



TEXAS STATE EMPLOYEES UNION UPDATE



VOL 36, NO. 3

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA, LOCAL 6186 / AFL-CIO

JULY 2017





DO NOT LET THEM SILENCE OUR VOICE!

On Tuesday, June 6th, Governor Abbott issued a call for a Special Legislative Session to begin July 18th. Among the laundry list of failed legislation that will be on the agenda is "Prohibition of taxpayer dollars to collect union dues." Most state employees and retirees who have voluntarily joined TSEU pay dues through payroll deduction. This is a direct attack on our union and the rights of all state workers and retirees to join TSEU.

Why attack public employee unions? State leaders pushing to privatize state services and convert our pensions to risky 401(k)s want to eliminate resistance to their plans. Members of TSEU and other public sector unions have fought off privatization attempts and efforts to eliminate our pensions. This means lost profits for potential private contractors and others seeking to make money from public services and the Texans who depend on those services. By weakening public employee unions, politicians are opening the door for corporate profiteers and turning their backs on regular Texans.



A DOSE OF REALITY: Taxpayer dollars don't go to collect union dues. Government employers can request reimbursement for the negligible cost of processing the union dues through payroll/annuity deduction. Elected officials are again trying to strip our away our right to join our union through the safest, easiest method while hiding behind weak arguments that are not based on facts or reality.

Don't let them win! TSEU has been preparing for the elimination of payroll deduction since 2015 with our Unbreakable campaign. By pre-authorizing switching your dues to bank draft, you will be doing your part to ensure that Governor Abbott and Lieutenant Governor Patrick can't silence our voices - even if they do pass their bill. Fill out the form on the opposite page of this Update and mail it back. You can also fill out an online version of the form at www.cwa-tseu.org/Unbreakable. If you are currently paying dues through payroll deduction, the switch won't happen until the bill takes effect. After you fill out your form, ask your fellow TSEU members to fill out an Unbreakable form too. If you have questions contact your local TSEU activist, organizer, or call 512-448-4225

Fill out your Unbreakable form today!



Doing my part to make TSEU:



NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____

WORK PHONE _____

CELL PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

AGENCY/UNIVERSITY _____

FACILITY / LOCATION / DEPT _____

If dues deduction from my salary or wages becomes prohibited by law, I authorize Texas State Employees Union / CWA (TSEU) to commence and continue deducting my monthly TSEU dues from the bank or credit union account identified immediately below, in the same monthly dues amount as then on file with TSEU. (initial box at right)

INITIAL

BANK NAME _____

BANK CITY/STATE _____

ROUTING # _____

ACCOUNT # _____

CHECKING [] SAVINGS []

YES, I want to help build our political power by joining CWA COPE. I authorize TSEU to draft the account listed above monthly for the amount that I have indicated and to forward these funds to CWA COPE.

MONTHLY DEDUCTION AMOUNT: COPE CLUB PLATINUM QUORUM TRIPLE QUORUM OTHER

[] \$5.00 [] \$10.00 [] \$20.00 [] \$30.00 [] _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

This authorization is voluntarily made based on my specific understanding that: The signing of this authorization card and the making of contributions to CWA COPE PC are not conditions of membership in the union nor of employment with the company that I may refuse to do so without fear of reprisal.

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UNBREAKABLE





2017 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

The 2017 Texas Legislative Session came to an end on May 29th. Over the previous six months, TSEU was on the frontlines fighting for pay raises, secure benefits, and more funding for state services and higher education every day of the session. And while TSEU members were leading the push to improve the situation for state workers and retirees, we also were fighting against efforts to make our situation worse. This legislative session saw major attempts to privatize Child Protective Services, close State Supported Living Centers, cut financial aid for low income university students, convert our pensions to 401(k)'s, and to eliminate our very right to join a union.

As a union, we took these fights head on. TSEU members participated in over 300 legislative meetings, made thousands of phone calls, and testified in support and opposition to various bills affecting state employees, retirees, services, and higher education.

State Budget Summary

Before the beginning of the 2017 legislative session, the State Comptroller announced a sharp decline in state revenue for the budget. In response, Gov. Gregg Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, and Speaker of the House Joe Straus instructed state agencies and universities to cut their budgets by 4%.

Lawmakers blamed their budget problems on declining state revenue from oil taxes and the state sales tax. But state leaders refused to acknowledge the true source of the problem- the nearly \$10.5 billion in tax cuts to large businesses and the wealthy that the Legislature passed over the last two sessions.

