



TEXAS STATE EMPLOYEES UNION UPDATE



VOL. 41/NO. 1

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA, LOCAL 6186 / AFL-CIO

JANUARY 2022

When the Going Gets Tough...



The **2022** Presidential address to members
from Judy Lugo

GEARING UP!

CWA-COPE TEXAS TOUR and
2022 ELECTION WORK begins!



ROC Retirees
at the Capitol
Members at
SSLC/SH meet
with Commish

Universities are open and
back on campus, so is TSEU!

OUR SPOTLIGHT STORY:

CWOP issues continue for
DPFS - what's being done,
why it matters and how
YOU can get involved!

...OUR UNION GETS GOING!

When the Going Gets **TOUGH...**

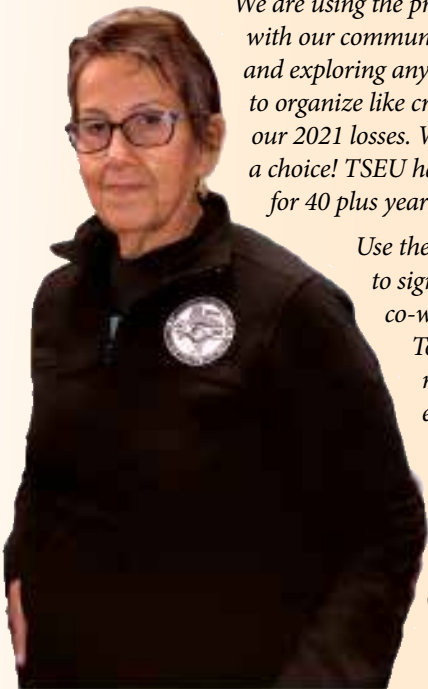
A MESSAGE FROM TSEU PRESIDENT JUDY LUGO

No doubt, 2021 has been quite a difficult year. This started in January with our first and hopefully last Virtual Session of the Texas Legislature. A session in which rules were lax, testimony was limited, and legislators were rushing bills with little to no oversight into law. TSEU fought radical changes to our membership process, and the watering down of pension benefits for workers who come to Texas after September of 2022. In February and March of 2021 we saw legislators make even more changes to policy to make up for the fact that Texas couldn't generate enough power to keep people warm in the winter. TSEU opened our offices to provide charging stations, places to warm up and a center for donations. In April and May, changes in the Capitol were being discussed/proposed to limit voter rights and make it harder to participate in Democracy. Voting rights and redistricting even lead to three Special Sessions, an exodus of State Democrats to DC and ultimately the most gerrymandered political map in the history of Texas.

To say 2021 was tough is an understatement! But despite all the challenges there are thousands of dedicated woman and men fighting back! We have dozens of TSEU members running for office in 2022! We have real mobilizations in CPS, universities and State Supported Living Centers.

We are using the press, working with our community partners and exploring any and all means to organize like crazy to regain our 2021 losses. We don't have a choice! TSEU has fought back for 40 plus years.

Use the form inside to sign up your co-workers today! Together, we can make a difference for Texas state employees and retirees!



As the Omicron variant surges, state employees need Gov Abbott to **STEP UP NOW!**



Ignoring the needs of TSEU members continues to be a health hazard in 2022! Governor Abbott has been implementing an uneven approach to state employees' safety- just like he has for all Texans. Scoring political points among his base of supporters trumps science, safety, and public health. Instead of making decisions to protect Texans, Gov. Abbott has hitched his wagon to those who deride federal guidelines while crying for local control and liberty, only to then limit local decision making in Texas communities. These politically based decisions have resulted in increased infection and exposure to COVID-19 for thousands of state and university employees, and those in our communities.

Covid is not going away. The omicron variant, which doctors say appears to be as contagious as the measles, could wind up sending more people to the hospital than during previous surges — even if it is a milder version of the virus — simply due to the sheer volume of people it's infecting. On New Years Eve, Gov. Abbott asked for help from the Federal Government to get COVID-19 under control.



NOT GOOD ENOUGH!

TSEU calls on the Texas leaders to enact the following:

- No further re-openings of State Offices or Universities should occur until the CDC recommended "Downward trajectory (or near-zero incidence) of documented cases over a 14-day period" is achieved.
- State facilities should train one individual in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) to provide training, answer questions, and administer on-site management of their COVID-19 prevention and response activities.
- The State of Texas must make public the number of COVID-19 infections, and deaths of state employees to assess risk for current workers and potential applicants.
- Official guidelines need to be established for the paid quarantine of a state workers infected with COVID. 4
- Guidelines also need to be established to close infected offices for 24 hours to properly disinfect after confirmed case of COVID.
- HERO PAY must be given to ALL state workers while COVID protocols are in place to stabilize the workforce and prevent additional turnover.

