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79th Annual Business Convention
May 2, 2026
Virtual

REPORTS

AFT Connecticut
Education | Healthcare | Public Services

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

79th ANNUAL AFT CONNECTICUT BUSINESS CONVENTION

Good morning to all my union sisters, brothers, and siblings as you join this year's convention via Zoom. If you missed the Delegate Assembly meeting in May, you may be asking yourself, "why is the convention virtual this year?" And an excellent question it is… As a reminder, we passed an amendment last year, and we planned to prepare a 2-year budget starting this year. As we move forward, in the years that we are not passing the budget, in lieu of a Business Convention we are planning to have a professional development conference for members. While preparing the budget this year, we realized that passing the 2-year budget beginning in 2026, we had scheduled our convention and the AFT convention in the same years. In an effort to give locals some financial relief and help send members to our AFT convention, we have a proposed amendment to have the 2-year budget begin in 2027, and a 1-year budget presented and voted on at this convention. We hope you will support this amendment, and we look forward to hearing from you regarding the 2028 Professional Development Conference.

What a year it has been. As I wrote my report last year, the president had just frozen several sources of funding to Connecticut. During that time, many members were concerned about their jobs, their families, and their communities. Within hours of freezing the funds, the courts issued a ruling that funds had to be released. This action has set the tone for what we have seen throughout the year – funding withheld from states, usually blue states, who depend on allocated federal money for important programs.

The decrease in federal funding to the state has caused major fiscal issues in Education (ECS) and Higher Education funding. There are currently three bills related to the ECS funding formula. In his budget, the Governor flat funded the funding formula, and this plan passed out of the Appropriations committee. This is a concern because in CT, too much of our education funding comes from local property taxes. So, wealthier towns can afford better resources, more teachers, and stronger programs, while less wealthy communities struggle just to meet basic needs. This type of system creates inequities in education instead of public education making what it is intended to be -- the great equalizer.

And these differences are getting worse. The ECS funding is based on the number of students in each town, and with declining student populations — caused by families moving away, fewer children being born, and a growing fear among immigrant communities — many school districts are facing drastic cuts, hiring freezes, and overcrowded classrooms.

The State can and must do better — for our teachers, our paraeducators, our communities, and above all, for our children. Because when we invest in equitable public education, we invest in democracy, and we invest in Connecticut's future.

In Higher Education, as was the case last year, the State of Connecticut has been flat funded or has withheld funds, starving our colleges and state universities. This is on top of millions of dollars in federal grants that have been cut from our higher education institutions. Connecticut's economy is built on a highly skilled,

highly educated workforce, so cutting education funding makes no sense. Our economic future requires us to invest in improving the education and skills of our residents today.

In a recent meeting with the administration of UConn – both at the college campus and the research hospital – I was shocked to learn that after DOGE's cuts of federal employees, many of the people at the federal level that process [CT's] higher education and healthcare grants are gone. With the lack of federal grants and the passing of the SEBAC agreements, UConn facilities tell me they are uncertain how they will pay for the negotiated salary increases.

The State Employees Bargaining Agency Coalition, or SEBAC, is the only coalition of all state employees in the nation. It has been in existence for more than 40 years and negotiates pensions and healthcare collectively. Thankfully, because it is 40,000+ members strong, it was successful in ensuring all our members - including the UConn health center and our CT Colleges – received a fair raise. It took far too long to negotiate, and it makes us wonder how we are going to negotiate the state employees' pensions and healthcare – far more complicated than the raises that took 15 months – by the end of 2026.

This past year in healthcare was equally turbulent. Last fall, we learned that Prospect Holdings – the owners of Waterbury, Manchester, and Rockville Hospitals – filed for bankruptcy. This caused a huge amount of stress and questions about the future of our members. The result for Manchester and Rockville was a transition to Hartford Healthcare – the same entity that has been fighting unions for a decade or more. We hope this relationship improves.

We also had a setback with Windham United. It made us take a hard look at how we can help locals talk to their members, have good internal structure, and have strong density. The result was a program called "Good to Great." We encourage our local leaderships to work together to determine where they are as a local, to select goals to improve, and to work with AFT CT to determine how we can help achieve the goals.