Considering Texas' rapid population growth, increased demand for state services and inflation, the budget that lawmakers approved for spending on services and education over the next two years represents an 8% cut compared with the state's last budget. The budget also directs HHSC to find over \$1 billion in cuts to Medicaid over the next two years. This will make it even harder for state employees to provide health services to the most vulnerable Texans.

Despite the tight budget, lawmakers spent less than \$1 billion of the state's \$10 billion Rainy Day Fund instead of using all of it to avoid cuts. With that Rainy Day Fund money, lawmakers could have actually improved funding for critical state services and education and provided pay raises for state employees. The good news is that a significant portion of the \$1 billion in Rainy Day money lawmakers actually spent will be used for major repairs and reconstruction of State Hospitals and State Supported Living Centers.

While short changing most state services and complaining about a tight budget, lawmakers managed to find money in the budget for the wealthy and big businesses in the form of huge tax cuts. This tax giveaway to the rich comes at the cost of working and middle class Texans who depend on state services and public education. The tax cuts will increase the state's budget hole by about \$3 billion, setting us up for an even tighter budget in the 2019 Legislative Session.



Pay Raises

The final budget did not include an across-the-board pay raise for state and university employees. TSEU members fought for a pay raise throughout the entire legislative process, making it a top priority. At the beginning of the session, TSEU members held a press conference to highlight the fact that over 6,000 state employees and nearly 30,000 children of state employees receive low-income instance because they earn so little from the state.

In response to the voices of state employee union members, Senator Jose Mendez (San Antonio) and Representative Roberto Alonzo (Dallas) filed bills that would create a salary career ladder for all state employees who earn under \$75,000 per year.

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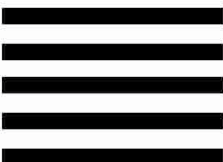


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A hearing was held for the career ladder bill in the House State Affairs Committee. Numerous TSEU members from around the state came to the capitol to testify in support of the bill. However both bills failed to passed.

Pension

Lawmakers fully funded both ERS and TRS pensions in the budget. However, anti-pension legislators and advocates attempted to undermine secure retirement for state employees through various bills. Senator Paul Bettencourt (Houston) filed SB 1751 that would enroll newly hired state and university employees into 401-k style defined contribution plans. SB 1750, also by Bettencourt, would conduct a study on converting our public pension systems into 401-k plans. Senator Joan Huffman (Houston) also filed SB 936 to conduct a conversion study. TSEU members successfully blocked all of these bills. **[VICTORY]**

The State Senate confirmed the nomination of Josh McGee as Chairman of the Pension Review Board (PRB). Josh McGee is currently the Vice President of the John and Laura Arnold Foundation, an organization that aggressively advocates for converting public employees' pension plans into 401-k styled plans. TSEU and other public employee unions were able to delay the nomination of McGee for over a month, but the Senate was able to slip McGee's nomination through during the absence of one of TSEU's allied Senators.

Health Care Benefits

Health care benefits were also fully funded. However, the Senate proposed numerous policy to cut health care costs. Some of the suggested cost-saving policies were productive and supported by TSEU, while other proposals cut costs by increasing out-of-pocket expenses on employees and retirees. Through the action of TSEU, attempts to cut costs off the backs of state employees and retirees were defeated. While cost saving measures supported by TSEU were included in the budget, the most notable is that the state will save money on ERS health care benefits by allowing state employees and retirees to access health care services provided by state-run health institutions (such as university health science centers) at a reduced rate. State agencies will also be allowed to establish on-site health clinics for state employees in an effort to reduce costs on the ERS health benefit plan. TSEU first put this idea forward to the Legislature in the 1980's, and the fact that the Legislature has now adopted it is a major victory for state employee union members. **[VICTORY]**

An amendment in the budget, referred to as a rider, instructs ERS to research and develop options to increase employee participation in Consumer Directed Health Care Plans (CHDPs). CHDP's are high-deductible health care plans that are tied to a Health Savings Account (HSA). They provide a limited amount of funds to cover health care costs. TSEU has opposed these alternative health care plans since they were first proposed in 2003.



Hiring Freeze

At the beginning of the session, Gov. Greg Abbott unexpectedly called for a 7-month hiring freeze in state agencies and universities. This placed pressure on agency and university employees to do even more with less.

TSEU worked with allied legislators and the media to highlight the dangers of the hiring freeze. Shortly after TSEU began mobilizing, the governor removed State Supported Living Centers and State Hospitals from the hiring freeze. TSEU members also defeated House Bill 3362 by Rep. Kyle Biedermann which would have extended the Governor's hiring freeze through August 31st, 2019. **[VICTORY]**

Child Protective Services

Due to the recent crisis and federal lawsuit involving Child Protective Services (CPS), legislators made reforming this agency a priority. Decades before the Legislature prioritized CPS, TSEU members were on the frontlines fighting for pay raises, lower caseloads, and quality services for children.