The Texas Tribune
Texas government employees' retirement plans could change
 ...
 If signed into law, new state workers would be required to contribute 6% of their pay to the retirement account, down from the 9.5% required of...
 May 26, 2021



NBC 5 Dallas-Fort Worth
State Workers Cite Stress as Main Reason for Leaving Job During 'Children Without Placement' Crisis
 Child welfare workers say the ongoing crisis of children without ... Another state worker representing the Texas State Employees Union...
 1 month ago



Because our fight IS REAL!

Texas ranks at the bottom among the states in funding for most key state services. We lead the nation in teen pregnancy rates and the number of children without health coverage, just to mention two. Texas state employees have substantially lower pay and higher workloads than employees of most other states. State employees, whether we work in human or health services, criminal justice, employment programs, or higher education, are the front line of these crucial infrastructure services. It will take a strong and growing state employee organization to stop the slide to the bottom and begin to move our state forward.

The Texas Tribune
Omicron in Texas is sidelining even healthcare workers
 Omicron is sidelining even health care workers as it rips through Texas ... in Texas, but some states that saw a surge in COVID-19 cases in...
 17 hours ago



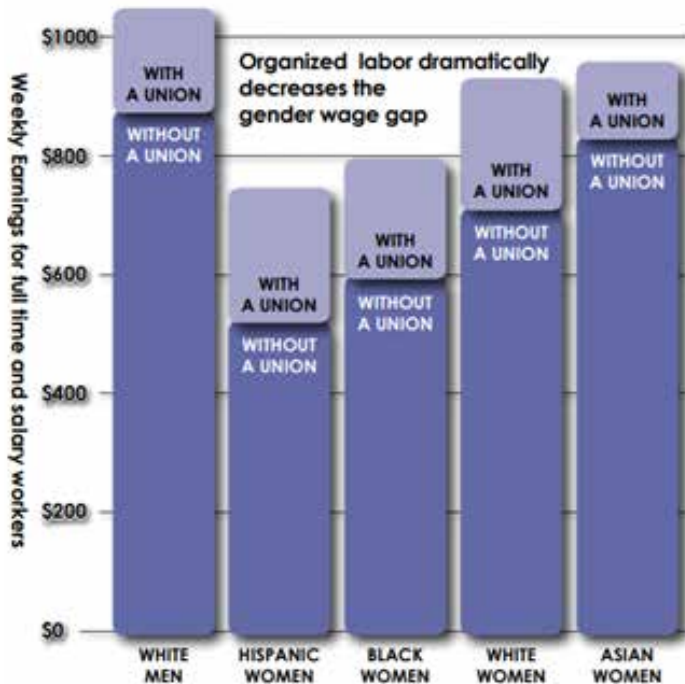
Dallas Morning News
Raises for state employees in new budget? Only for select law enforcement and correctional officers
 Going into the 2015 session, the roughly 250,000 such workers in Texas had hourly wages of \$7.86, he said. Attendants received raises of 14...
 Jun 3, 2021



WHY YOU NEED TO JOIN TSEU

Because no one will save us BUT OURSELVES!

By joining TSEU, you are adding your voice to an organization that has brought major improvements to our jobs and benefits. We're actively fighting for a real pay raise, safety on the job, a secure pension and affordable healthcare. Our strength is in our numbers – we need to show our elected leaders and other state officials that we mean business. Join TSEU, but also GET INVOLVED!



Because when we fight WE WIN!

Here's a brief list of just a few of the things that would have happened if TSEU hadn't been around to stop it.

- **RETIREMENT BENEFITS SAVED!**
 The current defined benefit pension plans administered by ERS and TRS would now be risky, defined contribution 401(k) plans
- **PRIVATIZATION ATTEMPTS STOPPED!**
 Terrell State Hospital along with Kerrville State Hospital would now be operated by private prison corporation GEO Group.
- **CLOSURES THWARTED!**
 The Austin State Supported Living Center and five other SSLC's would be shut down.
- **JOBS SAVED AND PUBLIC OFFICES KEPT OPEN!**
 Local Health and Human Services Eligibility Offices would not be open and 2,000 fewer state employees would work for the agency.
- **UNIVERSITY WORKER HEALTH CARE BENEFITS EXPANDED!**
 Graduate student workers in state universities would have to pay a larger portion of their health care costs.
- **STATE EMPLOYEE HEALTH CARE BENEFITS EXPANDED!**
 State workers and retirees would have to pay the full cost of their dependents' and spouses' health care coverage.
- **PAY AND BENEFITS RESTORED!**
 State employees wouldn't receive any longevity pay
- **RETIREMENT BENEFITS IN TDCJ!**
 Parole officers wouldn't be able to retire after 20 years of service.



