

The 93 Beacon

SPRING 2025

We Make Northern New England Happen!



WHEN WE FIGHT, WE WIN!

Council 93 Stops Closure of State Hospitals and Privatization in Brookline Saving Hundreds of Union Jobs!



AFSCME Council 93 and a coalition of labor, community, providers, and families rally at the Massachusetts State House on February 25th to advocate for investments in public health (left). Local 1358 and other Council 93 locals and leaders celebrate outside Brookline Townhall after a proposal to privatize custodial services was defeated on March 20th.

Boston, MA- Council 93 and a coalition of other unions have successfully pushed back against Governor Maura Healey's proposed budget cuts that included closing the Pappas Rehabilitation Hospital for Children and the Pocasset Mental Health Center. The decision to pause the closures was met with relief and celebration from union leaders, healthcare workers, and families who depend on these essential services.

Nancy Silva, President of AFSCME Local 1517, which represents over 115 workers at Pappas, expressed gratitude for the Governor's decision but emphasized that the fight is far from over. "Keeping Pappas open is a step in the right (State Hospitals pg. 5)

Brookline, MA- In a resounding victory, AFSCME Local 1358 members successfully thwarted the Brookline School Committee's efforts to privatize nearly 100 jobs, ensuring that dedicated school custodians and food service employees remain public employees. The victory, achieved through a strong coalition of labor unions, community support, and direct worker action, highlights the power of AFSCME Council 93 in standing up for essential public services.

The Committee's plan would have partially outsourced custodial and food services jobs to private contractors in an attempt to close a budget deficit. Council 93 presented evidence that any (Brookline pg. 3)

Council 93 Hosts Virtual Townhall to Fight for Public Services

Boston, MA- In the face of the new administration slashing federal budgets and laying off tens of thousands of public service workers, Council 93 and the AFSCME International Union, held a Virtual Townhall on April 1st as part of AFSCME's Get Organized campaign to fight for the vital public services our members provide for their communities.

The Townhall, attended by hundreds of Council 93 activists, highlighted the impact the administration's actions will have on state and local budgets and how we can mobilize, organize, and advocate for public services.

AFSCME International President Lee Saunders was blunt in his remarks, "Sugarcoating is best left for doughnuts. The billionaires and anti-union extremists in this administration are coming for you. They are coming for your jobs, they are coming for your benefits, they are coming for your rights." Saunders noted that AFSCME is fighting back, signing up over 32,000 new members, 3,000 retirees, and raising over \$1.6 million for PEOPLE, our political action committee. "This fight will be won by union members rising up and making their voices heard," Saunders said.

In Council 93's four state region, nearly 40% of state budgets rely on funding from the federal budget. Federal money funds mental healthcare, higher education, research, health and safety standards, homecare providers, corrections, and many more vital programs that AFSCME members provide to their communities.

A panel from the International's Legal, Government Affairs, and Research and Collective Bargaining Departments laid out what the administration's actions mean for members not only in our region, but across the country. If the new administration gets its way and guts federal

programs like Medicaid, it will directly impact our jobs, cut pay, benefits, and staffing levels, as well as implementing potential furloughs and layoffs. And it will most undoubtedly hurt our next round of contract negotiations.

As Council 93 President Christopher 'Tiger' Stockbridge noted during the Townhall, "AFSCME doesn't back down from a fight. We don't sit back and wait for someone to fight for us, we fight for ourselves and our union brothers and sisters- like we did in Duxbury, and at Pappas and Pocasset, and in Brookline, and anywhere else where our jobs are threatened. But we can't fight alone- participation is key."

We are under attack by billionaires and anti-union extremists who want to destroy the public services we provide and roll back laws that protect our health and safety at work, our job security – even the freedom to join a union. AFSCME is not going to let that happen. It is our hard work – not corporate greed – that makes our communities stronger.

“

We're counting on you now more than ever.