This session, CPS received \$508.5M in additional funding. Legislators added 597 new staff positions in addition to the 800 staff that were approved in December 2016. TSEU members fought to expand the pay raise we won in December to all DFPS staff, but one was not included in the final budget.

While lawmakers increased resources to CPS they also pushed to privatize and direct those resources to private contractors. TSEU aggressively fought against Senate Bill 11, which sets CPS on the path to privatization. SB 11 privatizes CPS case management as new areas convert to Foster Care Redesign, which is also renamed "Community Based Care." While SB 11 calls for 8 new regions to switch to the Community Based Care model, the budget only includes funding for 5 regions. SB 11 also includes a pilot program for privatizing Family Based Safety Services in 2 regions.

Despite our best efforts, SB 11 passed both the House and Senate and will be signed into law by the Governor. A total of 421 positions would be eliminated, due to privatization, by the end of FY 2019. Thousands more CPS case management positions are under threat if the state continues the privatization push past 2019. This fight is not over!

State Hospitals

All 9 State Hospitals have long been in drastic need of replacement or serious renovation. As a result, the state budget spends \$300 million from the Rainy Day Fund to repair state hospitals. Also, the budget prohibits the privatization of any State Hospitals. And because of pressure from TSEU, a study will be conducted on establishing a salary career ladder to improve employee retention. **[VICTORY]**

State Supported Living Centers

Senate Bill 602 by Sen. Juan Hinojosa (D- South Texas), would have established a special commission to determine which State Supported Living Centers to close. The bill was similar to the SSLC closure bill that was filed and defeated by TSEU in the 2015 legislative session.



Once again TSEU allied with SSLC parent groups to fight this bill. SB 602 passed the Senate by a vote of 24 to 7. After numerous legislative visits, phone calls, and public testimony, the SSLC closure bill was ultimately defeated in the House Human Services Committee near the end of the legislative session. **[VICTORY]**

The budget includes additional funding to repair the SSLC infrastructure while conducting a study on the creation of a salary career ladder to improve employee retention. **[VICTORY]**

TSEU scored another victory through SB 547 by Lois Kolkhorst and a budget rider that allows SSLCs to offer intellectual and developmental disability services to the broader community. This will improve the lives of folks with disabilities in the community and help prevent future closures. This has been a long-term goal for the TSEU State Supported Living Center Caucus. **[VICTORY]**



State Universities

The session started with lawmakers in both chambers discussing a major overhaul of how the state funds institutions of higher education along with major funding cuts. TSEU has long championed reining in skyrocketing tuition in public universities, increasing state funding for higher education, and providing across-the-board pay raises for staff, faculty, and graduate student workers. Although we didn't win fund-

ing for pay increases or tuition reregulation, TSEU members helped defeat the worst of the state's proposed university budget cuts along with bills to create performance-based funding restrictions and eliminate "tuition set-asides" which provide financial assistance for low-income students. **[VICTORY]**

Payroll Dues Deduction

Once again, anti-union interest groups and legislators pushed bills that would eliminate the rights of public employees (except police and firefighters) and retirees to pay union membership dues through our paychecks and annuity checks.

Sen. Joan Huffman (Houston) refiled her payroll deduction bill from last session as SB 13. Rep. Sarah Davis (Houston) filed the companion bill in the House. The bills received major support from Gov. Abbott and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick. SB 13 passed the Senate on a party line vote despite testimony from dozens of public employee union members opposing the bill.

After thousands of phone calls and hundreds of legislative meetings at the Capitol, SB 13 was finally defeated in the House State Affairs Committee.

The fight will now carry over into the Special Legislative Session which will begin on July 18th and could run for as long as 30 days. Governor Abbott has already promised to include eliminating payroll deduction of union dues on the agenda for the special session. Rep. Jason Isaacs (Dripping Springs/San Marcos) and Sen. Bryan Hughes (Northeast Texas) have both pledged to sponsor the legislation.

More details regarding the special session can be found on the back page of this Update.



TSEU members testify against SB 13 this past spring. Those testifying against the bill outnumbered those in favor by a wide margin; despite this, it passed by a vote of 29-11, along party lines.