SSLC, State Hospitals organize around the Turnover/Pay/Workload **SQUEEZE**

TSEU State Supported Living Center and State Hospital activists are not waiting for the next legislative session! For the last several months, union members across Texas have carried out a massive organizing push. The goal is to push back against forced holdover, low pay and to increase our union's power by signing up new members and getting more current members active.



TSEU E-board member and long-time activist/organizer Arthur Valdez signs up new members at a recent SaSSLC/TSEU information table.

This is despite direct care workers in State Supported Living Centers and Hospitals having to face increasing turnover rates as work expectations climb and pay stagnates. Mandatory overtime, shortages of coverage, work place injuries and approval of leave are also major issues in SSLC's and Hospitals. The union's position is clear that staff should have the right to get paid immediately for all overtime worked, it should be voluntary and if the need for holdovers arises,

there should be a fair system in place so employees know in advance when they may need to stay. Overtime along with the use of contract workers to fill vacancies are very costly to the agency, and that money would be better spent maintaining a fully staffed facility.



TSEU MINI VICTORY!

During November of 2021, TSEU activists met with SSLC Commissioner Shachlin and brought concerns about turnover, holdover and pay. Shortly after, Human Services announced approximately \$13 million to 7,200 staff with an average payout of \$1800. Although this was not considered Hero pay, Human Services seems to be working hard to retain direct care staff. In December 2021, most State Supported Living Centers and Hospitals announced three retention bonuses of up to 5% that will be distributed over the next 18 months.



ROC Caucus not waiting **ANOTHER TWO YEARS** for a Cost of Living Adjustment!

Retired Organizing Committee (ROC) members along with all Texas retirees under the Employees Retirement System (ERS) have not received an increase in their annuities since 2001! Texas does NOT provide automatic cost of living adjustments, or COLA, raises for our active or retired state employees! Retirees have been told over and over again by our elected state officials and their staffs that "it's not your turn" or "we'll take care of you next session". Unfortunately it hasn't been our turn or next session for more than 20 years. The

ERS needs to be fully funded and "actuarially sound" before paying out a pension increase. Under current funding guidelines, that might take more than 30 years before this comes to fruition. The State must fully fund the ERS request to make the pension fund actuarially sound and allocate additional funds to allow ERS retirees to receive a well-deserved and long overdue COLA. In the meantime, there is no reason that a \$2500 bonus cannot be given to present ERS retirees; with the funds coming

from General Revenue. TSEU ROC activists have already begun working on wording for a bill, listing allies, discussing lobbying visits needed and more.

On October 11th, more than 20 TSEU ROC activists from across Texas rallied outside the Governor's Mansion and inside the State Capitol (see picture, next page) to distribute copies of "The TSEU Tattler", a satirical faux newspaper outlining what would happen if Governor Abbott began working FOR the people of Texas! Along with the retirees bonus, the Tattler pointed out other priorities of the State and TSEU and what we would love to see Governor Abbott change his mind on. The action came from a clear sense of frustration from our retirees. As Yolanda Delgado of Austin stated at the Governor's Mansion "we've done everything asked of us, supported legislation, made phone calls, sent emails and letters, testified at committee hearings, lobbied our Representatives and Senators in the State Capitol, and still nothing. Today we're changing our tactics".

We can't let current and future retirees continue without an annual COLA! TEXAS OWES IT TO US FOR OUR SERVICE!

For more information about ROC or to get more involved, contact TSEU/ROC organizer Alex Moir at 512- 448-4225.



University Caucus to build on pre-pandemic gains, mobilizes against more attacks on higher education



The TSEU University Caucus has been especially busy in 2021. In addition to statewide pay raises, university organizing committees across the state have been pushing for COVID protections—including hazard pay for all university workers—and fighting right-wing attacks on public higher education.

- In August, **the UT-Austin Organizing Committee** rallied to demand increased COVID protections on campus. We presented our petition with nearly 400 signatures to President Hartzell demanding mandatory vaccinations and masks, frequent testing, and hazard pay for all university workers. Speaking at the event were Austin City Council members Greg Casar and Kathie Tovo; civil rights attorney Mike Siegel; UT Physician and Public Health Advocate Dr. Snehal Patel; and Central Texas TSEU Board member Anne Lewis. When President Hartzell failed to respond to our demands, over 50 picketers showed up at his September inauguration to talk to the crowd about our union's fight for justice for all UT workers and students.
- The organizing committees at **UT-San Antonio** and the **UT Health Science Center in San Antonio** have also been active. Both campaigns have grown our movement significantly since

the end of the legislative session, spurred largely by the pressing need for across-the-board raises—some full-time workers at UTSA and UTHSC make just over \$20,000 a year.

