

CSEA Advocates For The Safe Opening of Schools

CSEA Members including Paras, custodians, secretaries, nurses, bus drivers, and monitors, have been working together to advocate for appropriate safety measures when and if school reopens. As a result of this group's work, we have arrived at the following school reopening principles:

IF IT CAN'T BE DONE SAFELY, DON'T DO IT!

- **Maximize student and worker safety** by providing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), regular COVID-19 testing for students and staff, social distancing, and monitors on all buses.
- **Worker protections** against loss of pay and benefits during shutdowns, partial shutdowns, quarantines, and distance learning. Alternate work assignments for those who need them.
- **Fully comply with all CDC, DPH, and other public health guidelines** for any reopening.
- **State funding for school districts** to guarantee that all safety and health requirements are met for students and staff, and that school and bus workers are protected from loss of jobs and benefits.
- **Labor / management safety committees** in all workplaces that are empowered to resolve health safety issues quickly and effectively.

Connecticut General Assembly Approves No-Excuse Absentee Voting!



Council 400 Member Tom Connolly casts his absentee ballot in the August Primary in West Hartford.

The Connecticut General assembly passed legislation during a special session in July that guarantees the 2020 election will be a lot safer. For the first time ever, Connecticut will allow “no-excuse” absentee voting. While voters in Connecticut have long been able to get an absentee ballot if they were medically incapacitated or out of town on election day, the new legislation will allow voters to cast an absentee ballot without having to state an excuse.

Members of Council 400, CSEA's retiree council actively wrote hundreds of emails to legislators in support of no-excuse absentee voting. With both chambers of the General Assembly having approved the bill, the bill will go next to Governor Lamont, who has said he will sign it. Despite the rhetoric of President Trump, absentee voting remains a safe way to cast your ballot.

Visit Our Union's Website at www.CSEA-CT.com

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



Meetings And Events

COVID-19 has brought many challenges and safety issues that we have never had to deal with before, and we find ourselves having to make some difficult decisions to keep our members safe. The Council 400 Executive Board has continued to meet monthly online and by phone since March and have had discussions about meeting safely again in person. Because large groups are still discouraged from meeting indoors, and many locations and venues remain closed, the decision was made to cancel chapter and delegate meetings through December of 2020. During the next few months we will monitor and assess the right time for our members to meet in person again.

The Executive Board and LAC will continue to meet via our monthly online/phone in meetings during this period.

We are looking at different ways to stay connected to our members as well as get out information and updates in ways other than emails and the CSEA News. We are planning on having monthly online informational meetings that you will be able to join online or by phone. The first monthly informational meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 9th at 11AM. **There will be an email invitation that will be sent to everyone we have emails for, but if you don't have email and would like to join by phone, you can call 1-617-675-4444, you will then have to type in a PIN number which is 304 728 632 1343#.** This is a great reason to make sure we have your email - so please send us a message with your full name to email@csea760.com. We hope you will join us!

Dates for future online meetings:

- Wednesday, October 14th, at 10AM - United Healthcare Representatives will be in attendance
- Wednesday, November 18th at 10AM
- Wednesday, December 16th at 10AM

Just because we cannot meet in person doesn't mean that you cannot be active in the upcoming election. There are still ways to actively work to protect what you worked so hard to earn!

CSEA will be doing phone banking online, what we call Virtual Phone Banking (VPB). Some of our retirees have already been doing VPB for the primaries! You need a phone and a computer, and you can do these calls right from the comfort of your home, which is a huge time saver!

Council 400 has also begun a Letter to the Editor Committee (LTE). Retirees need to have a voice in publications that villainize your healthcare and pensions. Some of you may want to speak out but don't know how, or are not comfortable writing a letter to the editor on your own. The LTE Committee is happy to help you in doing so. Many times, the only voices are the ones that want to criticize or take away the benefits you worked for. There needs to be a balance to that, and you can be that balance.

Retirees need to know that this upcoming election is critical. Anti-labor forces are out there and planning ways to remove COLAs, Part B reimbursements, and health insurance. If we don't do the necessary work and elect the right people, there will be trouble ahead. COVID19 has not only wreaked havoc on our health and well being and lifestyle, it could decimate our national, state and municipal budgets. If we don't think ahead to do the work to protect your pension, health insurance and Social Security, it can and will be taken away. NOT WITHOUT A FIGHT! And we need you for that fight!

If you are able to do virtual phone banking, write a letter to the editor, or help in any way, please contact Drew Phelan to let her know how you can help! You can contact her at dphelan@csea760.com or 860-951-6614, ext. 118.

WE NEED YOUR EMAIL! Did you know that Drew sends out monthly information by email that is helpful to retirees? If you don't receive them, that means we don't have your email, and we need it to keep you informed! Please send an email to email@csea760.com with your first and last name so we can add you to our email list. You can also visit our website at www.csea-ct.com for up to date information.

