



## **Annual Business Convention May 17, 2014**

Aqua Turf Club  
Plantsville, Connecticut

# REPORTS

# **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

## **67<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL AFT CONNECTICUT BUSINESS CONVENTION**

What a year. It is a constant battle to hold on to what is just, fair, and true. Organized Labor has not only been a "self-interest" movement, but rather our struggle has always been what is just for all.

Organized Labor has brought tremendous positive changes to working families. Today, many workers enjoy, amongst others, higher wages, better working hours, safer working conditions, medical coverage, and vacation time. This effort did not come easy and was riddled with much tragedy.

AFT Connecticut works every day for the preservation of these gains while working to also build on them. Two prime examples are:

- 1) The challenges we and the Hartford Federation have been facing; most recently, to take over our public schools and mold them into what the "powers at be" would like without listening to the voices of our parents, teachers, and community. To date, we have prevailed. We have empowered the community to speak up and out by initiating and organizing Hartford Rising! "Community is the New Density."
- 2) We are witnessing the industrialization of the healthcare delivery system and the shifting of union healthcare workers and services to free standing entities. This move stripped workers of their union status, offered less benefits with less pay. This move also created a disparity in access to healthcare for the community. Well folks, we didn't sit down! We poured out all stops; working with the L&M locals 5049, 5051, 5123, and AFT, we organized the community by educating and giving them a voice. That led to victory. "Community is the New Density."

Our efforts are only achieved because of the dynamic leadership we have in all our locals and because of the gifted and talented staff we have in all our departments. For all of you, I am truly grateful.

### **Organizing**

L&M strike and lockout resulted in great community and labor support and positive contract results

Organized SECT VNA- Home Health Aides – won

Organized Hartford Rising Campaign – led to development of Community Bill of Rights

#### *Current and Ongoing*

Organizing LMMG- Election next month

Safe Staffing Campaign- leading to thousands of hits and followers for future campaigns

Organizing Healthcare workers in two other hospitals

Organizing RNs in one other hospital

"Community is the New Density"

## **Community Engagement**

### *Middletown BOE Budget Battle*

We organized several teachers, board members, and community groups, including the Middletown branch NAACP, and others to testify at a number of council meetings in support of the proposed budget.

### *New Britain Community Rally and Training*

We conducted several trainings with the New Britain Federation and followed up after the Community Engagement conference, which included members of the community, the para local, and the teacher local. A rally was scheduled by the parent leadership team and the mayor's office that both the local and state AFT CT participated in, which showcased local student talent.

### *Community Engagement Conference in Philadelphia*

We organized a contingent of three locals, Hartford, New Britain, and Bridgeport, to travel to PA to get the National's training on Community Engagement.

### *Hartford Summer Community Voter Project*

With CCNE we organized a community voter project to re-engage voters. This CVP resulted in very important community data, which would later be used to inform the Hartford Rising! strategy.

### *Community Engagement Internship*

A community engagement internship was set up and is now offered to college students wishing to learn more about AFT CT and our work to improve and encourage stronger labor and community partnership across the state.

### *L&M Community Engagement*

Significant training for members about what the framework for community engagement should look like based on the last couple of years of work with the National in developing a model/approach. A tremendous amount of community support was organized early on, which led to an overwhelming amount of community support that came later during the strike which went viral.

### *Hartford Rising!*

It has been the largest initiative so far this year and includes several layers of engagement and success. Beginning with the fight against Achievement First takeover at Clark and then Capital Prep at SAND, the organizing committee at these north end schools has emerged into a city wide movement.

## **Legislative**

Our annual Legislative Conference is attracting new focus and being received with good enthusiasm and intent.

### *2013 Municipal Elections*

AFT Connecticut distributed over \$50,000 to local town committees, often times through our members, resulting in: 67% of all municipal endorsements won 72% of endorsed union members won

## **Administrative**

We are continuing our efforts to conserve resources and operate as efficient as we can, updating our technology and promoting quality service.

We are also conducting several professional development programs for all our members. This past year we have conducted meetings to help identify the needs of our locals and continued to develop approaches to meet our locals' needs.

Our eyes have been focused on the races for 2014-2016. They include:

- Congressional Races
- Constitutional Officer Races
- Statewide General Assembly Races

Membership and community involvement will be the key to preventing: "Picture This: Becoming a Wisconsin"

Respectfully Submitted, and In Solidarity,

Melodie Peters  
*President of AFT Connecticut*

# **FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

## **67<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL AFT CONNECTICUT BUSINESS CONVENTION**

A year ago at this convention, I was elected as the AFT Connecticut First Vice President. I am honored to represent nearly 29,000 members within this labor organization. I want to thank the staff here at AFT Connecticut for their help as I transitioned into this position, as well as extend my sincerest appreciation for their help and dedication during the L&M strike last fall.