- Campaigns at **UT-El Paso**, **Sul Ross State University**, **Texas A&M-College Station**, and **Texas A&M-Commerce** have also seen recent growth. We now have organizing committees at nearly every public university in Texas.

On all of our campaigns we've made the university systems' respective Boards of Regents targets. Regents, who are appointed by the Governor, decide the budgets of the six state university systems. When the state legislature deregulated tuition in 2003, it gave regents the sole power to set tuition rates and give university-wide pay raises, which no board of regents has done to date. That is why our Caucus organizes simultaneously to hold the Regents feet to the fire—testifying at Board meetings, massive call and e-mail campaigns—and for the Legislature to re-regulate public tuition.

LIKE OUR UNION, OUR CAUCUS IS AS STRONG AS WE MAKE IT!

To get involved in organizing at your campus or becoming more active in TSEU's University Caucus, please contact TSEU/University organizer Sol Weiner: sweiner@cwa-tseu.org

TSEU MINI VICTORY!

Texas A&M University Systems announced a Tuition and Fee Hearing for the Commerce campus to be held on October 14, 2021, at the Sam Rayburn Student Center. TSEU members fought back against any increase in tuition and fees. Activist members Brian McShane and Rachel McShane organized a campus wide leaflet event asking students and staff to sign Action Network emails to the campus president and Board of Regents requesting that Tuition and fees remain the same for the 21-22 school year. There were 385 letters sent by the time of the public hearings.



[LEFT] ROC Caucus members at their October 11 Capitol rally
[MIDDLE] North Texas organizing (see more on back cover)
[RIGHT] University members at September demonstration



CHAOS in DFPS



Ripped from the headlines:

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Texas lags Okla. on foster care reform

By Edward McKinley
STAFF WRITER

The foster care systems of Oklahoma and Texas have a lot in common: Both states faced court monitoring over unsafe conditions in the homes in which foster children were placed, and each had high percentages of facilities with records of maltreatment and abuse.

In both states, cleanups spurred by lawsuits led to the closure of a number of those facilities — about 25 percent were shut down in

Texas and nearly 40 percent in Oklahoma were closed.

But while Texas now has a lack of beds that has left hundreds of kids sleeping in office buildings and motels, supervised by unlicensed caretakers, Oklahoma has avoided those problems.

Oklahoma more than doubled its funding for the foster care system from 2008 to 2018, and it is now thriving, making progress in all 30 metrics identified by court-appointed monitors.

Foster care continues on A-1

Metro
The Dallas Morning News

Workers tell of 'utter chaos'

At a forum, employees describe their struggle with the capacity crisis

By JAMES LAMBERT
STAFF WRITER

Days without sleep, 24 hours of weekly overtime, 10 missed meals, "complete and utter chaos" — these are the working conditions described by Texas Department of Family and Protective Services employees and foster care workers.

Attendance at a news hall this early in Dallas should increase with each day, and long lines of people waiting to get into the building to attend the press conference, which was held at the Texas State Employees Union only several hours after the opening of the field.

Despite a decade-old federal lawsuit over conditions in Texas foster care, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, which oversees the state's foster care system, is still struggling to find a way to address the growing number of children without placement, or CWOPs. The meeting, held at the Dallas County Courthouse, was held to address the Texas State Employees Union's recent lawsuit over the conditions in the state's foster care system.

Attendees at a news hall this early in Dallas should increase with each day, and long lines of people waiting to get into the building to attend the press conference, which was held at the Texas State Employees Union only several hours after the opening of the field.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Foster care employees describe work pressures

Employees at a news hall describe their struggle with the capacity crisis

By JAMES LAMBERT
STAFF WRITER

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HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Foster care crisis imperils kids, staff

By Edward McKinley and Cathy Harris
STAFF WRITERS

As a panel of experts prepared to recommend steps to the Texas State Employees Union, state workers in Dallas and Houston have been a long way from the state's foster care system. In the past year, the state has closed 25 percent of its foster care facilities, leaving hundreds of children in temporary, unlicensed facilities — often in motels, hotels, or churches — for significant periods of time.

State workers at a news hall this early in Dallas should increase with each day, and long lines of people waiting to get into the building to attend the press conference, which was held at the Texas State Employees Union only several hours after the opening of the field.