TSEU PRIORITY BILLS

ALL STATE AGENCIES

- SB 571 by Sen. Jose Menendez (companion HB 1615 By Roberto Alonzo), develops a salary career ladder for state employees making less than \$75,000. FAILED TO PASS
- HB 2657 by Rep. Donna Howard, expands the definition of an "optional holiday" to include any religious holiday. FAILED TO PASS
- HB 2750 by Rep. Gina Hinojosa (companion SB 1060 by Sen. Royce West), provides notice to all public employees regarding the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. FAILED TO PASS
- SB 1055 by Sen. Donald Huffines, abolishes re-employment assistance for laid off state employees. FAILED TO PASS **[VICTORY]**
- HB 3362 by Rep. Kyle Biedermann, Extends governor's hiring freeze to 8/31/19. FAILED TO PASS **[VICTORY]**
- SB 13 by Sen. Joan Huffman (companion HB 510 by Rep. Sarah Davis), takes away the right of state employees and retirees to have union dues deducted from our paychecks/annuity checks. FAILED TO PASS **[VICTORY]**

PENSION BILLS

- HB 265 by Rep. Ana Hernandez and HB 1014 by Rep. Roberto Alonzo, Allows one of three elected seats to the ERS Board of Trustees to be held by a retiree. FAILED TO PASS
- HB 397/HB 398 by Rep. Alma Allen, provides an immediate 10% cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) and a 4% annual COLA to ERS/TRS retirees. FAILED TO PASS
- HB 2218 By Rep. Roberto Alonzo, includes TJJJ employees in the 20-year LECO Special Retirement Fund once ERS is financially sound. FAILED TO PASS
- Defeated attempts to amend HB 2459 by Rep. Dan Flynn that would repeal the guaranteed cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for retirees that was put into law in 2013. **[VICTORY]**
- HB 2810 by Rep. Sergio Munoz, includes overtime pay in the calculation of benefits for members of the ERS. FAILED TO PASS
- HB 3949 by Rep. Roberto Alonzo, increases the number of TRS Board members from 9 to 12, with one seat reserved for a retiree or current employee of a state university or health science center. FAILED TO PASS
- SB 936 by Sen. Joan Huffman and SB 1750 by Sen. Paul Bettencourt, mandates a study of moving new public employees to 401(k) -style defined contribution retirement plans. FAILED TO PASS **[VICTORY]**
- SB 1751 by Sen. Paul Bettencourt, authorizes ERS and TRS to establish 401(k)-style defined contribution retirement plans for newly hired employees. FAILED TO PASS **[VICTORY]**

STATE HOSPITAL BILLS

- HB 435 by Representative Ken King (amended by Senator Kirk Watson), prohibits firearms from being carried on State Hospital premises PASSED **[VICTORY]**
- SB 1923 by Sen. Charles Schwertner, Creates a fund to provide money for infrastructure repairs in state hospitals. FAILED TO PASS

STATE SUPPORTED LIVING CENTER BILLS

- SB 547 by Sen. Lois Kolkhorst (companion HB 3409 by Rep. Stan Lambert), creates a schedule of fees of services provided by an SSLC allowing anyone in the community to access services. PASSED **[VICTORY]**
- SB 602 by Sen. Chuy Hinojosa, develops an SSLC Restructuring Commission to recommend which centers should be closed. FAILED TO PASS **[VICTORY]**

HHSC Commissioner strips workers of rights, protections

TSEU members launch campaign to restore grievance procedure

In May, the Health and Human Services Commission announced eliminating access to the employee grievance procedure for all state workers in HHSC, DADS, DSHS, and DFPS, except those who work at a state hospital or state supported living center. This change reverses the long-established right of state employees to challenge unjust terminations and demotions. Without a grievance procedure, thousands of state workers are vulnerable to being unfairly fired or disciplined with no way to dispute. For all state employees in an HHSC agency (including state hospitals and SSLC's) whose position is ranked at B21 or higher, the new policy makes them entirely "at-will."

While the policy change claims that employees ranked below the B21 classification won't be technically "at-will," stripping away access to the grievance procedure effectively makes them at-will because there will be nothing to stop the agency from firing someone for unjust or fabricated reasons.

What does at-will mean?

At-will means that an employee can be fired for any legal reason, or no reason at all. With at-will, an employee can be simply told "you're fired," without any justification or warning. This opens the door to a whole range of illegal or unethical reasons for termination- as long as the employer doesn't say they are firing you for an illegal reason, they will be allowed to do so.

FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES BILLS

- SB 11 by Sen. Charles Schwertner (companion - HB 6 by Rep. James Frank), expands Community Based Foster care throughout the state and transfers the duties from CPS conservatorship caseworkers to private contractors. PASSED – ONGOING FIGHT
- HB 39 by Rep. Gene Wu, makes several positive changes to CPS such as privacy protections for caseworkers, better criteria for caseload assignments, and a plan for emergency placements. FAILED TO PASS
- HB 482 by Rep. Armando Walle, sets caseloads standards and call processing times for critical CPS positions. FAILED TO PASS
- HB 2401 by Rep. Mary Gonzales, adds a supplemental pay increase of up to 6.8% for bi-lingual DFPS employees in certain positions. FAILED TO PASS
- HB 2717 by Rep. Mary Gonzales, prevents DFPS from authorizing overtime hours for CPS employees unless the agency has the money to pay it. FAILED TO PASS

UNIVERSITY BILLS

- SB 18 by Sen. Kel Seliger, eliminates "tuition set asides"- a source of financial assistance for low-income students. FAILED TO PASS [VICTORY]
- SB 19 by Sen. Kel Seliger, freezes university tuition at current levels for the next three years. FAILED TO PASS
- SB 250 by Sen. Charles Schwertner, bars universities from increasing tuition above the rate of inflation and only with approval of students. FAILED TO PASS
- SB 543 by Sen. Kel Seliger, Requires universities to meet certain "performance" requirements- such as graduation rates- before they can raise tuition levels. FAILED TO PASS [VICTORY]

● All HHSC, DFPS, DSHS (non State Hospital), and DADS (non SSLC)

Job title at level B21 or higher	Completely at-will, can be fired for any or no reason
Job title at level B20 or lower	Must be given termination reason, but no right to challenge it

● All State Supported Living Center and State Hospital

Job title at level B21 or higher	Completely at-will, can be fired for any or no reason
Job title at level B20 or lower	Must be given termination reason; you have full rights to challenge through grievance process

Why is a grievance procedure important?

A grievance procedure provides a fair and transparent way to resolve disputes between employees and their employer. With it, the burden is on the employer to prove why an employee should be disciplined or terminated. If an employee speaks up about illegal or unethical behavior on the part of management, they can be reasonably assured that they will be protected against retaliation. Without it, the door is open for abusive forms of supervision, for retaliation, for arbitrary terminations, and for discrimination. Without a grievance procedure, the employee has no opportunity to challenge whatever justification their employer has given for firing them. State employees are frequently blamed for failing to keep up with unreasonable workloads and expectations. Without a grievance procedure, employees will be scapegoated and fired even more often for problems beyond our control- such as short-staffing.

Why this will hurt state services, state workers, the public

State employee whistleblowers call attention to major abuses of power or actions that cost taxpayers millions of dollars. Without a grievance procedure, whistleblowers will be vulnerable to retaliation from higher-ups who want to punish them for speaking out.

Additionally, taxpayers will see big increases in legal costs in state agencies. Without a grievance procedure to settle employment disputes, terminated employees will have no other option but to sue the state when they feel they have been treated unfairly.

What can we do about it?

- **We can Organize!** Only a strong union can stand up for our rights on the job. We need to sign up our coworkers and get them involved in the fight to reverse this move.
- **We can push lawmakers to take action.** By getting state representatives and state senators to intervene, we can eventually defeat this move. In May TSEU members launched a hand-written letter campaign, explaining to legislators why this is a terrible idea and asked them to contact Commissioner Smith, but we need to continue the pressure. Find who represents you and their contact information at: www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us.



HHSC caucus members at last spring's pre-legislative, statewide meeting in Austin.

TAKE ACTION NOW to protect our pensions!

Anti-pension legislators are pressuring ERS to make a major change in the way it projects the long-term growth of our retirement plans. For the last 30 years, ERS has averaged an 8.3% return on the investments it has made with our retirement money. Based on that, ERS makes projections about how much money it will have to pay out in retirement benefits to state employees. Currently, ERS projects average returns of 8% on its investments over the next 30 years. Although the rate of return on investments has fallen in the last few years, ERS has weathered many downturns in the economy before. That is why having a 30-year average is the best way to make long-term predictions for our retirement fund.



HERE'S WHAT TO DO NOW: Email each of the members of the ERS Board of Trustees (listed below), and ask them to vote against lowering ERS' expected rate of investment returns. Tell them there's no reason to make this change and it will only hurt current and future retirees.