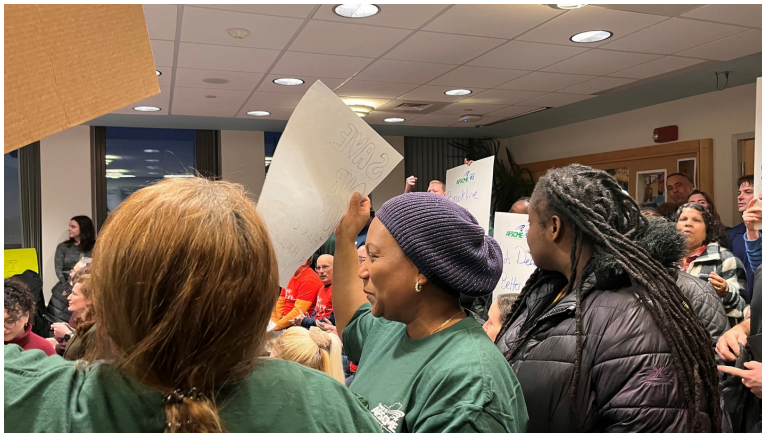
-Mark Bernard

Council 93 Executive Director Mark Bernard closed out the event by asking members to get engaged in the fight. "We're counting on you now more than ever. We have trying and troubling times ahead, but working and fighting together, we will make it through and beyond these next four years, and we will emerge stronger than ever."

Check out afscmego.org to find out how you can get involved today!

Brookline

(Continued from pg. 1)



Local 1358 Members at a Brookline School Committee Meeting

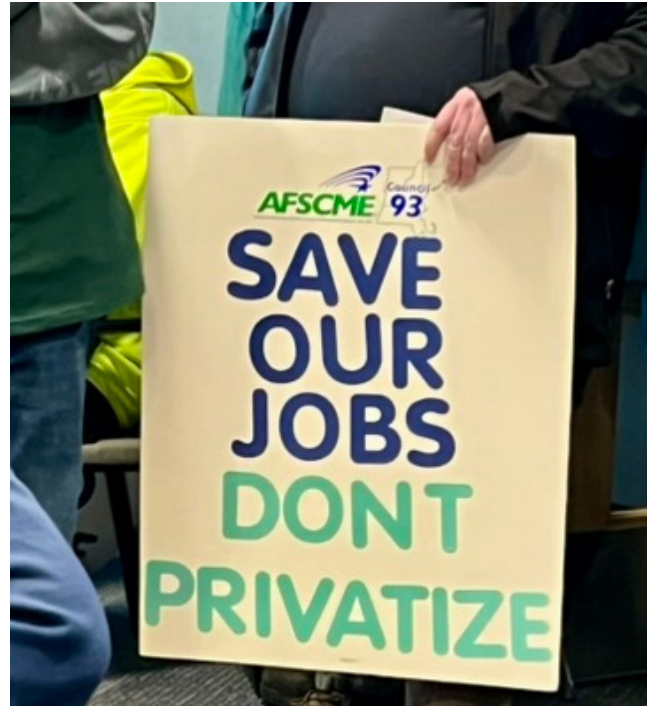
savings would be temporary at best, while disrupting the lives of dozens of workers, diminishing service quality, and losing the trust that the members of Local 1358 provide the Brookline School community.

The proposed privatization effort threatened the livelihoods of long-time employees, many of whom have deep roots in the community. Jim Mellett, Vice President of Local 1358 and a school custodian since 1988, was one of the key voices in the fight. "I've always tried to make whichever building I'm working at better than it was yesterday," he said. "You won't get that from a private contractor."

When news of the proposed cuts broke in late February, Local 1358 quickly jumped into action, enlisting Council 93's Membership Mobilization, Political and Legislative, and Field Services Departments for assistance and expertise in countering the School Committee's proposed cuts. In a flurry of activity over a few short weeks Local 1358 members, other AFSCME Locals, Council 93 staff, and union and community supporters were a constant presence at School Committee meetings speaking out to educate the community on the pitfalls of privatization. A robust outreach campaign generated over 300 emails, letters, and calls to School Committee members in support of the workers.

"Spreading the word and getting the public involved in the process, along with support from other unions, really made the difference," Mellett explained. "But what put it over the top was workers showing up to fight for their jobs—adding a human element."