Everyday, DFPS staff - case workers, human service techs, supervisors, and administrative assistants - are in motels, hotels, and apartments to watch foster children without placement (CWOP). These foster children, mainly teenagers, are in the temporary or permanent custody of the state of Texas. Many have complex behavioral, psychiatric, and therapeutic needs that are going unmet or being refused by the children. In these unstructured, ad hoc placements, traumatized children in care are deciding whether they will go to school or not, whether they will take their medications or not, and whether they want to stay put or leave to engage in any number of dangerous behaviors - including prostitution, drug use, and armed robbery.

The combination of untrained staff working countless extra shifts, unstructured environments free of consequences, and traumatized children calling the shots has bred chaos. Numerous assaults on staff, other children, and law enforcement have already occurred. Youth have destroyed personal property of staff, DFPS property, and property at hotels, motels, apartments, and church halls serving as unlicensed placements.

Here, we'll explain how Texas leaders created this disaster, what solutions members are proposing to end the crisis, and what we can do to sound the alarm with decision makers.

Years of inaction, privatization push, and appeals set the course

For decades, internal and external reports, studies, and reviews have documented the systemic failure of DFPS to meet the needs of children in the foster care system. Countless recommendations to address the systemic issues in the agency were answered with half-measure legislative proposals. A growing population with more complex needs pushed caseloads higher, stretching resources thinner despite additional positions funded by legislators. Instead of state leaders directly addressing the systemic issues, privatization of the foster care system was touted as the fix. Privatization fit neatly into the anti-government ideology of state leadership while also allowing Texas to escape accountability. Firing a contractor and blaming them for failing is easier than addressing decades-old systemic issues that have plagued the state's child welfare system.

By 2010, Children's Rights, an advocacy organization that had successfully sued numerous state and county child welfare systems to enact reforms, was exploring taking Texas to court on behalf of children in the foster care system. During the 2011 Legislative session, Children's Rights filed their class action lawsuit in Federal court. Legislators passed Senate Bill 218 just weeks

later, which set the privatized Foster Care Redesign model (now called Community Based Care) into motion. Unlikely earlier attempts to privatize that received intense legislative scrutiny, the possibility of Federal judicial oversight tamped down skepticism. Private contractors would come to be funded well beyond the "legacy" foster care system in non-privatized regions of Texas. This year's long tunnel vision focus on privatization as the cure-all for the foster care system helped lead to the CWOP crisis.

While pushing privatization of the foster care system and propping up contractors, state leaders were simultaneously fighting the ongoing Federal lawsuit at every turn. From legal wrangling over the certification of foster children in the class-action lawsuit, to defending the flawed system in court and arguing foster children needed nothing more than meals and beds, to eventually appealing the Federal court's ruling and remedial plans, state leaders spent 10 years trying to defeat the lawsuit and overturn the ruling. The lax oversight of Residential Treatment Centers (RTCs), which was detailed in the 2014 trial and 2015 ruling from Judge Jack, persisted all the while. Many of the foster children without placement would have been placed at RTCs.



TSEU members across Texas sound the alarm

During the CWOP crisis, TSEU members have been holding regular statewide meetings to share information, ideas, and updates from all corners of Texas. The bottom line is the concern for the well-being of children and staff is what unites us.

[TOP ROW L-R] On October 6th, TSEU members in Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, and Austin (not pictured) held simultaneous press conference and rallies outside of regional DFPS offices to draw attention to the CWOP crisis.

[MIDDLE RIGHT AND LOWER RIGHT] Since state leaders have failed to address the needs of children and staff, TSEU members decided to turn to local stakeholders to seek their help. In Dallas and Houston, members held town hall meetings in December with local officials and community members that interact with children in the foster care system. These town halls were forums for members to share their experiences and discuss solutions with local officials. The meetings were eye-openers to many officials who had no idea how chaotic and dangerous our work has become.

A town hall is planned for February in San Antonio, and members in other parts of the state are planning meetings with local officials as well.



In 2020, court appointed monitors and DFPS agreed upon a system of “Heightened Monitoring” to deal with foster care facilities with lengthy histories of abuse and neglect violations. As a result of this increased scrutiny, unsafe facilities began closing voluntarily or losing their licenses. Roughly 25% of capacity was lost as these facilities closed. The closure of these unsafe facilities and the resulting loss of capacity didn’t strike out of the blue, but state leaders and DFPS were completely unprepared to handle the consequences.