ERS BOARD MEMBERS

- **CRAIG HESTER, Chair**
craig.hester@ers.state.tx.us
(appointed by Tx Supreme Court Chief Justice)
- **DOUG DANZEISER, Vice-chair**
doug.danzeiser@ers.state.tx.us
(appointed by ERS Board to fill elected vacancy)
- **ILESA DANIELS**
ilesa.daniels@ers.state.tx.us
(elected, works in HHSC, TSEU member)
- **CYDNEY DONNELL**
cydney.donnell@ers.state.tx.us
(appointed by Governor)
- **BRIAN RAGLAND**
brian.ragland@ers.state.tx.us
(elected, works in TxDOT)
- **JEANIE WYATT –** jeanie.wyatt@ers.state.tx.us
(appointed by Speaker of the Texas House)

ERS' 8% projection is very important because it plays a big role in determining how financially healthy our pensions seem. A lower expected rate of return means that the ERS pensions will suddenly appear to be in much worse financial health. And, if ERS doesn't appear to be healthy, it will be impossible for current retirees to receive a much-needed cost-of-living increase in our pensions. If ERS looks to be in bad shape, it also makes it easier for lawmakers to justify taking away our pensions and pushing state workers into risky 401(k)-style plans.



Very soon, the Employees Retirement System Board of Trustees will vote on whether or not to lower the assumed rate of return below 8%. If they vote to lower it, the health and well-being of our pension will take a huge step backward, and the door will be open to losing our defined benefit pension plans completely.



Hard-fought ERS board race comes up just short of victory for TSEU

Despite an outpouring of TSEU member support and assistance, Jackie Dickerson, TSEU's candidate for this year's Employees Retirement System Board of Trustees election, was edged out by Catherine Melvin in the race to fill the empty board seat. Jackie received over 10,000 votes which accounted for almost 30% of the total vote (Melvin received 35% of the vote in the four person race). TSEU members congratulate Jackie for her hard work throughout the election; as well, recognition goes out to those TSEU members that played an active role in the campaign; from collecting ballots to posting flyers to getting out the vote! We look forward to winning the NEXT ERS election in 2019!

Jackie Dickerson addresses the crowd at this year's TSEU Lobby Day

TSEU/TRS candidate Charleston awaiting Gov's confirmation

Current TRS Board member Karen Charleston received enough votes from both TRS retirees and active members to be eligible for appointment by the Governor. He can choose any one of the top three vote-getters from the election to fill the seat on the board. With her past experience on the board, along with her vote tally, we hope the clear choice for the Governor would be for Karen. TSEU will keep you informed of any decisions made on this board seat.





TEXAS STATE EMPLOYEES UNION / CWA

1700 South 1st Street, Austin, Texas 78704 / (512) 448-4225 / www.cwa-tseu.org



SECTION A: FOR CURRENT TSEU MEMBERS ONLY

I authorize the Texas State Employees Union/CWA 6186 to commence and continue deducting my monthly TSEU dues from the bank or credit union account identified below, in the same monthly dues amount as then on file with TSEU, in the event that dues deduction from my salary, wages, or annuity becomes prohibited by law. I will inform TSEU of bank account changes or changes in employment status. (initial at right)

INITIAL

SECTION B: EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

NAME (LAST, FIRST, MI)

SOCIAL SECURITY OR EMPLOYEE ID NUMBER

E-MAIL ADDRESS (SUITABLE FOR RECEIVING TSEU CORRESPONDENCE)

HOME STREET ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP

HOME PHONE

()

WORK PHONE

()

CELL PHONE

()

AGENCY / UNIV.

FACILITY / LOCATION

PROG / DEPT / UNIT

JOB TITLE

SHIFT

N U RR ORG: _____

SECTION C: MEMBERSHIP AND AUTHORIZATION

I authorize TSEU to draft my account for my dues each month in the amount indicated until further notice:

- \$16.00 salary below \$20,000
 \$19.00 salary \$20,000-\$25,000
 other - \$_____
- \$22.00 salary \$25,000-\$30,000
 \$25.00 salary over \$30,000
 \$11.00 part time
 \$9.00 retiree

BANK NAME / BANK CITY ACCOUNT NUMBER ROUTING NUMBER

CHECKING SAVINGS

DRAFT BEGINS: MONTH/YEAR _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

[OPTIONAL] I also authorize a voluntary monthly contribution in the amount indicated to CWA-COPE to be withdrawn from the bank account identified above.

COPE participants get a special prize at each contribution level - contact TSEU for details



- \$5.00
 \$10.00
 \$20.00
 \$30.00
 other \$_____

INITIAL

Budget Cuts, Hiring Freeze, Stagnant Pay, Caseload Crisis

Setting the stage for the next tragedy in APS, CCL

While legislators spent much time and energy on Child Protective Services issues, the same problems that led to numerous tragedies in one part of our agency will continue to fester and worsen in Adult Protective Services and Child Care Licensing. Both APS and CCL recently announced that positions would be cut, mostly from vacant positions caused by Gov. Abbott's hiring freeze. This is making a bad situation worse for employees, and putting vulnerable Texans at risk.