Connecticut is a key battleground state for the forces that want to silence worker voices, especially in healthcare. AFT CT applied and received a Move Grant from AFT to mobilize, organize, structure, and empower our members and communities around our recent win on staffing ratios. We are asking each local to have at least one member participate in our Move Organizing Committee and help determine how AFT CT can best keep our members safe.

In addition to the Move Grant, AFT CT has also applied to AFT to fund a Healthcare Organizing Blitz. The objective of our mobilization is to involve AFT CT staff, leadership, other local leadership, rank-and-file members, and our Move Committee members to conduct effective one-on-one meetings in workplaces and engage in home visits organizing conversations. During these conversations, using a series of "asks," we hope to identify potential worksite leaders and new members, as well as ensure maximum local density.

AFT CT has not been immune to the challenging economic conditions, and ensuring we have maximum density is a must. We will have to make difficult financial decisions for the fights ahead. As I have mentioned in the past, AFT-CT only has two ways to increase revenue: increase dues or increase membership. Raising dues is never popular with our members, especially when times are tough. So, we must focus on increasing

our membership like never before. That means making sure everyone in our union is a dues-paying member, and that means doing whatever we can to help organize the unorganized. It also means working people in CT will have an even louder voice.

We also have an opportunity in the upcoming elections that could help reverse some of the issues we face on the federal level. Regardless of your political party affiliation, we encourage members to get involved, study the issues, and support the union – and vote.

As we do every year, I would like to take a moment to say thank you to all our members. In a year that saw nonstop mailings from the Freedom Foundation encouraging members to "give themselves a raise" and drop their union, our members have not only stayed with their union, but they also continue to become active. Whether it was participating in negotiations, in local meetings, or in the legislature, members showed up.

I would also like to thank the staff of AFT CT for all their hard work and dedication to our members and the movement.

Respectfully submitted in solidarity,

Jan Hochadel
President, AFT Connecticut

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

79th ANNUAL AFT CONNECTICUT BUSINESS CONVENTION

This past year was again busy, with members fighting battles in their locals, at the state level and nationally. Every division had its challenges, and our members rose to meet those challenges. On the national level, AFT was the first union to join with community and faith groups in the "No Kings" marches and other mass mobilizations. AFT developed trainings on peaceful participation in mobilizations and members took advantage of these trainings and participated in the mobilizations, including speaking and performing music.

Two memorable events for me were a march in Chicago with other AFT Healthcare members last fall at the Healthcare Professional Issues Conference and a memorial in Hartford for Alex Pretti, the Minneapolis ICU nurse that was killed by ICE agents.

Member Engagement is always critical, whether it be for an organizing drive, a contract fight, to save services in schools or hospital, to protect our communities, or to elect candidates who support working people. It is also important in protecting our democracy. Our members understand this.

Whether our Divisional Councils or one of our committees, such as our Legislative and Political Action Committee (LPAC), our members discuss, debate, and act on issues important to all of us. Without such involvement and guidance for our Delegate Assembly and Executive Committee, we would not be the member driven union we are. When I attend AFT conferences and meetings and mention that we have nearly 34,000 members in every division that AFT represents and that they are in around 100 autonomous locals, people ask, how does that work? I tell them that it works just fine, thank you, because members have, and use, their voice.

I think it also helps that we are adept at working in coalitions. There is SEBAC, which negotiates state employee benefits, the Working Families Party, Connecticut 4 All, the AFL-CIO and others. But there are also the countless work groups that our members serve on.

Several years ago, we recognized the power of AFT CT when it came to education or state employment. When a question came up in those fields, people would ask, where is AFT on this? We recognized that we needed to be seen that way in healthcare also, not only because we represent healthcare workers, but because healthcare access and affordability effects every one of us. So, we replicated what we do in education and state employment. We started saying yes to committee assignments and coalitions. We now fight alongside coalition partners to save Labor and Delivery services, provide a safer workplace, provide for adequate staffing levels, ensure that health plans are not "junk plans," and fight against the evils of Private Equity and the concerns around Artificial Intelligence (both of which cut across all our divisions).