My responsibilities here include overseeing the PreK-12 Council, Personnel Committee, Finance & Budget Committee, Scholarship Committee, and Ad Hoc Executive Council Committee. I also had the honor of being elected to represent AFT Connecticut's members as a Vice President to the AFL-CIO. In addition, I oversee the building maintenance of our Rocky Hill office.

We made two renovations to the third floor of our building this year: creating an office for Ryan Henowitz, who joined us as the Legislative Advocate Associate/Member Mobilizer, and building a wall to enclose the Financial Office. Due to the harsh winters of recent years, the upper parking lot was in disrepair with pavement crumbling and potholes forming. We contracted a paving company who assessed the damage and repaired it by removing the old pavement and repaving the lot. In January, the building's backflow preventer froze and burst due to the extreme cold. The damage was minimal and repairs were made rather quickly, with some improvements. We installed a larger heater in the room where the backflow preventer is located and better insulated the remaining water pipes.

This year, new contracts were negotiated with the Staff Union and Support Staff, effective through June 30, 2017. We've learned that Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield has discontinued our current health plan, so we are currently seeking alternative plans for review.

The fall brought forth challenges for healthcare. The L&M strike and lockout took a lot of time and energy that was difficult, but necessary, for everyone. The workers of L&M and AFT-CT took a stand against corporate greed and the outsourcing of jobs. This type of greed is a plague that affects all of us, whether in healthcare, education, or public realms. It was heartwarming to see so many people from other unions throughout the state, even the nation, supporting our members by walking the picket line or sending donations to the L&M Nurses and Techs Hardship Fund.

In education, the ongoing implementation of the Common Core State Standards, the enactment of the new teacher evaluation system, along with the adoption of the SBAC, heightened everyone's awareness to the condition of our educational system and presented more questions than answers. Many meetings were needed in order to understand the concerns and implications of the Common Core State Standards, new teacher evaluation plan, and the SBAC adoption. Combining our efforts with the CEA led to successful negotiations with the Department of Education and the Governor's office. Limiting the number of Student

Learning Objectives and the number of formal observations for teachers were two significant changes we were able to negotiate with regard to the teacher evaluation plan. These substantial changes gave teachers across the state immediate relief.

Our work continued as we sought continual input from teachers across the state and worked alongside the Coalition for Public Education in order to clarify the teacher evaluation guidelines. In April 2014, PEAC and the State Board of Education accepted additional changes to the teacher evaluation guidelines. The most significant change is that teacher evaluations will not be based on a single test score. Instead, teachers will be evaluated on student performance over time.

I worked closely with Jan Hochadel, who chairs the Ad Hoc Committee for the Executive Council, to hold our first Small Local Summit. This was held in April and designed to give Presidents and Treasurers of our small locals some training in budgeting, accounting, constitution writing, and member organizing. We had 75% of the invited locals attend, and those that attended said the summit was very beneficial. We are working on follow up training based on the feedback we received.

It has been a privilege to serve you, and I look forward to another year of advocating for all the members of AFT Connecticut. Thank you.

In Solidarity,

Stephen McKeever  
*First Vice President, AFT Connecticut*

## **SECOND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### 67<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL AFT CONNECTICUT BUSINESS CONVENTION

This has been a year of professional transition for me as I left the position of UHP President and became the Second Vice President of AFT Connecticut. I am honored that you all believed in me as I made this transition and thank you for your unwavering support and help.

As the Officer assigned to support the State Employees Council, I have continued to attend SEBAC meetings and offer any assistance I can to our State Employee Locals. Along with Jennifer Berigan and Matt O'Connor, I wrote the application for the first AFT Solution Driven Unionism Award. AFT Connecticut's State Employee Locals won this prestigious award and received a \$25,000 grant. The award was based on the 2011 SEBAC negotiations and the Health Enhancement Plan that was adopted by state employees as a result. This agreement is revolutionary in its concept of delivery of health care, and a fabulous program that shows that labor can get great results by collaborating with all stakeholders. It has been my honor and privilege to speak about this program at several AFT-sponsored conferences across the nation.

The other constituency group I support is the PSRP Council (Paraprofessional and School Related Personnel). I was pleased to attend their National Professional Issues Conference in April; it was a great experience. PSRP's are a highly diverse group of individuals and their conference clearly reflects that. I was especially enlightened by two workshops—one on the influence of poverty on learning and one on the history of labor. I am thrilled that we have finally gotten the FMLA for paras implemented, and hopeful we can address the short staffing and IEP compliance issues in the next year.