It shouldn't take a tragedy to grab headlines before decision-makers in the Capitol take action. During the interim period between legislative sessions, TSEU members will be meeting with legislators across the state to ask them to take emergency action. The Texans we serve have been put at risk by the choices they made, and they need to fix the problems.

Redesign Contract Procurement Cancelled in Region 2

DFPS has cancelled the procurement of a contract for a Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) for Region 2 in West Texas. Earlier this year, the agency was in the final stages of negotiating a contract when a serious conflict

of interest was revealed- DFPS's chief negotiator was married to a member of the contractor's Executive Board. With the passage of Senate Bill 11, Foster Care Redesign was rebranded as Community Based Care, and responsibility of case management will also move to SSCCs if new contracts are signed. The only SSCC currently responsible for placing

children, ACH in Tarrant and 6 surrounding counties, will be renegotiating a new contract to include case management services. No requests for proposals (RFP) have been solicited yet by the agency. The RFP will indicate the next proposed catchment area for Community Based Care and the privatization of case management.



On June 23rd, State Representative Gene Wu (Houston) met with TSEU members at the Murworth DFPS office to discuss what came out of the regular legislative session. Rep. Wu reviewed the significant pieces of legislation impacting DFPS that passed or failed, and answered questions from members. TSEU presented Rep. Wu with a certificate recognizing his work in supporting meaningful changes at DFPS, and his efforts to stop the privatization of CPS services.

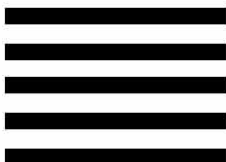
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IN THE
UNITED STATES



SEEKING CANDIDATES!

The TSEU Executive Board

Just by glancing at this UPDATE, you can see the many challenges that are in front of state workers AND union members. We are seeking leaders who will help guide our union through the difficult times ahead. Do you have what it takes? If so, please follow the nominating procedures detailed below and run for a spot on the TSEU Executive Board!

WHAT IS THE TSEU EXECUTIVE BOARD:

The Executive Board (or E-Board, for short) is the governing body for TSEU. It is made up of: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, elected at-large by the statewide membership; and eight Regional members, elected by membership from within that TSEU region. You can contact the Austin TSEU office for region maps or for more information about the Board, specific duties of board members or the election/nomination process.

EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTION TIMELINE

- **Wednesday, September 6:** Nomination deadline
- **Friday, September 22:** TSEU Update published with candidate information
- **Friday, September 29:** Ballots in the mail to members
- **Tuesday, November 14:** Ballot deadline
- **Tuesday - Wednesday, Nov 14 and 15:** TSEU Election Committee counts ballots
- **Thursday, November 16:** runoff ballots out if needed
- **Sunday, December 31:** deadline for runoff ballots if needed

NOMINATING QUALIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURE

- 1. Qualifications to run for an Executive Board seat:**

Must be a member of CWA Local 6186 in good standing.
Must be an employee or retiree from a unit organized by CWA Local 6186; including public and private sector units and multi-employer organizing units, but not associate members.
Those seeking nomination for a regional board seat must work in that region.
- 2. Nominating procedure:**

Those seeking office must send a nominating petition signed by at least five members in good standing. If running for a regional seat, all members signing the petition must be from locations in that region. All signatures must be accompanied by clearly legible printed names. Petition must include the name, work location, and office the nominee is running for. *(There is no form for the petition: it can be on plain paper.)*
- 3. To be included with nominating petition**

A signed statement they will accept the position and serve if elected.
A clear 2"x2" photograph, preferably passport type, suitable for publication
A statement of 100 words or less describing why they are seeking office. The statement will be published as sent, and cut off at 100 words.
- 4. Submitting a nominating petition:**

All nominations must be sent by U. S. Mail to the TSEU election committee post office box. Nominations must be received by 5:00pm on Wednesday, September 6.
Send nominations to:
TSEU Election Committee / P.O. Box 42409 / Austin, TX 78704-0041

TSEU EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Judy Lugo (HHSC-Retired, El Paso) President
- Seth Hutchinson (TSEU Austin) Vice President
- Joanne Day (DSHS, Austin) Secretary
- Anthony Brown (DADS, Houston) Treasurer
- Joe Angulo (UTPA-Retired, Edinburg) Region 1
- Arthur Valdez (DSHS-Retired, San Antonio) Reg. 2
- Yvette Sherman (FPS-Retired, San Angelo) Reg. 3
- Micah Haley (TDCJ, Dallas) Region 4
- Yolanda White (DADS, Lufkin) Region 5
- Debra Coleman (DADS-Retired, Brenham) Reg. 6
- Samm Almaguer (TWC, Houston) Region 7
- Anne Lewis (UT-Austin) Region 8