Now, there are few issues that we are not asked for our opinion. That is because our members and our communities are all interrelated and affected by such a wide range of issues, and because our members

have such a wide range of knowledge, we always have someone who can speak on a particular topic. This is one of the greatest strengths of our diverse state federation.

This past year our members turned out for No Kings and other rallies, and to parades and Night Outs. We launched a new website dedicated to healthcare, CodeRedCT.org. Our LPAC committee did tremendous work and our Retirees Launched an Organizing Committee. We secured contracts for many, including our state employees.

As we move forward, we have secured a MOVE grant from AFT to enforce our safe staffing and workplace violence legislation and are forming a MOVE Committee, which will guide this work. I am confident it will be another example of what is possible with membership involvement.

We are also encouraged that the state has stepped up to rescue Waterbury Hospital and potentially Bristol and Day Kimball Hospitals. We have long advocated for the state to be more involved in hospitals and see this as a step in the right direction.

The AFT is the fastest growing union in the AFL-CIO and we are leading the way in protecting our democracy. I continue to serve on the AFT Climate Committee and as cochair of both the AFT Healthcare Policy and Planning Committee and the AFT Organizing Committee.

Thank you to our Divisional Vice Presidents and all our Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly members, as well as all our members, for all you do. Thank you also to our dedicated staff. It is an honor to serve with Jan and Shawn and all of you.

Respectively submitted in solidarity and service,

John Brady
Executive Vice President, AFT Connecticut

PSRP: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2026

This year has underscored both the growing demands placed on paraeducators and the urgent need to redefine how the profession is understood and supported across Connecticut.

Across our districts, paraeducators are responding to increasingly complex student needs. Members report higher levels of student dysregulation, expanded behavioral responsibilities, and situations that raise serious concerns about safety and supervision. At the same time, role expectations continue to shift without consistent guidance. Paraeducators are being asked to manage multiple students in roles designed to be one-on-one, assist with toileting for general education students while leaving assigned students unsupported, and take on additional responsibilities without clarity, compensation, or access to critical information such as IEPs.

These challenges are compounded by a broader structural issue: the persistent misunderstanding of the paraeducator role. Too often, paraeducators are viewed as interchangeable support staff rather than as skilled professionals with direct insight into student needs, learning environments, and instructional effectiveness. This disconnect impacts not only working conditions, but also student outcomes.

In response, the PSRP Division has remained actively engaged in both advocacy and long-term systems change. During this legislative session, we have encouraged members to share their experiences through testimony and direct engagement with policymakers. We have also prioritized strong participation in legislative regional meetings, recognizing that visibility and voice are critical in shaping policy decisions that affect our members.

At the same time, we are leading one of the most significant initiatives currently underway: a comprehensive revision of Connecticut's paraeducator guidance, in partnership with the State Department of Education, the Office of Early Childhood, and the State Paraeducator Advisory Council. This document, unchanged for more than two decades, no longer reflects the realities of today's classrooms.

Our work is focused not only on updating language, but on advancing a fundamental shift in perspective. The goal is to move from a compliance-based model, where paraeducators are positioned as subordinate support staff, to a collaborative framework that recognizes them as essential members of the educational team. This includes elevating their role in instruction and student support, strengthening onboarding and induction practices, and promoting structures that include paraeducators in planning, communication, and decision-making processes.

We are also addressing critical issues of compensation, role clarity, and professional recognition. Paraeducators are performing increasingly complex and, at times, hazardous work. Their compensation and working conditions must reflect that reality. Pay, training, and support are not secondary concerns. They are central to workforce stability, retention, and student success.

Despite these challenges, our members continue to show resilience, professionalism, and deep commitment to the students they serve. Our council has begun the year with renewed energy, focusing on strengthening member engagement and welcoming new members into our union community. We are also expanding access to practical tools and resources, including introducing emerging technologies that can support paras in their daily work.