Oklahoma, facing a nearly identical situation as Texas, took steps to build capacity after state leaders recognized that about 40% of their foster care capacity would be lost due to unsafe facilities being shut down. Had DFPS and elected leaders in Texas worked to expand capacity to compensate for the closure of unsafe facilities, the ongoing CWOP crisis could have been avoided.

How does Texas get out of this crisis?

TSEU members are calling on state leaders and DFPS to immediately start hiring and training DFPS staff specifically to provide care for children without placements in safe, licensed facilities. Children in care need stability and predictability, not a constantly rotating carousel of different staff every 4, 6, or 8 hours.

Legislators approved \$90 million earlier this year to address the capacity crisis, with \$20 million dedicated to expanding capacity for step-down or sub-acute care facilities for children released from psychiatric hospitals. DFPS staff and the children and families we serve can’t wait for this capacity to eventually expand. We need state leaders to take action immediately to address this crisis instead of hoping providers will step up sometime in the future

What’s next

In January, an expert panel will provide voluntary recommendations to DFPS to address the CWOP crisis. DFPS and Gov. Abbott would then have a month to decide whether to enact any of the voluntary recommendations or not. Today, Texas is failing DFPS staff, foster children, and every family and child we serve because of the strain CWOP is placing on the workforce. As more dedicated employees leave the agency, the stress on employees will only increase.

We need state leaders to act now! We need local officials, legislators, stakeholders, and community members to step up and demand Gov. Abbott and DFPS immediately start hiring and training staff to specifically care for children without placements in licensed facilities.

BUILD OUR VOICE AT DFPS!

TSEU members are acting urgently to sound the alarm and push for immediate solutions to this unrelenting crisis. Our voice needs to be louder and stronger. Coworkers who haven't joined yet need to join their union today (use the membership form inside this Update). We are asking all TSEU members in DFPS to get involved in organizing for change. Hoping the CWOP crisis ends or just complaining about it doesn't make a difference- A BIGGER STRONGER UNION DOES!

DFPS WEEK OF ACTION | FEB 7-11

During the Week of Action, we will be coordinating DFPS organizing events across Texas to grow TSEU in the agency.

Whether it's the ongoing CWOP crisis, stagnant pay, or the threat of privatization, employees are facing many issues that must be addressed. Get involved in planning an event at your office or region, and let us turn TxDFPS into a TSEU-STRONG agency!





WHY JOIN CWA-COPE? WHY CARE about House Races?

Politics is important to all of us but to state workers in particular, since government funds and regulates all aspects of our work-life. Every issue that affects us can be decided by an elected leader or by someone appointed by an elected leader; and these elected officials can help us in changing our own workplaces. This is why it is vital that TSEU members contribute to candidates and issue campaigns that affect our work.

TSEU is nonpartisan and only cares about the issues directly influencing state and university workers. As a union, the only way we can influence state elections and elected leaders is through voluntary monthly COPE donations from our members - and the more members contributing, the more influence we have.

Over the last several years it has become more and more clear that election outcomes have consequences. In the past



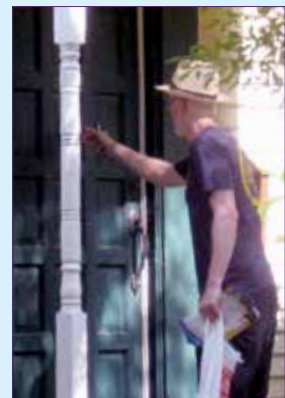
it was easy to stand on the sidelines and believe that who got elected wouldn't directly impact your life or career. Use this increased awareness to get your co-workers to join COPE. As a COPE member you have a chance to elect your boss. **BUILD THAT POWER!**

TSEU Texas COPE Tour & UPCOMING POLITICAL WORK

GET INVOLVED!

TSEU's Texas COPE Tour is a series of events designed to build on our political influence coming out of the 87th Texas Legislature. Having faced one of our most difficult legislative sessions, it is critical that we elect more pro-state employee / pro-state services lawmakers. At tour stops, TSEU Legislative Director Tyler Sheldon will give a review of the last legislative session and will discuss plans to strengthen our political muscle for the upcoming 2022 elections and onto the 88th Texas Legislature in 2023.

COPE TOUR / POLITICAL WORK ▶▶▶▶



TSEU participates in a CWA Beto Town Hall event

Over 100 CWA members gathered on December 9th, to hear from candidate for Texas Governor, Beto O'Rourke. Members first heard from District 6 Vice President Claude Cummings about the importance of the 2022 Governor's race for CWA members and for all working people across the state of Texas.