The staffing issue in Healthcare continues to be an issue that we are all working on, and the problem of conversions of not for profit hospitals to for profit entities is worrisome. Being a member of the Healthcare PPC (Program and Policy Council) for AFT is a duty that I enjoy and am happy to do on behalf of AFT Connecticut. The National Healthcare Professional Issues Conference is something I help plan and run as part of this Committee and I am always open to suggestions and ideas for future topics. With the addition of the National Federation of Nurses (NFN) to the AFT family, we are now the second largest Healthcare union in the United States. There is no better example of why Healthcare workers need a union than to look at what happened in the Lawrence and Memorial strike and lockout. Kudos to the leadership of all three of those locals!

As part of my administrative duties, I supervise the Support Staff of AFT Connecticut. I wish to thank all of them for their hard work, dedication, and professionalism. They are what make this office run and I have nothing but respect and gratitude for what they do every day. In addition to my responsibilities as a full time officer for AFT Connecticut, I also serve as a member of the Contracting Standards Board for the State of Connecticut, a trustee of the Connecticut State AFL-CIO, a member of the West Hartford Democratic Town Committee, and a delegate to CT Democratic Convention.

In Solidarity,

Jean Morningstar  
*Second Vice President, AFT Connecticut*

# HEALTH CARE COUNCIL REPORT 2014

MAY 2014

Our Health Care sector has been through a tumultuous year, and that may be putting it mildly. From the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, to layoffs, to legislative successes and disappointments, back to a strike/lock-out, we have been through it all.

The ACA has not only been changing our work environment, it has also changed the health care market. These changes have made hospitals very cautious and they have greatly cut back on their spending, especially in hiring. We have seen and continue to see layoffs of our members. Whether through consolidation, merger, moving off site, or closing of departments, our members have been hurt. From New London to Danbury, our employers have let us know that we are considered expendable.

Fortunately, it was not all doom and gloom. Our fight at L&M was tough, contentious, and nerve wracking; but not only was it successful, it also helped to unite us all and showed us the importance of our "friends." We salute our L&M Presidents and their members for all they went through and for showing us what can happen if you stay strong!

As I write this, the legislature is still in session, but one of the bills that AFT CT has been working on for a few years is the independent practice for Advance Practice RNs. This legislation has passed and is on its way to the Governor. We are still awaiting action on Hospital Conversion, but Hospital Reporting of Staffing Levels has passed the House and is on the Senate calendar. School Nurse Ratios has passed the Senate and has been placed on the House calendar.

The School Nurse Advisory Board was one of our victories from the 2013 Session, and this year's bill is to implement the recommendations from that Committee. Last year was also our first go around to strengthen our legislation from 2009 to demand that hospitals report what actual staffing levels are maintained and for the Department of Public Health to report these findings to the public, as well as to the Public Health Committee.

I want to thank all of our members who have testified in person, written testimony or worked on our legislative agenda, as well as those who represent us on the State Boards and Commissions. Also, thank you to Jennifer Berigan for all of her hard work and expertise, as well as Melodie Peters for her leadership and vast knowledge of the workings of our legislature.

An especially big shout out to our L&M Presidents – Lisa D'Abrosca, Stephanie Johnson, and Harry Rodriguez – for being selected as AFT Everyday Heroes. Congratulations!

As 2014 unfolds, our biggest challenges will be the ever growing threat of "for-profit" health care being allowed in CT. With a totally different philosophy and investors to please, our health care environment could be headed for another big shock. We will have to remain strong and united to protect our patients, communities, and members.

Joanne Chapin

*Jurisdictional Vice President for Health Care Council Chairperson*

# PREK-12 COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2014

The AFT Connecticut PreK-12 Council has had a very busy and productive year. Our council has been growing with many locals being represented at meetings. Our goal is to have a representative of each teacher local, and we are making good progress towards this goal. The Council has become very useful as a vehicle for sharing concerns and solutions, and for getting advice and information on what is happening at the state and federal level. Discussions on teacher evaluations, contracts, discipline, and other issues provide a way for us to learn and benefit from each other's experiences. Thank you to all who attend regularly and participate.

Our Legislative Advocate, Jennifer Berigan, along with Teri Merisotis and Ryan Henowitz, deserve giant kudos for the information they provided to us about the legislative session, as well as for lobbying so well for our issues. Our Communications Director, Matt O'Connor, has also been instrumental in getting the information we need on our website, emailed to our members, and in the press. This has been a short session, but quite labor intensive. Many bills have been proposed, amended, and withdrawn due to the efforts of the Officers and Staff. A thank you to Melodie Peters, Steve McKeever, and Jean Morningstar for all their hard work, as well as to each and every one of you who made a phone call, sent an email, or visited the legislators and spoke at a hearing. Your participation is vital.