Looking ahead, the PSRP Division remains committed to advancing a clear and unified vision: one where paraeducators are recognized not as peripheral staff, but as foundational contributors to education. This work requires continued advocacy, strong member engagement, and a willingness at all levels of leadership to embrace a more equitable and collaborative model.

Paraeducators do not simply support education. They make access to education possible. And it is time our systems fully reflect that truth.

Respectfully submitted in Solidarity,

Shellye Davis
Hartford Federation of Paraeducators, Local 2221 President
Divisional Vice President for Paraprofessionals & School-Related Personnel

PREK-12: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2026

The PreK12 Council continues to expand our capacity to organize and respond to members, strengthen our presence at the Capitol, impact education policy in Connecticut, and advocate for the schools our students deserve. Relationships across locals have strengthened this year and we look forward to the work ahead! Here are some highlights from the past year:

- One of our priorities continues to be **school funding** as a broken school funding system combined with inflation continues to take its toll on our districts and communities.
    - We joined forces with CAPPS, CABE, and CEA to make school funding a priority issue this legislative session.
    - AFT-CT members testified at Appropriation and Education hearings about the need to fix the Education Cost Sharing formula.
    - AFT March 4 Day of Action: In coalition with our students and district & local leaders, AFT-CT members across the state took action to demand improvements to the school funding system.
    - We kept up the pressure with press events and a recent Week of Action that included a meeting with Governor Lamont where we packed the room with AFT-CT members, as well as parent advocates and coalition partners.

- We recognize that what happens at the State Capitol and at the CSDE impacts our members' working conditions and students' learning conditions. As a result, PreK12 Council members also prioritize **our legislative and policy efforts**.
    - AFT-CT attended the Back to School meeting with Commission Russell-Tucket at the CT Science Center.
    - AFT-CT members participate in a range of commissions, committees, and boards on topics that include graduation requirements, evaluations, certification, special education work loads, and school funding.
    - In collaboration with CEA, AFT-CT hosted a Public Schools Forum in January that also included AFT President Randi Weingarten, researcher Josh Cowen, former Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, and Congresswoman Jahana Hayes.
    - AFT-CT members show up strong to testify at public hearings on a range of issues that impact our schools and our members:
        - School funding - Education & Appropriations
        - Fair Share Revenue bills – Finance
        - Keep ICE out of schools – Judiciary
        - AI regulations - Labor
    - We also recognize the role that relationship building with legislators plays in the ongoing work and we hosted three successful, well-attended regional meetings this year.

- AFT-CT values the **collaboration and support we receive from our national union AFT**. As a result of this support, we were able to engage our members in new and meaningful ways.
    - AFT President Randi Weingareten visited CT to celebrate and uplift our community schools and CTE programs.
    - Our locals continue to host Reading Opens the World events across the state to ensure our students have access to the books they need to become joyful and confident readers.

- We brought a MOVE (Mobilize, Organize, Vote, and Empower) Training to the PreK12 Council, inspired by our own participation in these training sessions at the AFT Human Rights Conference in Detroit in the fall.
- We hosted a Why Fascists Fear Teachers Bookclub for our members.
- For the second year in a row, we participated in the AFT National Day of Action on March 4.
- We hosted an AFT-facilitated Direct Action, Direct Care First Aid Workshop for members, students, and coalition partners. As a result, a similar training will take place at this year's CT AFL-CIO Convention.

- As we continue to protect our schools and protect our kids against anti-public school attacks at the federal level, we know that the **fight against vouchers** is timely and necessary.
  - We hosted a Town Hall on the issue where 60 members attended and we welcomed experts from AFT as well as researcher Josh Cowen to help us educate our members about the impact of privatization and school vouchers.
  - Informed by the town hall, PreK12, along with leaders from Healthcare, organized a visit to Governor Lamont's office to deliver a care package with information materials to educate his office on the issue and make it clear where we stand.
  - We raised the issue again in our recent visit to his office.