In the meantime, take all measures to keep yourself and loved ones safe.

Your Retiree Team,

Drew and Bernadette

Important numbers to have on hand:

Retirement Division Payroll: 860-702-3528	UnitedHealthcare: 1-888-803-9217
Retirement Division Life Insurance: 860-702-3537	Oxford Health: 1-800-385-9055
Retirement Division Health Insurance: 860-702-3533	Caremark: 1-800-318-2572
Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield: 1-800-922-2232	Cigna: 1-800-244-6224
CSEA Retiree Organizer, Drew Phelan: 860-951-6614 x118	HEP Care Management Solutions: 1-877-687-1448 or visit them at their portal: https://www.connect2yourhealth.com/ParticipantPortal/Default.aspx

CSEA NEEDS YOUR EMAIL!

Make sure CSEA has YOUR EMAIL so that you don't miss a single thing!

EMAIL DREW TODAY if you don't receive her monthly E-Newsletters

DPHELAN@CSEA760.COM



Council 400 Virtual Picnic Wednesday, September 9th at 11AM

There will be an email invitation sent to everyone we have emails for, but if you don't have email and would like to join by phone, you can call 1-617-675-4444, you will then have to type in a PIN number which is 304 728 632 1343#

HOPE TO "SEE" YOU THERE!

SEND US YOUR BEST QUARANTINE RECIPE!

Did you find a new favorite homemade treat while quarantining? Send Drew the recipe (& a picture of the final product!)

Council 400 is putting together a community cookbook to share at our Picnic—be sure your creation is included! Email Drew today!

DPHELAN@CSEA760.COM

With the uncertainty of COVID still looming, CSEA Council 400 Leaders & Staff are working on a virtual picnic for members. Come join us and hear from State candidates and elected, representatives from your healthcare administrators.

If you don't already get Drew's monthly E-Newsletters, email her today to be sure you don't miss any updates!

DPHELAN@CSEA760.COM



COUNCIL 400 MEMBERS IN ACTION LEAD TO VERNON SUCCESS

By: Drew Phelan

Throughout the month of July, Council 400 has been active in the fight to ensure that voters will be able to cast their ballot safely in November by allowing mail in balloting. After the Governor signed an Executive Order allowing all registered voters in Connecticut to vote absentee in the August 11, 2020 primary elections, 168 of our State's towns followed the Secretary of the State's guidelines to ensure ballot boxes were accessible. However, Mayor Dan Champagne (R-Vernon) who also serves as state senator, and Town Administrator Michael Purcaro encouraged Vernon to be the one town that did not. This tactic not only made the ballot box inaccessible to workers who are unable to stop by the Clerk's Office during normal business hours, but was out of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Council 400 members jumped into action along with our allies for a car caravan and demonstration outside of Vernon Town Hall. Not even 3 days later, Senator Champagne and Town Administrator Purcaro reversed their position and will comply with the Secretary of the State's formal instruction to place the federally funded, secure absentee ballot drop box in an outside location that is easily accessible to voters all times.



State Retirees

By The CSEA Retiree Team’s
Drew Phelan

CUTS TO SOCIAL SECURITY & PAYROLL TAX DISPROPORTIONATELY HURT VULNERABLE SENIORS

Social Security is the safety net for nearly two thirds of retirees—providing them with over half of their overall income. In fact, half of all Americans haven’t even been able to put away more than \$10,000 retirement—further emphasizing the need for this program.

During the campaign season those collecting Social Security, and those hoping to do so, breathe a sigh of relief as every candidate on all sides swears not to cut Social Security, promises to protect Social Security and hails the great importance of Social Security.

But what about when candidates come off the campaign trail?

There are three major ways that opponents can attack your monthly Social Security check: federal budget cuts, means-testing for benefits, and payroll tax cuts and all are being publicly voiced by opponents of Social Security. The Trump Administration has considered each one recently, so it’s important to understand what the outcomes would be if the President was to move forward with any one of the aforementioned proposals.

The White House’s 2020 budget resulted in \$35 billion in cuts to Social Security and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) programs and his 2021 budget proposal offered more cuts. These cuts inherently undermine retirement security.

Payroll tax cuts are often floated as a break to working class Americans, however payroll tax cuts would have menial impacts to the average worker at the onset, and disastrous impacts in their retirement. Social Security isn’t an entitlement as opponents often refer to it as, and instead is funded by worker contributions through payroll taxes. As it stands currently, Social Security is scheduled to fall by 25% after 2034 if immediate action isn’t taken, and any cut to payroll taxes would just further undermine the program.

Means-testing for benefits is another opportunity for opponents to slash Social Security benefits. Simply put, means-testing would allow the Federal government to review the annual income of beneficiaries to determine whether they would receive a reduced Social Security benefit or no benefit at all.

