues that are experienced firsthand by CSEA members. It does not include increased funding for the educational programs in our state's prisons provided by CSEA members. And, it does not include a consultant line item in the Department of Transportation's section of the budget. All things CSEA members fought hard to achieve.

The budget, also, does not fund pandemic pay bonuses for workers who were required to go to worksites during the pandemic. CSEA members like those working in the Southbury Training School, in our state's prison facilities, as family child care providers, or board of education workers like bus drivers and paraeducators literally put their lives on the line to do their jobs. Recognizing the commitment and bravery of these people with a pandemic pay bonus for the time they spent at their worksites is the right and fair thing to do. Creating a pandemic pay program and passing legislation to fund it with ARP money and put it into effect is at the core of CSEA's Special Session agenda.

Paraeducator compensation improvement and career development: After many years of hard work, CSEA paraeducators, working with our brothers and sisters in other union locals that represent paras, passed legislation that will start the process of dramatically improving their pay, benefits, training, professional development, career opportunities, and working conditions. Sections 509 and 510 of House Bill 6621

will direct the School Paraeducator Advisory Council to spend the next several months compiling a series of legislative recommendations for the 2022 legislative session. This proposal will allow for the development of a statewide, uniform system for paraeducator qualifications, career development, pay rates, and retirement and health care benefits.

Post-Traumatic Stress Injury coverage for Department of Corrections workers: For years, members of CSEA's Correction Supervisors Council have been working to pass legislation that expands PTSI coverage to include them, and other emergency responders. Although current law covers police officers, DOC-employed parole officers, and firefighters diagnosed with PTSI, other DOC workers, emergency dispatchers, and EMS workers were excluded. Senate Bill 660 corrects that problem and passed unanimously through both chambers of the General Assembly.

Early voting and no excuse voting by mail: Allowing voters to vote early or by mail without an excuse is something Connecticut should have done long ago. CSEA and allies helped pass two constitutional amendments that will give voters the chance to finally create a system of early and no excuse voting. House Joint Resolution 58, a constitutional amendment to allow no excuse absentee voting, passed through both chambers, but because it did not pass with a supermajority, it needs to be voted on again by legislators during next year's General Assembly session. If it passes through the House and Senate, it will be placed on the 2024 General Election ballot. House Joint Resolution 59, a constitutional amendment to allow early in-person voting, passed through both chambers and will be on the 2022 General Election ballot for voter approval (it was already approved by both chambers during a previous session).

Pass State Employee Contracts: All state employee collective bargaining agreements and binding arbitration awards must be approved by a vote of the House of Representatives and Senate. This session, the contract for the newest members of the CSEA family, State School Principals, passed through both chambers of the General Assembly with bipartisan support.

Protecting collective bargaining after the Supreme Court's bad decision in the Janus case: Anti-union forces funded the Janus case because they saw it as an opportunity to deliver a body blow to the labor movement. For them, it was not about public policy or free speech, but a chance to financially hamstring labor unions. Labor unions are still here, members are still here, and now, thanks to the passage of Senate Bill 908, we have a key tool to ensure that members rights, jobs, and benefits are protected. The bill (1) requires public employers to provide the union with access to orientations for new public employee hires and up-to-date bargaining unit lists with worksite locations and contact information; (2) clarifies the dues deduction authorization process; (3) maintains the union's ability to meet with members during the workday to respond to grievances, complaints and other issues; and (4) requires public employers to refrain from deterring or discouraging public employees from becoming or remaining members of a union.

These are just a few highlights from the 2021 Connecticut General Assembly session. With the State Capitol closed to the public due to the ongoing deadly COVID-19 pandemic, CSEA members rolled up their sleeves, literally and virtually, to pass, amend, and defeat legislation of crucial interest and importance. Some parts of our agenda - the public health care option (Senate Bill 842) and collective bargaining rights for probate court workers (House Bill 6382), for instance - did not move forward this session. Other bills we were able to stop - such as the privatization of building inspections (Senate Bill 846) - or fix - Senate Bill 920, for example, started as a bad public-private partnership bill, but CSEA members got it amended to take out dangerous language and to put in strong protections for workers and the general public - can always come back later.

As we close the chapter on this very unique legislative session of the Connecticut General Assembly, we look ahead and remember the words of former 1199 President Carmen Boudier, "The work, it never ends."

CSEA Gets a NEW Website!

It has been several years since CSEA updated our online presence, but after hearing from several members about our outdated website, we took a giant leap into the 21st century with a BRAND NEW WEBSITE! We are looking forward to launching this new website in the coming weeks and hope every member takes the time to visit, look around and give us feedback on what you like, don't like and what you want improved! To get the ball rolling on that feedback, please take a moment to fill out our first survey in the series by visiting bit.ly/CSEAWebsite (case sensitive). If CSEA has your email address, then you've already received this survey in your inbox, but if we don't then it is also a good opportunity for you to update your contact information by visiting bit.ly/CSEAWebsiteInput (case sensitive).

Inspectors Council Hold Annual Meeting

Council Votes in New Officers & Celebrates Retirement of Several Members

This past month, following the Governor's rollback of COVID-19 restrictions, the CSEA Inspectors Council hosted their annual membership meeting at the Timberlin Golf Course in Berlin. Nearly the entire council's membership showed up to hear from current council leaders and CSEA staff, congratulate the newly retired

members and to vote in the new group of council leaders for the upcoming year.

Members in this council serve in a broad array of departments across the State of Connecticut from State's Attorney Offices where they serve as a middleman between the police departments and the prosecuting attorneys, to fraud

units where they investigate suspected instances of various types of fraud like Medicare and Tax fraud.

Please join us in congratulating the newly elected leaders of this council as well as bidding farewell to the newly retired members who have selflessly continued to serve our State for decades.



PICTURED ABOVE: Members of the Inspectors Council meet for their annual luncheon.



PICTURED ABOVE: The Inspectors Council swears in newly elected officers (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT): Secretary, Elisa Tuozzoli; Alternate Delegate to the CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Executive Council, Joseph Hurley; Treasurer, Forest Beaulieu; President, David Sydnor, Vice President, Derek Sutton (not present)



PICTURED ABOVE: Inspector Gregory Zigmont is congratulated by Joseph Hurley on his recent retirement from the State.

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