The efforts paid off when the Brookline School Committee voted unanimously on March 13th to keep food services in house and in another unanimous vote on March 20th to maintain custodial services.



That human element resonated deeply with Brookline residents, parents, and students who rely on these workers every day. Mona Saltalamacchia, Local 1358 President, Council 93 Executive Board Member, and a longtime school department employee, emphasized the importance of grassroots organizing. "I don't think we would be in the position we are today without the help of Local 1358 members from departments across Brookline, Council 93 Locals, other unions, and the Brookline families."

Heather DeLuca, Recording Secretary for Local 1358 and a 25-year veteran of Brookline's Public Works Department, echoed that sentiment. "Many times, these workers are overlooked—you need to show how important these jobs are to the fabric of
(Brookline pg. 4)

Brookline

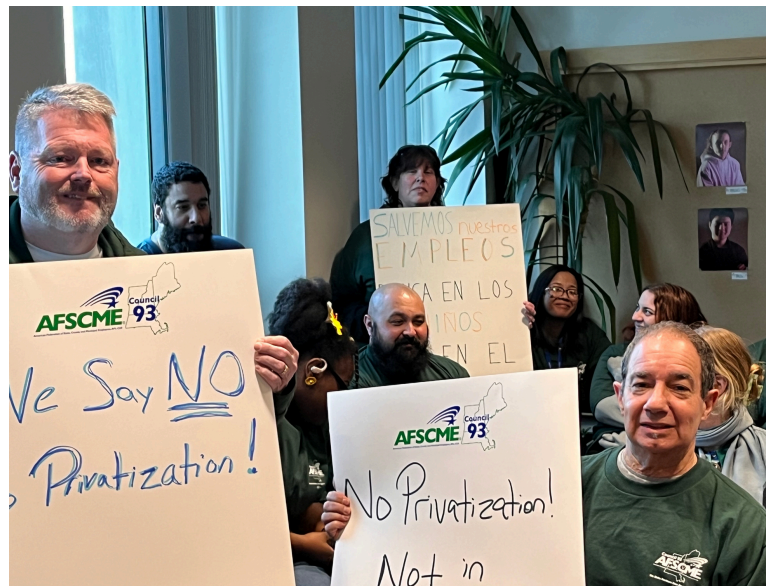
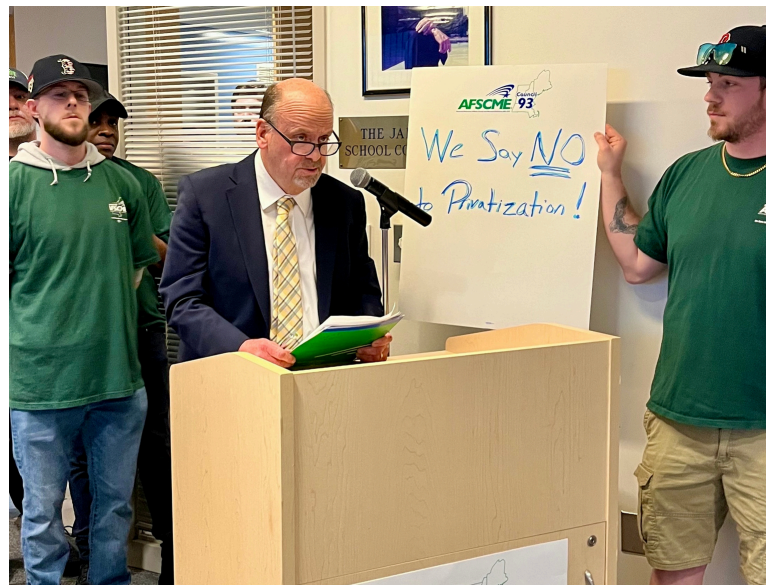
(Continued from pg. 3)

the community," she said. "Our community saw past the marginal savings and recognized the benefit of keeping their trusted public employees." DeLuca noted that one of the most compelling factors in stopping privatization was hearing directly from the teachers, students, and other school staff who depend on them. "Schools are unique in that these workers are in the everyday lives of the school community, many times for years. Teachers, parents, and students spoke up about how much they cherish this staff."