Among our successes this year were changes to the PEAC process, which will help make teacher evaluations a little less onerous. Thanks to Melodie Peters and Steve McKeever for working with the CEA; we were able to make many changes happen – teachers can now be fully evaluated every three years, the number of Student Learning Objectives have been decreased, SBAC will not be used to evaluate teachers, and teacher evaluations are not linked to a single test score, but whether they are making progress with their students.

Our Professional Development Coordinator, Carole Clifford, has arranged numerous workshops this year on topics ranging from Common Core to Stress Management and everything in between. She has also provided insight on our issues while bringing an abundance of information to the council. This is very much appreciated.

On the legislative front, one of our big successes is an Early Childhood bill which will provide more slots for PreK. As of this writing, it is unknown whether the Office of Early Childhood will be established and whether all day Kindergarten will be mandated. We also were able to fend off a move to halt the Common Core Implementation that would have devastated the districts who rely on the Common Core funding. Instead, a Common Core Implementation Task Force has been set up and is working to come up with recommendations on how to fix the problem. This Task Force meets every week and is striving to make meaningful, actionable recommendations.

I'd also like to thank the Office Staff for all their help in preparing our meetings and events – running off copies, making flyers, ordering food, arranging venues, etc. This takes a lot of time, and their assistance has been greatly appreciated.

The AFT Connecticut PreK-12 Council has had a great year and made a positive difference in the lives of all of our teachers. We still have work to do, but with everyone's active participation, we will get it done.

Patti Fusco

*Jurisdictional Vice President for PreK-12 Council*

# PSRP COUNCIL REPORT 2014

MAY 2014

Our focus has been on “Reclaiming the Promise” – educating the whole child, fostering unity and professional development through workshops and training. The goal of our work is to make a difference in the lives of the students. To that end, we advocate to ensure that our members receive the necessary tools they need to do their jobs well.

Over the last year, we have been busy! In addition to regular meetings of the jurisdictional council, I have attended AFT meetings, Executive Council meetings, and assisted with jurisdictional constituency issues. We have had quality agendas along with conversations and interaction among PSRPs. Through this work, we are better able to identify and focus on the many challenges, including diversity. We vigorously discuss these issues in order to empower our members in building bridges within the education system and within and around our schools.

We are continuing to identify and address issues. One step in this process has been the development of surveys to get our members' feedback about their schools' climate. As a start, we have sent out surveys to see what types of training is needed by our members. However, to reach our goal of a better educational system, other important surveys will include the following topics: Health and Safety Issues (Wellness), Bullying Within the Workplace, Administrative Issues, and DCF Complaints.

In our efforts to reclaim the promise through strong leadership, we have had training on the Common Core Standards, and we are engaging our members through positive activism and improved communications through AFT. We have created a task force with PSRPs and teachers to take a thorough look at Health and Safety. We have had discussions on the necessary framework that will ensure our members get the continuous training they need and are supported with every possible opportunity for professional development. Our children deserve this.

This work takes many forms and must be done at every level. I have been very vocal during the Legislative Session and have testified about many bills along with my colleagues. Many of us have immersed ourselves in the change that we want to see; within communities we are volunteering for activities with a distinct focus on ensuring that the children and students are the first priority in all that we do.

Understanding that we are all in this together, we continue to support and encourage each other to step up, speak up and make a difference. “In unity there is strength: We can move mountains when we are united and enjoy life. Without unity we are victims. Stay United!” (Bill Bailey)

Thank you to all of the officers and Staff of the AFT Connecticut for all of your help and guidance. AFT Connecticut Rocks!

Shellye Davis

*Jurisdictional Vice President for Municipal-MERA*

# STATE EMPLOYEE COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

## MAY 2014

The State Employee Council (SEC) represents six locals: A&R, UHP, UCPEA, JPE, SVFT, and FTC. As State agencies, these locals have many common issues; however, because they represent members in all different job functions, they also have an array of workplace concerns and issues.

AFT Connecticut takes great pride in our political involvement, and early in the year our SEC meetings focused on the Legislative Agenda. In a short session, the group had to collectively agree on what issues would be addressed. The two bills of focus were FOI restrictions for JPE officers and testing requirements for A&R members. In addition, AFT Connecticut would continue to monitor efforts to protect workers in "sick buildings."

Each of the six locals is a member of the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC). This body is charged with the task of negotiating with the State on pension and healthcare. An often contentious issue left from the SEBAC 2011 agreement was how to improve the Tier II breakpoint in the State retirement calculation. This past fall, the Tier II calculation was addressed to help resolve the inequity in pension calculations between higher-paid and lower-paid workers. This modification improved the pension for lower-paid workers.