- PreK12 Council is committed to uplifting and participating in the **coalition work** that not only improves outcomes for our members but also for the communities we serve.
  - We joined CT For All on Labor Day for a community picnic and canvassing day of action. In addition, our members participated in two CT For All Democracy Schools this year to sharpen our skills and strengthen our collective impact.
  - Our members showed up to NO KINGS in October and March to continue to resist the authoritarian takeover of our government and protect our kids and communities.
  - Our members took part in solidarity actions in January after the horrific events and violence in Minnesota.
  - We joined union members around the state for the CT For All Tax Day Action where we demanded the ultrawealthy and corporations pay that they owe in taxes so we can build a better state for working people.
  - We are members of the May Day Strong Coalition, hosting town halls, organizing meetings, and preparing for a massive day of action on Friday, May 1.

- At the end of the day, we know our **contract fights** have the most direct impact on our members, so we used our summer meeting to compare notes and share best practices on **bargaining, contract campaigns, and how to win at the negotiating table**. As a result, many of our locals won big gains in our contracts this year. At the same time, we know there is still much more work to do when it comes to member engagement, as well as our working conditions and our students' learning conditions, so we will continue this practice to build off of our success and ensure it continues.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Blatteau
New Haven Federation of Teachers, Local 933 President
Divisional Vice President for PreK-12

HEALTHCARE: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2026

AFT Connecticut's Healthcare council has been busy this year. Our Locals have secured multiple new contract extensions this year, with our State Employee contracts at the state legislature for final approval right now.

Members have testified at the Capital on numerous bills this year, one of our most important pushes has been joining in the fight to keep Private Equity out of hospitals and our healthcare. We also have pushed and succeeded in getting a bill passed to help with violence against nurses and healthcare workers, so they are not financially harmed if attacked and I nurse while on the job.

We have also started our CODE RED website. Which will be a repository for staffing issues, not only for Unionized AFT members, but all nurses in the state of Connecticut. This year we also secured a MOVE grant from AFT National to help our organizing and messaging while we continually fight the anti-union attacks from the Freedom Foundation, Yankee Institute and the OPT-Out today movement.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Garrity
University Health Professionals, Local 3837 President
Divisional Vice President for Healthcare

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2026

State Employees meet on the last Monday of each month to discuss issues facing state employees in Connecticut and to discuss updates from the SEBAC 15.

This year has been focused on fighting for fair contracts. Negotiations began in January 2025 and our contracts expired on July 1, 2025. Despite every local's efforts, we were not able to reach agreements until March and April. One local was not able to reach an agreement and will be going to arbitration. All locals that reached tentative agreements also had their contracts ratified by their membership with overwhelming support. The Appropriations Committee passed the contracts with a votes along party lines. As I write this we are hoping to see the House and Senate pass our contracts in the next week.

SEBAC was able to come to an agreement with management on some "win-wins" in pension and healthcare. We defined these as issues that either benefited or did not harm to members and also helped management, whether it be with a cost savings or administrative difficulty. The goal in the coming months will be to continue to negotiate pension and healthcare. We will also continue to focus on recruitment, retention, and reinvestment in state agencies to ensure strong public services.

We had some successful organizing events including a SEBAC event at the State Legislative Office Building that was attended by 550 supporters. Our siblings in Higher Ed continue to fight for fair funding. We also had many members attend the No Kings Rallies.

Respectfully submitted,

Makenzi Hurtado
State Vocational Federation of Teachers, Local 4200A President
Divisional Vice President for Public Employees

HIGHER EDUCATION: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT
MAY 2026

This year the CT AFT Higher Education Council was reconstituted. We began holding regular meeting of representatives from all AFT and AAUP higher education institutions, including public institutions like CSU-AAUP, UConn, UConn Health, UCPEA and the Federation of Technical Colleges Teachers, and also independent institutions including Fairfield University, Connecticut College, Quinnipiac University, Sacred Heart University, Trinity College, University of Hartford, University of New Haven, Wesleyan University and Yale University.