All three of these attacks are very real to your secured retirement. Protecting Social Security is a core function of CSEA Council 400 and it’s important that we vote for candidates that understand it’s efficacy at providing Americans with a secure retirement.

As the CSEA News goes to print, President Trump has just issued Executive Orders which pose a direct threat to Social Security benefits.

While the President characterized his actions as a financial boost to the American people struggling to make ends meet amid the pandemic, it doesn’t take too much digging to find the adverse impacts of these actions. As the House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee Chairman, John Larson (CT-01), explains,

“The payroll tax proposal is the single worst way to get relief to beleaguered Americans - it is stealing from their retirement to make up for the administration’s failure to contain the virus and save our economy. Americans need help but not this way. [...] President Trump is pushing forward with payroll tax deferral, with the promise of a permanent cut down the line. This not only defunds Social Security and weakens it, but it also opens the door for permanent cuts down the road. It also leaves working Americans with a huge tax bill come April.”

These threats aren’t just around during the pandemic either, as President Trump made clear over the weekend his plan to permanently gut Social Security if re-elected,

“If I’m victorious on November 3rd, I plan to forgive these taxes and make permanent cuts to the payroll tax, in other words, I’ll extend beyond the end of the year and terminate the tax.”

Visit seiu2001.org/social-security/ for both candidate’s plans.

UNITEDHEALTHCARE MEDICARE ADVANTAGE MEMBERS WAIVED COST SHARING

A Message from UnitedHealthcare:

“Our member’s health is our priority. To help you get the care you need, we are waiving cost-share (copays, coinsurance and deductibles) for our Medicare Advantage plan members as follows. Members will have a \$0 copay for covered primary care provider (PCP) and specialist physician services, as well as other covered services (listed below) between May 11, 2020 until September 30, 2020.1 By lowering our PCP and specialist copays to \$0, along with our telehealth cost-share waiver, we hope to help make it easier for you to access care.

SERVICES INCLUDED:

The following services, if covered by your plan, are eligible for a \$0 copay under the cost-share waiver, but do not include diagnostic tests and certain other services.

- Primary care provider (PCP) office visits
- Specialist physician office visits
- Physician assistant or nurse practitioner office visits
- Medicare-covered chiropractic and acupuncture services
- Podiatry services and routine eye and hearing exams
- Physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy
- Cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation services

- Outpatient mental health and substance abuse visits

- Opioid treatment services

The \$0 copay applies to services from a network provider and out-of-network services covered by the plan.

Member cost-share is not waived for the following services, unless they are related to COVID-19 testing or treatments:

- Lab and Diagnostic tests (radiological and non-radiological)
- Part B and Part D drugs
- Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies
- Renal Dialysis
- Other services not covered by your plan

Copays, coinsurance and deductibles for services in the following settings are not waived. Members will be responsible for their share of the cost under their benefit:

- Inpatient hospital and Outpatient surgery or observation services
- Skilled Nursing Facilities
- Emergency, Urgent and Ambulance service

WHAT TO DO IF YOU PAID FOR ONE OF THE WAIVED SERVICES AFTER MAY 11, 2020

If you paid a copay for one of the waived services listed above, your provider should refund you after they file the claim for your visit with the plan. Contact your provider’s office for refund information.

IS YOUR SPOUSE A MEMBER OF CSEA COUNCIL 400 YET?

The size of our membership is an important way that CSEA Council 400 demonstrates our power, our voice and our strength—and for 2020 we’ve set out to drastically increase our membership numbers ahead of upcoming contract negotiations and legislative threats.

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

By becoming a member, your spouse will ensure they will continue to receive the CSEA News and important notifications regarding the benefits you worked hard to secure if you were to pass away. They will also be eligible for SEIU Member Benefits like discount BJ Membership Cards and reduced auto and home insurance rates. But most importantly, by becoming a member, they will help to increase our membership numbers so that CSEA Council 400 will have an even larger voice against our opponents who want to slash benefits—your benefits, their benefits.

If your spouse isn’t yet a member, contact our Retiree Organizer, Drew Phelan at dphelan@csea760.com or 860-951-6614 x 118 to get them signed up!

VICTORY! Governor Lamont Issues Executive Order
Re: Workers Compensation and Covid-19

After months of relentless advocacy on behalf of essential workers by the labor movement, Governor Lamont finally issued an executive order establishing a workers’ compensation presumption for COVID-19. After receiving hundreds of emails from workers and being lobbied by the Democratic leaders of the State House of Representatives and the State Senate, the Governor realized he could delay no longer. The order will allow essential workers to collect the healthcare and wage replacement they have earned more quickly and easily.