SEC locals spent much of year continuing to educate members on our new Health Enhancement Plan (HEP) program. As with any new program, there were growing pains, but overall the program has provided state employees with a superior healthcare program and saved the State over 100 million dollars in the process. This July, State employees will have a new dental carrier, Cigna. The bidding process between Cigna and the current dental provider, United, will save the State 13 million dollars.

A new Fight Back Committee was formed this year at SEBAC. This committee planned the very successful April 5<sup>th</sup> "We are Not Wisconsin" forum. This event was not designed to endorse any political candidate, but rather to educate members and the public of what it means to be a "Right-to-Work" state. Union members from Wisconsin were invited to participate in a panel discussion to explain how Act 10 effectively took away collective bargaining rights in Wisconsin overnight. SEC locals, in collaboration with SEBAC, will continue to work on ways to educate members on the need to focus on the biggest issue we face – the need to preserve collective bargaining.

Thank you to the Officers and Staff of AFT Connecticut for all of your help and guidance.

Jan Hochadel  
*Jurisdictional Vice President for State Employees*

# STATEWIDE RETIREE COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

## MAY 2014

I have been chairing this committee for about four meetings, beginning in September 2013. We meet every other month, unless we schedule a special meeting in between.

Because of unforeseen problems, the council had been out of commission, but we are now on our way. It has taken a while to get our member count, estimated at 20 to 25, back into council meetings again. We are planning a Retiree Informational Conference in September with speakers on issues that would be of importance to our Retirees, along with a representative to talk about First Books and a speaker on the benefits offered by the AFT.

Our council members are all leaders in good standing and have been actively meeting within their own locals. These members also have speakers coming to talk to their respective groups.

MaryAnn Goggin  
*Statewide Retiree Council Acting Vice President*

## **FERGUSON, DOYLE & CHESTER**

### **MAY, 2013 – APRIL, 2014**

These are highlights of some of the areas that the firm provided legal services to AFT Connecticut. During the last year we were involved in 152 DCF Investigations. Additionally, we defended school employees at 12 DCF Substantiation Appeal Hearings.

During the last year we provided defense to 18 tenured teachers who were being terminated. This number includes cases that were settled during the statutory hearing process as well as those that went through the hearing process to a decision.

The firm represents our members for Workers' Compensation claims. We have attended and advocated at over 100 Workers' Compensation Hearings from the Informal to the Pre-Formal and Formal Administrative Trial Hearings.

In the last year we have defended 10 members for Unemployment Appeal Hearings before the State Labor Department Trial Referee.

In the last year the firm has defended 8 Duty of Fair Representation claims brought against AFT CT Locals at the State Board of Labor Relations or Connecticut Superior Courts. Our firm represented the three L&M Local Unions in a lengthy Superior Court case that ultimately settled. Additionally we represented AFT CT Locals at numerous Labor Board Hearings throughout the course of the year.

We also provided formal and informal legal opinions to numerous AFT CT Locals. The firm was also involved with legislative matters during the 2012-2013 session of the General Assembly as well as this most recent legislative session.

## 2014 Legislative Session Summary

### WINS

#### AFT CONNECTICUT BILLS/ISSUES

- **SB 35 Hospital Conversions** – Establishes a firewall between for-profit and non-profit medical foundations and limits each entity to one medical foundation, requires an additional public hearing before a hospital conversion application is filed, establishes additional criteria for hospital conversion applications (including the requirement that hospital staffing levels be an indicator of quality patient care) and allows the Attorney General and Commissioner of Public Health to put any conditions on a hospital conversion.
- **HB 5125 FOIA Exemption for Probation Officers** – Exempts from disclosure personal information about current and former probation officers employed by the Judicial Branch to people (1) under the supervision of the Court Support Services Division or (2) under Department of Correction custody or supervision for violating probation.
- **HB 5566 Minor Education Revisions** – Changes the name of “Special Master” to “District Improvement Specialist” and clarifies that the certified member on local school districts’ professional development and evaluation committee shall be a certified teacher.
- **Study on Paraprofessional Staffing** – The Program Review and Investigations Committee has agreed to study the issue of paraprofessional staffing and provide recommendations to the General Assembly before the 2015 legislative session.