Vice President Cummings then introduced Beto O'Rourke who addressed our members and spoke concretely about what changes he would make if he were to win the race for Texas Governor. Some of the priorities he discussed included expanding Medicaid in Texas and making it easier, not harder, to organize a union; and funding state worker pensions, rather than cutting benefits. He also emphasized the importance of voting rights and spoke out against anti-voting rights legislation that specifically targets communities of color, making it harder to vote.

Beto also took questions from Arthur Valdez, TSEU board member in San Antonio who asked Beto to support pay raises and improved benefits for state employees. Beto answered 'yes' and spoke passionately about the need for Texas to take care of its workers. At the end of the evening, members participated in a poll about who they would vote for if the race for Texas governor were held today. Brothers and Sisters, the results were a resounding victory for Mr. O'Rourke, who won the poll 100% to 0%.



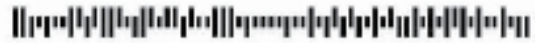


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----- FOLD IN THIRDS - SEAL WITH TAPE - SEND IT IN! -----

- ▶ JANUARY 2022
 - All Events postponed due to COVID-19
- FEBRUARY 2022
 - Block Walks: every Saturday
 - Phone Banks: every Tuesday and Thursday
 - Virtual COPE Meetings:
 - Austin Monday, February 7 / 6:00PM
 - San Antonio and South Texas Tuesday, February 1 / 6:00PM
 - Houston Wednesday, February 2 / 6:00PM
 - El Paso Wed, Feb 2 / 7:00PM CST (6PM MST)
 - Dallas/North Texas Thur, Feb 3 / 6:00PM

Limited supplies are still available.
**GET YOUR TSEU, MASKED, FULLY VACCINATED,
UNION STRONG T-SHIRT TODAY!**



THE COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION

I want to build our political power by joining COPE!



I authorize TSEU to draft my account monthly for the amount that I have indicated and to forward these funds to CWA COPE.

HELP MAKE SURE OUR UNION IS UNBREAKABLE!

If dues deduction from my salary/wages becomes prohibited by law, I hereby authorize TSEU to commence and continue deducting monthly TSEU dues from the bank or credit union account identified here, in the same monthly dues amount as then on file with TSEU.

INITIAL

NAME _____ SOCIAL SECURITY # _____

MAILING ADDRESS (STREET/PO BOX, CITY, STATE, ZIP) _____

(_____) HOME PHONE _____ (_____) WORK PHONE _____

EMAIL _____ AGENCY, UNIVERSITY, ORGANIZATION _____

MONTHLY DEDUCTION (CHECK ONE):
COPE CLUB [] \$5.00 [] \$10.00 [] \$20.00 [] \$30.00 []
[] I'm using this form to make my union UNBREAKABLE

BANK NAME _____ BANK ADDRESS _____

ROUTING # _____ ACCOUNT # _____

DRAFT FROM (CHECK ONE) [] CHECKING [] SAVINGS DRAFT BEGINS MONTH OF _____, 20____

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.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____



TEXAS STATE EMPLOYEES UNION / CWA

1700 South 1st Street, Austin, Texas 78704 (512) 448-4225



T.I.N. No. 15102561097-001

SECTION A: AGENCY USE ONLY			
AGENCY NAME	AGENCY#	UNIT#	FIRST ACTIVE DUTY DATE

SECTION B: EMPLOYEE INFORMATION		
SOCIAL SECURITY #	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MI)	
EMPLOYEE ID #	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	WORK HOURS



N UPG RR ORG: _____

SECTION C: MEMBERSHIP AND AUTHORIZATION	
<p>Membership dues and effective date of payroll deduction: the 1st day of _____, 20____ (MONTH)</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> \$17.00 salary below \$20,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$21.00 salary \$20,000-\$25,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 salary \$25,000-\$30,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$28.00 salary \$30,000-\$40,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 salary \$40,000-\$50,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$32.00 salary over \$50,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$13.00 part time <input type="checkbox"/> other - \$ _____ </p> <p><i>AUTHORIZATION: I understand that I cannot be compelled to be a member of a state employee organization or to pay dues to a state employee organization as a condition of employment with the state. While I am free to join a state employee organization, I understand that I may change or cancel this authorization at any time by providing written notice to my employer. I voluntarily authorize a monthly payroll deduction in the amount shown above from my salary or wages for membership fees to the state employee organization listed above and agree to comply with the comptroller's rules concerning this deduction. I agree that my name, social security number, personal contact information, and the amount of my payroll deduction for membership fees may be provided to the state employee organization listed above only for the purpose of informing the state employee organization about the payroll deduction.</i></p> <p>SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____</p> <p><i>I agree to comply with the rules adopted by the Comptroller concerning deductions for dues and will submit this application to HR to establish the deduction and provide a copy to TSEU.</i></p>	

TSEU MEMBER-ONLY BENEFITS

Build an unbreakable state employee movement while enjoying these member benefits!