A few events that members of the CT-AFT Council participated in this Fall included a meeting with U.S. Senator Chris Murphy and his staff on September 19th to discuss the current challenges higher education institutions are facing. We also had two meetings with CT Attorney General Tong in September, one in a private meeting in his office and one as part of a larger public event at Central Connecticut State University on September 15. AG Tong discussed lawsuits he and other attorneys general have filed against the Trump administration that impact higher education, including cuts to higher education, student loans, research, and healthcare, and how faculty, staff, and students could fight back.

In November the CT-AFT Higher Education Council addressed the issue of the federal government interference in higher education. We wrote a letter to all Connecticut College and University Presidents and Boards, and legislators asking that they do not agree to any "compact" proposed by the Trump administration that restricts academic freedom or interferes in the autonomy of higher education institutions. We were able to get almost all the AAUP and AFT higher education units in the state to sign the letter, plus the 4Cs union of CT State Community college, and a few other UConn unions. We then held a press conference on Friday, November 7 to announce the letter and our coalition of faculty unions. Speakers at the press conference included 1) State Senator Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox, who is also a professor of legal studies at Quinnipiac University, 2.) Brian Stiltner, professor of Philosophy, Theology, and Religious Studies at Sacred Heard University, 3.) Andy Zhang, Student Body President, University of Connecticut, 4.) James Bhandry-Alexander, professor at Yale University Law School, 5.) Neena Qasba, professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Connecticut Health Center, 6.) Fiona Pearson, professor of Sociology, Central Connecticut State University. The press conference got some good press that Matt O'Connor shared with AFT members.

In December the CT AFT Higher Education Council began work on a campaign to promote state legislation about academic freedom, which is still ongoing. We worked on writing a bill to be introduced in the legislature that build on unsuccessful bills in 2019 and 2023 about academic freedom for public institutions of higher education. We want to extend those bills and make them more comprehensive so that they also cover private institutions, especially those that do not have the protection of collective bargaining agreements. Robert Post of Yale Law School, and Isaac Kamola of Trinity College and the AAUP Center for the Defense of Academic Freedom took the lead on writing a sample bill.

As part of our efforts, AAUP-AFT Higher Education Council organized a webinar on Academic Freedom that took place by Zoom on Wednesday, February 4. It included stories about the impact of federal politics on the academic freedom of faculty on a daily basis, even in public institutions with some guarantees of it. Robert Post and Isaac Kamola, shared their expertise on the history and importance of academic freedom.

We were not able to introduce our bill in the current legislative session, but we have plans to design and implement a concerted campaign over the coming summer and fall to gain support for the 2027 session. This will involve a comprehensive strategy that includes creating informational webinars/forums, podcasts, and informational flyers, having meetings with individual legislators, incorporating the issue in electoral questionnaires and endorsements, and thinking of ways to engage students in our campaign. We also have a meeting scheduled with Attorney General Tong on May 11 to discuss the issue of Academic freedom.

Finally, this year saw contract negotiations for all the public sector higher education units. These negotiations were difficult and contentious but are now complete and will be voted upon by the legislature at the end of this session.

Respectfully Submitted,

Louise Williams
AAUP - Connecticut State University, Local 6745 President
Divisional Vice President for Higher Education

AFT CT RETIREE DIVISION: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2026

The AFT Connecticut Retiree Council consists of the presidents, executive officers of the chartered retiree locals. Any Retired member is also welcome at these meetings. The Retiree Council meets monthly and the members of the Retiree At Large meet in conjunction with the Council.

Retirees attended/participated in various functions throughout the past year. And also interacted with other CT Retiree Groups namely Association of Retires Teachers Connecticut (ARTC) and the Association of Retired Americans (ARA).

The Regional Legislative breakfast/luncheons were well attended by Retirees. Discussion with several legislators, at each event, centered on TRB issues, premium share on healthcare, issues regarding safe staffing levels in hospitals and elder healthcare in general. Many of the various retire constituencies had members at the Legislature lobbying their respective issues with their legislators.

Participation in the three "No Kings" rallies throughout the State were well attended by retirees. Many photographs documenting these events were posted to various social media sites. Going forward the Connecticut day of action on this coming May Day is planned for Hartford and New Haven. Retirees remained active in last year's Municipal elections. These actions included continued participation in the LPAC, phone banking and labor walks for many Municipal candidates.