#### Other Priority Bills:

- **SB 18 English Language Learner Teachers** - Redesigns the existing loan reimbursement program, as an incentive grant and loan reimbursement program for undergraduate students enrolled in teacher preparation programs. Grants up to \$20K to each student who pledges to teach bilingual education for a period of five years.
- **SB 25 and HB 5562 Early Childhood Education** – Adds 1,020 new school readiness slots in priority and competitive school districts, plus alliance districts, moving Connecticut towards universal access to PreK. Establishes Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program to expand preschool opportunities for low-income children in public schools taught by certified teachers. Creates the Office of Early Childhood.
- **SB 36 APRNs** – Allows APRNs with three or more years of licensed experience in collaboration with a physician to practice independently.
- **SB 63 Municipal Arbitration Timelines** – Killed legislation that would have allowed an arbitrator in a municipal interest arbitration to begin deciding a case no later than 180 days after the arbitration process begins by requiring the municipality and the union to file last best offers and briefs on unresolved issues and by prohibiting modification, deferment, or waiver of any deadline beyond the 180-day period.
- **SB 219 MERS** – Killed legislation that would have raised municipal employee contribution rates to the pension fund.

- **SB 229 Sudden Cardiac Arrest** – Requires coaches to annually review online video training regarding the signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest. The initial bill required coaches to withdraw students exhibiting signs of cardiac arrest and revoke a coach’s permit for failing to remove such students, but these provisions were successfully removed from the final bill.
- **HB 5113 Concussions** - Narrows the scope of required training and review coaches must undergo from concussions and head injuries to just concussions. Requires coaches to notify a student athlete's parent or guardian when the student is removed from play for a concussion or suspected concussion. Establishes a task force to study concussion occurrences in youth.
- **HB 5125 Healthcare Professional Licenses** – Requires the Department of Public Health to study and report to the General Assembly in January 2015 about how the term of professional healthcare licenses may be extended.
- **HB 5537 Various Revisions to Public Health Statutes** – Gives school nurses access to the Department of Public Health’s immunization registry to verify the immunization status of students.
- **HB 5375 CTHSS Student Data** – Requires the Connecticut Technical High School System superintendent to annually submit additional information on students who graduate from or complete an approved program of study to the General Assembly.
- **HB 5521 Administration of Epinephrine** – Allows non-licensed personnel in the absence of a school nurse to administer epinephrine to students without a diagnosis or prescription only after they have completed a comprehensive training program.
- **HB 5559 Uniform School Calendar** – Delays implementation of the uniform regional school calendars until SY 2016 and permits districts to delay one year further (SY 2017) if required to conform with existing collective bargaining agreements.
- **SB 29 Bonding** – Authorizes the following bonding projects of interest to AFT Connecticut members:
  - “Transform CSCU 2020” will bring all 17 of Connecticut’s community colleges and universities into a single, cohesive, student-centered, technology-enriched system that will improve the learning experience for hundreds of thousands of students.

**BUDGET – HB 5596 & HB 5597**

- Establishes the Connecticut Retirement Security Board and requires it to design a state-run defined contribution retirement plan for workers who do not have access to retirement savings programs via their employers and submit it to the General Assembly by April 2016.
- Requires the Finance Committee chairs to undertake a comprehensive study of all aspects of Connecticut’s \$16B tax system and report recommendations for change to the General Assembly beginning in January 2015 with final recommendations due in January 2016.
- **HEALTHCARE**
  - Requires the Comptroller to analyze facility fees charged to the state employee and retiree health plan and determine the feasibility of no longer reimbursing providers for facility fees deemed inappropriate or unreasonable.
  - Exempts Sharon Hospital for three years from paying sales tax on services it provides and any property it sells.
  - Requires individual provider profiles to be created and disseminated by the Department of Public Health for APRNs (the requirement already exists for physicians).
- **PRE-K-12**
  - Phases-in a state income tax credit for retired teacher pensions beginning at 10% in 2015, increasing to 25% in 2016, and topping out at 50% in 2017.