Connecticut’s workers’ compensation statutes require workers to demonstrate that they have acquired an illness at work in order to be eligible for healthcare, wage replacement and other benefits. Requiring a worker to prove exactly how and when they con-

tracted COVID-19 is nearly impossible. Executive Order 7JJJ, creates a presumption that exposure to COVID-19 is work-related for essential workers between March 10 and May 20. It still allows the employer the opportunity to prove that infection happened elsewhere, but moves the burden of proof from the worker to the employer. It also eliminates the need for employees to go through a protracted appeals process through the Workers’ Compensation Commission, which could take months.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our state’s public health and safety have depended heavily on the efforts of frontline workers. While the number of COVID-19 cases skyrocketed, these dedicated workers continued to care for patients, stock grocery store shelves, answer emergency calls, staff prisons, oper-

ate public transit systems, care for children and ensure taxpayers have continued access to other essential services. They continue to perform their jobs under difficult circumstances and in extremely dangerous conditions.



Landslide victory! In the biggest union election in two decades, 45,000 family child care providers gain official recognition, bargaining rights with the state of California.

97% vote YES for union representation
After 17 long years, family child care providers in California will have the ability to bargain together for higher pay, better training and the kind of improvements that mean their families will no longer have to struggle just to pay for necessities.

And the vote wasn’t even close. Ninety-seven percent of those voting chose Child Care Providers United (CCPU) to represent them.

“After so many years of struggle, I am happy we have finally certified our union. After so many bills vetoed, trips to Sacramento, and providers who have come and gone, we are finally ready to begin negotiating for a better early care system for providers, our communities, and the children in our care,” said Zoila Carolina Toma of Signal Hill.

“Through good and bad times, including this pandemic, the doors of my home have remained open for families in need of a nurturing and safe place to educate their little ones, because the weight of a pandemic shouldn’t fall on the shoulders of children. Instead, they should have all of us, and especially our elected officials, to look up to when it comes to making the right decisions, including committing to equity,” said Patricia Moran, a child care provider in San Jose.

“It should not take 17 years to form a union. SEIU members across the country are determined to elect leaders who will see, hear, and listen to working people and rewrite the rules to give all service and care workers the right to join together in unions to negotiate for better pay and a better life,” said SEIU International President Mary Kay Henry.

Against the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing struggle for racial justice around the country, these child care providers, a workforce that is mostly women and 74 percent people of color, have shown the power of resiliency and hard work. Their victory is an example for everyone.

¡Victoria abrumadora! En la elección sindical más grande en dos décadas, 45,000 proveedores de cuidado infantil familiar obtienen reconocimiento oficial, negociando derechos con el estado de California.

El 97% vota SÍ a la representación sindical
Después de 17 largos años, los proveedores de cuidado infantil familiar en California tendrán la capacidad de negociar juntos por un salario más alto, una mejor capacitación y el tipo de mejoras que significan que sus familias ya no tendrán que luchar solo para pagar las necesidades.

Y la votación ni siquiera estuvo cerrada. Noventa y siete por ciento de los votantes eligieron Child Care Providers United (CCPU) para representarlos.

“Después de tantos años de lucha, estoy feliz de que finalmente hayamos certificado nuestro sindicato. Después de vetar tantos proyectos de ley, viajes a Sacramento y proveedores que han ido y venido, finalmente estamos listos para comenzar a negociar un mejor sistema de atención temprana para proveedores, nuestras comunidades y los niños a nuestro cuidado “, dijo Zoila Carolina Toma de Signal Hill.

“En los buenos y malos momentos, incluida esta pandemia, las puertas de mi casa han permanecido abiertas para las familias que necesitan un lugar acogedor y seguro para educar a sus pequeños, porque el peso de una pandemia no debería caer sobre los hombros de los niños. . En cambio, deberían tenernos a todos, y especialmente a nuestros funcionarios electos, a quienes debemos mirar cuando se trata de tomar las decisiones correctas, incluido el compromiso con la equidad ”, dijo Patricia Moran, una proveedora de cuidado infantil en San José.

“No debería tomar 17 años formar un sindicato. Los miembros de SEIU en todo el país están decididos a elegir líderes que verán, escucharán y escucharán a los trabajadores y reescribirán las reglas para dar a todos los trabajadores de servicios y atención el derecho a unirse en sindicatos para negociar mejores salarios y una vida mejor “. dijo la presidenta internacional de SEIU, Mary Kay Henry.

En el contexto de la pandemia de coronavirus y la lucha continua por la justicia racial en todo el país, estos proveedores de cuidado infantil, una fuerza laboral que es principalmente mujeres y 74 por ciento de personas de color, han demostrado el poder de la resistencia y el trabajo duro. Su victoria es un ejemplo para todos.

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159360 06/01/2014

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MetLife Auto & Home program is now available to all CSEA members!

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