The Retiree Organizing committee was organized in the Fall, founding members of this group consisted of Chuck Morrell, Nathan Karnes, Judy Small, John Brady, Walter O'Connor and Eric Borlaug. It is making progress, particularly in respect cleaning up the contact data (a PPC national goal) for both retired local membership as well as all current AFT CT retirees. Various email and traditional mail, are being drafted depending on the retirees' contact data and current membership status. The committee as a group meets visually via Zoom monthly.

The AFT Retiree Program and Policy Counsel (PPC) meets quarterly via Zoom with typically one annual meeting in Washington, DC. The following Action Plan outlines strategies for the AFT Retirees Program and Policy Council.

Retiree Engagement and Collaboration The plan emphasizes increasing retiree activism through coordinated efforts with in-service locals and state federations, including planning meetings, ongoing outreach, and annual membership drives. Creative engagement methods such as virtual participation, celebrating union milestones, and recognizing retirees' service are encouraged to develop retiree activists.

Data and Communication Improvements The plan calls for developing best practices with staff and data teams to improve retiree data collection and tracking. Training on data management, expanded communication via calls and workshops, and regular virtual trainings aim to strengthen outreach and engagement.

Advocacy Against Federal Attacks The plan advocates collaborating with national leadership to create a contribution fund for retiree programming and mobilizing rallies and events to oppose cuts to social programs and collective bargaining rights. Recruitment into retiree groups and communication channels is prioritized.

Political Activism The plan seeks to involve retirees in electoral activities by working with leadership and political departments to identify activists, conduct surveys on member interests, and increase retiree participation in endorsements and campaigns. Partner organizations include unions, social justice groups, and civil rights organizations to amplify efforts.

Overall, the plan aims to deepen retiree involvement, improve data and communication, strengthen advocacy, and boost political activism to support members' interests and influence policy.

Respectively Submitted,

Walter O'Connor
Divisional Vice President for AFT CT Retirees

FERGUSON, DOYLE & CHESTER, P.C.

MAY 2025– MAY 2026

This year has proven to be a litigious one. Our office secured a victory for the Hartford Federation of Teachers and other teachers around the state where the State Board of Labor Relations held that the Board of Education could not add toileting/diapering of students to teacher job duties. We are now fighting a similar case on behalf of paraeducators. Attorneys at our office have played a key role in drafting and providing testimony in support of legislation that would protect healthcare workers who are injured at work as the result of an assault. We also drafted and testified in support of legislation to provide tenured teachers with actual due process when fighting an unjust termination. Our office also provided testimony against a bill that would have penalized individuals by requiring a pension offset to workers compensation benefits if an injured worker has a workers compensation surgery post-retirement.

We are defending a few Locals against complaints brought at the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) as well as at the State Board of Labor Relations (SBLR).

We regularly consult with AFT-CT leadership and the management team on legal matters. We provide support and guidance to Staff Representatives in their work on behalf of affiliate Locals.

The firm has provided representation to seventy three (73) AFT-CT members for investigations with the Department of Children and Families in the past twelve months.

The firm represents our members for contested Workers' Compensation claims and we provided representation to forty eight (48) members for new Workers' Compensation claims. We have attended and advocated at hundreds of Workers' Compensation Hearings at the Informal, Pre-Formal and Formal Administrative Trial Hearing levels. When a member is referred to us for a Workers' Compensation matter, our attorneys and staff dedicate an enormous amount of time preparing for hearings, communicating with insurance adjusters, medical providers and/or attorneys as well as meeting with clients and answering their questions and putting their minds at ease in what can be a very complicated and frustrating process. In the past twelve months Ferguson, Doyle & Chester has favorably settled multiple Workers Compensation claims.

As always, we stand ready to assist AFT-CT, affiliated locals, their elected leaders and members in any way we can.

UNION YES

Legislative Update

SCAN ME



AFT Connecticut

Education | Healthcare | Public Services