- Revises the definition of racial diversity under the interdistrict magnet school law regarding Sheff magnet schools by excluding Asians, Alaskan Natives, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders from minority status.
  - Establishes “Sheff Lighthouse Schools” and funds them for \$750K/year for four years. Specifies that such schools are to be selected through a collaborative process approved by the Hartford BOE and that employees of such schools remain employees of the Hartford Public Schools.
  - Prohibits municipalities from withholding Alliance District funds from local boards of education.
  - Allows Alliance Districts to use Alliance District funds to pay magnet school tuition for students attending magnets operated by a RESC or the Great Path Magnet by Hartford Public Schools.
  - Allocates \$250K for Renzulli Gifted and Talented Academy in Hartford to help meet Sheff goals.
  - Allows SDE to prioritize which magnet schools may increase enrollment and to limit state expenditures on magnet schools for SY 2014-2015.
  - Caps amount SDE may retain of magnet school appropriations for administration and evaluation at \$500K.
  - Allocates \$2,882,368 to priority school districts and allows priority school districts to carry forward any unexpended funds allocated after May 1, 2014.
  - Changes minimum per pupil cost formula local school districts must use to fund local charter schools.
  - Funds Smart Start competitive grant program (see above) with \$10M from the Tobacco Settlement Fund.
  - Requires the Commission on Children to establish a two-generational school readiness plan that would address intergenerational barriers to school readiness and workforce readiness.
  - Allows SDE to develop a financial literacy plan which may be taught to high school seniors.
  - Allows students to take an annual mastery exam in reading, writing and math during any month, not just March or April.
  - Extends the Early Literacy (K-3 Reading) Pilot by one year to July 2015 and extends Commissioner’s reporting deadline to October 2016.
- **HIGHER EDUCATION**
    - Established “CHET Baby Scholars” Program which offers new parents up to \$250 in a tax-free college savings account to encourage families to save for college.
    - “Go Back to Get Ahead” allows students who have not attained an associate’s or bachelor’s degree to return to one of the 17 state colleges and universities to complete their degree. Connecticut residents who have not attended any institution of higher education since June 30, 2014 and return to a Connecticut state college or university to complete a degree may receive up to three non-credit courses for free.
    - Requires the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC) to develop a statewide plan and funding proposal to implement, expand or improve on contextualized learning programs, career certificate programs, middle college programs, early high school programs and requires CETC to report to the Higher Education Committee by January 2015.
    - Establishes three-tiered remedial support program at the CSUs and regional community-technical colleges for eligible students.
  - **PSRPS**
    - Allows municipalities to issue bonds to pay for unfunded past pension obligations and requires the municipalities to contribute the actuarially required contribution to the fund.

- **STATE EMPLOYEES**

- Extends deadline by one year (January 2016) by which the Governor must approve up to five public-private partnerships.

**Contracts/MOUs**

- **HR 9/SR17 Sandy Hook Comp Time** – Approved a stipulated agreement between SEBAC and the state on compensatory time for state employees who responded to the Sandy Hook tragedy in Newtown.
- **HR12/SR22 Medical Examining Board** - Agreement between SEBAC and the state to expand the state medical examining board, adding, among others, a pulmonologist.

**School Construction Grants**

- **New Britain Gaffney School** - \$27.3M in new funds
- **New Haven UNH Science & Engineering** - \$24.M in additional funds
- **Wethersfield Central Administration (Wethersfield HS)** - \$165K in new funds
- **Connecticut Technical High School System**
  - Ansonia Emmett O'Brien - \$16.5M in additional funds
  - Milford Platt - \$66.6M in additional funds
  - Groton Ella Grasso - \$73.4M in additional funds

**Wins for the Movement**

- **HB 5596 Minimum Wage** – Increases the minimum wage from \$8.70 an hour to \$9.15 on January 1, 2015; \$9.60 on January 1, 2016; and \$10.10 on January 1, 2017.

## LOSSES

### AFT CONNECTICUT BILLS/ISSUES

- **SB 62 Promotional Examinations** – Would have allowed DAS to retain promotion exam results for certain state employees. It died in the Appropriations Committee.
- **SB 220 Labor History** – Would have allowed Labor history and the collective bargaining process to be included in public school curriculum. It passed the Senate, but died in the House.
- **SB 224 School Nurse Staffing** – Would have required school districts to have at least one school nurse for every 750 students. It passed the Senate, but died in the House.
- **HB 5066 Charter School Organizing** – Would have allowed charter school teachers seeking to form a union to submit their petition to the State Board of Education rather than the individual charter school board, which often is comprised of direct supervisors. It passed the House, but died in the Senate.
- **HB 5257 Hospital Employee Protections** – Would have guaranteed labor protections to healthcare workers employed by non-profit hospitals undergoing conversion. It died in the House.
- **HB 5384 Hospital Nurse Staffing** – Would have required all hospitals to report actual nurse staffing ratios. It passed the House and died in the Senate, despite support from the Connecticut Hospital Association.