As public sector unions will undoubtedly continue to face threats of privatization, Local 1358's victory in Brookline serves as an inspiring example of what can be accomplished through solidarity and strategic action.

Mellett's advice for other Locals facing similar challenges "You don't have to go through this alone. Don't be afraid to ask for help and keep fighting."

Saltalamacchia summed up the fight with a clear message- "We are all in this together."



At the Brookline School Committee (clockwise from top right) Council 93 Political and Legislative Director Jim Durkin testifies against privatization, Council 93 President Tiger Stockbridge and Executive Board Member Kelly Abreu with Local 1358 members, Executive Board Member Michael Manning with Brookline School Custodial workers, and Local 1358 Food Service Worker Donna O'Dell testifying.



State Hospitals

(Continued from pg. 1)

direction, but we still have a long way to go. There will always be a need for the services that Pappas provides. Right now, there are thousands of families in Massachusetts who rely on specialized care for their children. We should be expanding Pappas and the vital care that it provides,” Silva said underscoring the importance of keeping the facility open permanently.

Pappas Rehabilitation Hospital has provided specialized care for children with complex medical, emotional, and social needs for over 120 years. “Pappas is more than just a facility. It’s a community,” Silva stated. “It’s a place where children with unique medical, emotional, and social needs can receive care tailored specifically for them.”



The proposed closures were met with strong opposition from Council 93, a wide ranging coalition of other unions, and healthcare advocates, who argued that shutting down these facilities would severely impact vulnerable populations. The Pocasset Mental Health Center serves as a critical resource for individuals facing mental health crises, particularly in an era and area where access to such care is already limited. Silva and other union leaders have called on state officials to not only keep these facilities open, but to expand public health investments.



Left: Hundreds gathered at the Massachusetts State House on February 25th to advocate for increased investments in public health. Above: AFSCME Local 1517 held an informational picket at Pappas on the 24th

“Massachusetts is in a mental and public health crisis! We should be investing in and expanding access to care, not laying off mental health caseworkers, which will only make things worse,” Silva warned.

Workers at Pappas and Pocasset are committed to providing high-quality care, and many, like Silva, have dedicated their entire careers to these institutions. “I have spent nearly four decades of my life at Pappas Children’s Hospital. I stayed there all those years not just because it was my job, but because of the children—because they became like family to me,” she shared.

Council 93 has long argued that rather than cutting funding, Massachusetts should lead the way in strengthening public healthcare services. “We owe it to the children, the families, and to the future of Massachusetts to ensure that Pappas remains open and thriving for years to come,” Silva declared, rallying supporters with the slogan: “We will always be PAPPAS STRONG!”

While the temporary pause on closures is a victory, Council 93 and our allies remain vigilant, continuing to fight for a long-term commitment to public health investment.

AFSCME Locals 1674 and 3997 Sponsor Union Training Conference in Vermont

Burlington, VT- AFSCME Locals 1674 and 3977 are co-sponsoring, along with UVM Staff United and UFCW Local 1459, Union Power 2025. This day-long conference is designed to build worker power, foster solidarity, and strengthen local unions.

Hosted at the ONE Community Center on April 26th in Burlington, the conference will offer trainings on:

- Building Shop Floor Power (facilitated by Valerie Braman, AFSCME IU);
- Bargaining To Win (facilitated by Kristin Warner, AFSCME Council 93);
- Becoming Strike Ready (facilitated by Andrew Tripp, formally of AFT & SEIU)

Each training will be interactive, in depth, and be 90 minutes in duration.

Following the trainings, there will be major keynote speakers who will place the need for developing these skills in the context of the wider political environment which is increasingly representing a threat to our traditional Union rights. Among these speakers will be our own Council 93 Executive Director Mark Bernard.