TSEU STAFF AND OFFICES

CENTRAL TEXAS 512.448-4225

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Austin, TX 78704

- Seth Hutchinson, Organizing Coordinator
- Ron Day, Lead Organizer
- Alex Moir, Organizer
- Jennifer McCaig, Organizer
- Taylor Jones, Organizer
- Tyler Sheldon, Political Organizer
- Debbie Haun, Office Manager
- John Behr, IT
- Rachel Telles, Membership Office
- Chris Knapp, Publications

SOUTH TEXAS 210.354-2900

454 Soledad, Suite R-200

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- Santos Hernandez, Organizer
- Linda Wilson, Organizer
- Mary Mosley, Organizer
- Elias Cantu, Organizer

SOUTHEAST TEXAS 713.661-9030

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- Myko Gedutis, Lead Organizer
- Amy Zachmeyer, Organizer
- Willie Mae Bolar, Organizer
- Michael Young, Organizer

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- Anitra Patterson, Organizer
- Keith Stenson, Organizer
- Michele Goodwin, Organizer

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- Missy Benavidez, Research
- Elias Cantu, Organizer

WEST TEXAS 806.741-0044

2002 Avenue J

Lubbock, TX 79405

- Santos Hernandez, Organizer
- Keith Stenson, Organizer
- Jennifer McCaig, Organizer
- Alex Moir, Organizer

You can always find us online at:

www.cwa-tseu.org

www.facebook.com/CWA.TSEU





TEXAS STATE EMPLOYEES UNION

Communications Workers of America
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WHAT IS A SPECIAL SESSION?

A special session amounts to legislative overtime. If lawmakers reach a stalemate on key issues or if the governor decides the legislative show must go on, he or she can call for a special session.

The premise is similar to that of a regular session — except the governor's the one calling the shots this time. During a regular session, lawmakers can consider bills on any topic; during a special session, if a bill is not on the governor's agenda, it's out of bounds. Another difference is the time — legislators only have 30 days to do their work. And unlike the predictability of a regular session, the governor can call a special session at any time, without any warning. He or she can call the Legislature back for as many special sessions as he or she wants, with each lasting no more than 30 days. This year's special session is set to start July 18th.

Why did Governor Abbott call this special session?

Lt. Governor Dan Patrick and the State Senate he controls purposely failed to pass critical legislation during the regular session to keep the Texas Medical Board from shutting down in September. Patrick did so to draw the spotlight to himself and force Governor Abbott to call a special session on the discriminatory and anti-education bills that Patrick still wants to pass this year. Abbott responded by doubling down and including a whole range of extreme, anti-public service agenda items in order to steal the spotlight back from Patrick.

What will lawmakers debate in the special session?

Lawmakers can file all the bills they want, but the Legislature can only consider bills the governor has put on the call. Other issues may be added by the governor during a session. This year's special session has an ambitious 19-item agenda — including a union-busting bill designed to strip the long established right to join the union of choice by payroll deduction of membership dues

for all public employees (state, city, county, teachers, etc) and retirees in Texas (see page 1 and 2 of this Update for information about payroll deduction and TSEU's Unbreakable campaign).

The other 19 items on the agenda cover a range of topics but largely focus on stripping away the rights of transgender Texans, further tightening budgets for cash-strapped local school districts, privatizing education, cutting taxes for the wealthy and big business, overriding local ordinances, and restricting future funding for state services.

Will committees (and other legislative procedures) still work in the same way?

A special session is essentially a sped-up version of the regular session; bills will be heard fresh, and the hearing process will start all over again. Each bill filed during a special session will be assigned to a committee, which will then hear whatever pieces of legislation the panel decides to bring forward. House bills voted out of committee will go to the Calendars Committee before they can come to the floor a vote, and the same rules apply to get a bill placed on the Senate's intent calendar.

Will Abbott call another special session if lawmakers don't pass all his measures?

While Abbott hasn't said if he plans to keep calling lawmakers back if they don't pass all 20 of his measures, there's no limit on the number of special sessions that can be called between regular legislative session. That's right — if the governor's not satisfied at the end of the 30 days, he can call another session. So, theoretically, Abbott could keep lawmakers in the Capitol until the next regular session. In 1989, Governor Clements kept the houses in for a whopping six special sessions, spanning just under a year.