### Other Bills

- **SB 56 and HB 5533 Workers' Compensation Coverage of PTSD** – Would have required workers' compensation to cover workers' diagnosed with PTSD deriving from the witnessing of specific workplace deaths or injuries. A hefty fiscal note and heavy lobbying from CCM and COST killed the bill.
- **SB 222 State Employee Managers** – Would have classified fewer state employees as managers and allowed more state employees to join a union. It died in the Senate.
- **SB 425 SERC** – Passed bill allows the State Education Resource Center to become a quasi-public agency.
- **SB 476 Alliance Districts** – Would have required Alliance Districts to provide full-day Kindergarten and increase the amount of time a student may spend in bilingual education from 30 to 40 months. The bill died in the Senate.
- **HB 5241 Pay It Forward** – A bill requiring a study of a program that would allow post-secondary students to pay no upfront tuition costs but require them to pay a percentage of their gross income upon graduation passed the House but died in the Senate.
- **HB 5280 McWalmart** – Would have made employers ineligible for tax credits, exemptions, abatements, and financial assistance in any calendar year in which executives are paid 50 or more times the average annual compensation of its other employees. It died in the House.
- **HB 5357 Chronic Absenteeism** – Would have required boards of education to create districtwide school attendance review teams to discuss interventions for chronically absent students. The bill passed the House but died in the Senate.
- **HB 5561 Local Charter School Transparency** – Would have required local charter schools to post meeting minutes and agendas on their websites, allowed the education commissioner to randomly pick a local charter school for a financial audit, and allowed local charter schools to enter into cooperative arrangements. It passed the House but died in the Senate.

## **SUMMARY OF SB 35 AS AMENDED BY SENATE "A" AND "B"**

### *AN ACT CONCERNING NOTICE OF ACQUISITIONS, JOINT VENTURES AND AFFILIATIONS OF GROUP MEDICAL PRACTICES*

*SB 35 was originally the Attorney General's bill to regulate the sale of group medical practices. In the last days of the 2014 legislative session, SB 35 also became the vehicle to address hospital conversions. The amended bill now does the following:*

#### **• Group Practice Provisions**

- Requires parties involved in a merger, acquisition, or other transaction governed by the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act to submit to the Connecticut Attorney General (AG) written notification of the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice filing.
- Requires parties of any merger, consolidation, affiliation, stock acquisition, formation of partnership, or change in corporate structure involving a hospital or similar entity or that result in a group practice of eight or more physicians to notify the AG.
- Defines "group practice" as eight or more full-time physicians legally organized in a partnership, professional corporation or LLC formed to render services, medical foundation, non-profit corporation, faculty practice plan or other similar entity.
- Requires group practices to file reports with the AG and Department of Public Health (DPH) that include the names and specialties of practicing physicians; business entities that provide services as part of the group practice; a description of services provided at each location; and the primary service area for each location.
- Requires a Certificate of Need (CON) when ownership of a group practice is transferred to an entity other than a physician or group of physicians unless a sale agreement has been executed before September 1, 2014.
  - Establishes new criteria for reviewing CON applications:
    - Whether the applicant has demonstrated the proposal will not adversely impact the diversity of healthcare providers and patient choice in a geographic region.
    - Whether the applicant has demonstrated that any consolidation resulting from the proposal will not adversely affect healthcare costs or accessibility to care.
    - Establishes a presumption in favor of the CON applicant when the sale of a group medical practice was made in response to an RFP or other similar voluntary practice.
- Requires a public hearing to be held if 25 or more individuals submit a written request on the sale of a group medical practice that was made in response to an RFP or other similar voluntary practice.

#### **• Medical Foundation Provisions**

- Requires that only a member of a medical foundation may appoint or elect members to the board of the foundation.
- Prohibits any employee or representative of a for-profit hospital, for-profit health system or for-profit medical school or entity that owns or controls such from serving on the board of directors of a medical foundation organized by a non-profit hospital, non-profit health system or nonprofit medical school.
- Prohibits any person from serving on the board of directors of a medical foundation organized by a for-profit hospital, for-profit health system or for-profit medical school while serving on a board of directors of a non-profit hospital, non-profit health system or non-profit medical school.
- Requires all medical foundations to provide annual IRS information to OHCA which shall be made available to the public and published on OHCA's website.
- Prohibits a hospital, health system or medical school from organizing or being a member of more than one medical foundation.

- **Hospital Conversion Provisions**

- Expands the current hospital conversion statute to require the purchaser and the non-profit hospital to hold a public hearing on the contents of the CON determination letter in the municipality in which the new hospital is proposed to be located.
  - Requires the purchaser and the non-profit hospital to record and transcribe hearing and provide that information to the AG and DPH.
- Sets new criteria for reviewing CON applications:
  - Whether the applicant has demonstrated the proposal will not adversely impact the diversity of healthcare providers and patient choice in a geographic region
  - Whether the applicant has demonstrated that any consolidation resulting from the proposal will not adversely affect healthcare costs or accessibility to care.
- Allows the AG and the Commissioner of DPH to place *any* conditions on the approval of a CON application for hospital conversion.
- Requires the Commissioner of DPH to deny any hospital conversion application unless the affected community will be assured of continued access to **high quality** and affordable healthcare **after accounting for any proposed change impacting hospital staffing**.

- **Miscellaneous**

- Requires hospitals to ask patients upon admittance if they want their own physician to be notified and do so if requested.