

CEUI & MEUI  
2022



# LEGISLATIVE RECAP



## STATE CONTRACTS

The most important piece of legislation to pass this session was our State Employee contracts. Our negotiating team spent countless hours working together to help enact some of the strongest contract language our members have seen in years, and in an impressive showing of solidarity, our contracts received bipartisan support from our elected officials. This CBA included 2.5% wage increases for the next 3 years, lump sum payments, retro pay from the date our last contract expired, among other exciting benefits to our members.

## PANDEMIC PAY

As our stewards have already been made aware of, pandemic pay for State workers will be determined at a future date through the arbitration process. There is currently \$35 million set aside in the budget for State worker pandemic pay.

## A NEW STATE HOLIDAY: JUNETEENTH

Effective October 1, 2022, Juneteenth will officially be observed as a State holiday. Negotiations will be required for State employee applicability.

# **S.B. 215 – An Act Concerning Engineering, Maintainer and Open Positions at the DOT**

S.B. 215 originally began as a bill focused solely on the recruitment of entry level DOT engineers. As the legislative session moved forward, this bill was amended to include entry level DOT Maintainer positions. House Chair of Transportation Roland Lemar said it best during his floor debate of the bill when he said that “Maintainer 1 and 2 positions are in many ways the heartbeat of the Dept. of Transportation.” It is due largely to this fact, coupled with more than 700 current vacancies for DOT Maintainer 1’s and 2’s here in the state, that this legislation couldn’t have come at a better time.

In collaboration with our Transportation co-chairs, we worked on lobbying House of Representative rank and file members and leadership to make sure the bill was called before the end of the legislative session. Due to all of their efforts we will now see this important bill move on to the Governor’s desk. Once signed, this legislation will put all DOT Maintainer 1 and 2 positions on continuous recruitment through 2025. This legislation will also streamline the hiring processes for these and other positions within the DOT by requiring DAS and the DOT to make job offers within 120 days of receiving an application.

## **STATE CONTRACTING STANDARDS BOARD**

This year’s budget implementer includes \$450,000 to restore funding to the State Contracting Standards Board. The SCSB is tasked with reviewing state contracts to ensure they comply with state law and are using tax dollars efficiently

## **TAX BREAKS**

- 100% pension/annuity income exemption up to \$75,000 for single filers and \$100,000 for joint filers beginning tax year January 1, 2022.
- Car Tax cap at 32.45 mills beginning with assessment year October 1, 2021.
- EITC at 41.5% for tax years commencing on or after January 1, 2023.

# PARAEDUCATORS

Effective July 1, 2022 and annually thereafter, each paraeducator employed by a local or regional board of education shall participate in a program of at least 18 hours of professional development at no cost to its paraeducators.

H.B. 5466 includes language that empowers both the parent/guardian as well as the pupil to request that their paraeducator be present at and participate in Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings.

# INDOOR AIR QUALITY IN SCHOOLS

\$150 million was approved for HVAC improvements and repairs in school buildings over the next two years. In-depth HVAC assessments for all schools shall be completed by certified technicians by 2024 and every 5 years afterward, including identifying needed corrective actions. This special task-force will be in place to identify:

- Optimal humidity and temperature ranges
- School air quality emergency conditions and thresholds warranting temporary school closures – based on the presence of insufficient heat, an excessive combination of indoor temperature and humidity levels, etc.
- Protocols to be used by school districts to receive, investigate, and address complaints or evidence of mold, pest infestation, hazardous odors or chemicals, and poor indoor air-quality;
- Criteria for prioritizing HVAC repair and remediation, including the needs of the students attending a school
- Optimal HVAC system performance benchmarks for minimizing the spread of infectious disease;
- Frequency and uniformity of assessments and inspections
- Best practices for the proper HVSC maintenance
- Prevents districts that have not completed assessments from qualifying for DAS HVAC grant.

## Other Budget Implementer Benefits

- \$1 million for CDL training at the Community Colleges through the Connecticut Career Accelerator Program Account to be Conducted by the Office of Workforce Strategy by July 1, 2023.
- Requires DAS to report monthly during FY 23 on the number of vacancies, new hires, and refused employee offers for each state agency.