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**Teachers, Nurses and Public Employees Back
Victor Funderburk to Lead Windham**

*Labor federation representing educators, health professionals and state workers
announce formal mayoral endorsement in town's November Municipal General
Election*

Willimantic - Citing his deep community roots and commitment to issues impacting working families, members of the 30,000-strong AFT Connecticut are supporting Victor Funderburk to serve as mayor of Windham. The labor federation's executive committee voted to add the retired educator to its slate of endorsed municipal candidates for the November 7 General Election. Members of affiliated unions last week participated in a local community canvass and are engaged in additional efforts to help "get out the vote" for Funderburk.

"Victor has an impressive resume as a longtime advocate for teachers, their students and families both in Windham and across the state," said AFT Connecticut President Jan Hochadel. "We are excited he is running for local office and are proud to support someone who truly demonstrates that 'labor is your neighbor,'" added Hochadel, who previously taught physics and science in the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS).

Candidates for municipal office completed questionnaires over the past three months on a series of policy issues important to the members of AFT's local unions and their communities. Members of the federation's legislative and political action committee reviewed the responses and made recommendations for endorsements in the 2017 General Election to its executive committee.

"I want be part of the effort for progressive change," said Funderburk, the endorsed mayoral candidate for both the Windham Democratic Town Committee (DTC) and the Connecticut Working Families Party (WFP). "Being mayor will give me an opportunity on a bigger stage to use my experience and ideas around the need for collaboration, communication and goals achievement in local government. I am very grateful for the endorsement for my commitment to a better life for workers," added Funderburk.

Funderburk for five decades has been deeply involved in the civic life of the greater Windham area, participating on a variety of local committees and

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community non-profits. He held positions on the Windham Economic Development Commission, the Thread City Development Corporation and the Windham Regional Arts Council and in 1981 co-founded the Windham Theatre Guild.

"Public education unified the country in the 20th century and became a foundation for a shared experience of economic growth, prosperity and national identity," said Funderburk. "Today's attacks on public education have produced increased segregation, class conflict, limited curriculums, and a fractionalization of our polity. We must support public education," added Funderburk, who for 37 years taught biology in Windham Public Schools.

Funderburk's passion for teaching and making a difference in the lives of students and educators extended beyond the classroom to include management of a community-based summer youth program. He was also elected to several local and statewide union leadership roles during his career, including service as president of the AFT Connecticut-affiliated Windham Federation of Teachers.

Link —

"Stepping up to Demonstrate 'Labor is Your Neighbor'"

(features Funderburk):

<https://youtu.be/8mWjYXU8TU8>

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AFT Connecticut represents approximately 30,000 hard-working women and men in PreK-12 education, healthcare, public service and higher education from more than 90 local unions throughout the state. For more information, visit www.aftct.org or follow the labor federation on Twitter at [@AFTCT](https://twitter.com/AFTCT) and on Facebook at [AFT Connecticut](https://www.facebook.com/AFTConnecticut).

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