Carry the card that works as hard as you!



Multiple credit card options

Whether you prefer cash rewards or a low intro APR, all of these credit cards have competitive rates, U.S.-based phone customer service and more.



American Income Life, special member benefit

Members receive benefits for accidental death or loss of limb: \$3000 member, \$500 spouse, \$250 child. Additional insurance is available to TSEU members at a reduced rate.

Benefits offered through UnionPlus

DISCOUNTS

- AT&T
- Consumer Reports Digital
- Flower and Gift Discounts

HOUSE AND HOME

- Mortgage Program
- Real Estate Rewards
- Save My Home Hotline
- Moving Discounts

HEALTH

- Dental, Vision Discounts
- Prescription Discounts
- Medical Bill Negotiation
- Health Discounts

AUTO PROGRAMS

- Auto Buying Service
- Goodyear Tire & Service
- Motor Club

MONEY AND CREDIT

- Credit Card
- Credit Counseling

ENTERTAINMENT AND TRAVEL

- Car and Truck Rentals
- Entertainment Discounts
- Travel Center

LEGAL AND EDUCATION

- Legal Service
- Scholarships

INSURANCE DEALS

- Auto, Home Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Accidental Death Insurance
- Pet Insurance

Information about these and other TSEU member-only benefits can be found by calling your nearest TSEU office or organizer or our main office in Austin at (512) 448-4225.

Educational scholarships

Union Plus Scholarship Program

All members, their spouses and dependent children may apply. At least one year of continuous union membership is required. Applications are available starting mid-June and are due in January of the following year.

CWA Joe Beirne Foundation Scholarship

Eligible for the awards are members and their spouses, children and grandchildren. Applications are accepted during the months of November through April.

Texas AFL-CIO Scholarship

Members or high school children of members are eligible. This application requires validation by the Austin TSEU office. Applications accepted Nov-Jan.



AT&T

Exclusive wireless savings

Members can save 15% on the monthly service charge of qualified wireless plans and 20% on select accessories from AT&T.

Union Strength, Union Solidarity

AT&T employs over 150,000 members of the Communications Workers of America.



TSEU EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Judy Lugo (HHSC, El Paso, retired) President
 Joe Montemayor (TSEU Austin/DFW) Vice President
 Joanne Day (DSHS, Austin) Secretary
 Samm Almaguer (TWC, Houston) Treasurer
 Albert Zepeda (HHSC Brownsville) Region 1
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 Yolanda White (HHSC, Lufkin SSLC) Region 5
 Ilesa Daniels (HHSC, Houston) Region 6
 Freddie Greer (HHSC, Mexia SSLC) Reg. 7
 Anne Lewis (UT-Austin) Region 8

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Francisco Santillan, Organizer



ROC STARS: Activist members of the Retiree Organizing Committee (ROC) are known as our ROC STARS; who despite no longer working at state agencies or universities, they continue fighting and building a stronger union in retirement!

TSEU recognizes R.O.C. Star **LINDA WILSON**



Linda Wilson is a long time Civil Rights and Children's Advocate participating in the San Antonio ROC Caucus. She joined TSEU while working at the San Antonio State Supported living center, and kept her membership while transferring to the Department of Child Protective Services. As a retiree, she has kept her passion for activism and social justice alive by working as a TSEU Organizer and then becoming a volunteer for CASA in February of 2018. Over the past several months, Linda has been leading the fight in San Antonio to advocate for the Children Without Placement Crisis effecting the State (see more on pp 5-6). TSEU is proud of her work and recognizes her as a TSEU ROC Star.

Find us online at: www.cwa-tseu.org
 OR facebook.com/CWA.TSEU



TEXAS STATE EMPLOYEES UNION

Communications Workers of America
1700 South 1st Street
Austin, TX 78704

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TSEU SPOTLIGHT ORGANIZING



North Texas area State Hospital and SSLC organizing **BLITZ**

TSEU's North Texas Organizing Team enjoyed a week of teamwork as they held hot dog cookouts at three area State Hospital/Schools last Fall. Kicking off the week at **Terrell State Hospital** on a Monday, moving over to **Denton State School** on Wednesday, and ending the week at **North Texas State Hospital** in Wichita Falls on Friday; everyone enjoyed the union fellowship, which has been sorely missed during the ongoing pandemic.

During the week-long blitz, 37 new members signed up to join TSEU in the struggle for better wages, benefits and working conditions!