A red poster with white and yellow text. The top text reads 'UNION 2025 POWER' in large, bold letters. Below it, in smaller white text, is 'OUR POWER IS IN OUR LABOR! BECOMING STRIKE READY IN THE GREEN MOUNTAINS'. The next line is 'WORKSHOPS' in large yellow letters, followed by 'ORGANIZING A UNION! • BUILDING SHOP FLOOR POWER!! • BARGAINING TO WIN!!! • BECOMING STRIKE READY!!!!' in white. Below that is 'SPEAKERS' in large yellow letters, followed by a list of speakers: 'MARK DIMONDSTEIN, APWU INTL. PRESIDENT • MARK BERNARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AFSCME COUNCIL 93 • ELLEN KAYE, PRESIDENT OF UVM STAFF UNITED • AND MANY MORE!!!'. The next line is 'FREE TO ALL WORKERS' in large yellow letters. Below this is a white box containing the event details: 'Saturday, April 26 ONE Community Center, 20 Allen St, Burlington VT 10AM-4PM'. To the right of this box is a QR code. At the bottom, it lists 'Lead Sponsors: UVM Staff United, AFSCME 1674 AFSCME Local 3977, UFCW 1459' and 'Endorsers: United Academics, Green Mountain Central Labor Council, UNITED! Slate, Green Mountain Democratic Socialists of America'.

The Conference is FREE and childcare and a complimentary lunch will be provided to ALL Union members. The conference is open to all Council 93 members throughout our four-state region.

Register for this historic Union event today by scanning the QR Code above.



It is spring in New England, so that means it is pothole season! Members of Local 1703 with the Townsend, MA Highway Department have been working hard to fix our roads after a long winter.

Plowing, painting, paving, patching, and repairing, Council 93 Public Works members in Locals across our region make sure that our public roadways are safe for their communities.

Local 3434 Honored for Work on Lynnfield Veteran's Memorial



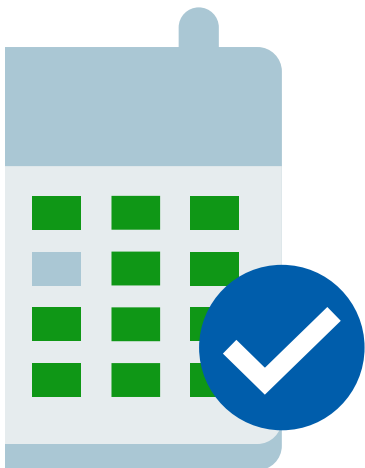
Lynnfield, MA- The members of Local 3434, Lynnfield Public Works, were recently honored by the Lynnfield Veterans War Memorial Committee for helping to complete the recently dedicated Veteran's Memorial on Lynnfield Common.

Committee Chair Joseph Connell presented a plaque to the members of Local 3434 to be hung in the Public Works garage in appreciation of the work AFSCME members did to bring the memorial to life. The members were also treated to a luncheon sponsored by the Committee.

The 100-foot-long curved stone wall is dedicated to honor the memory of Lynnfield's men and women who demonstrated a willingness to serve their country in all war's past, present, and future.

From the initial site planning, Local 3434 has been deeply involved in the Veterans War Memorial construction. Members have prepped and graded the site for proper drainage, removed trees and brush for better visibility, installed landscaping and grass, moved granite slabs for installation, and provide regular maintenance for the memorial.

Upcoming Events



Union Power 2025 Conference

- Burlington, VT
- April 26th
- 10:00am to 4:00pm
- More info at afscme93.org

New Hampshire Steward Training

- Belmont, NH
- May 10th
- 8:00am to 4:00pm
- Register at afscme93.org

Virtual Refresher Training-NEO

- Online
- May 20th
- 6:00pm to 7:00pm
- Register at afscme93.org

Council 93 Golf Tournament

- Plymouth, MA
- June 30th
- 6:00pm to 7:00pm
- Register at afscme93.org

Member Benefit: AUTO INSURANCE

Use your AFSCME
Union Card to Save!



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To talk to a Farmers GroupSelect sales representative, call 855-666-5797



AFSCME Council 93 Charitable Foundation Golf Tournament

June 30th | Crosswinds Golf Club Plymouth, MA

Shotgun Start Scramble Golf Tournament | 50
Teams | Skills Competitions | Breakfast |
Banquet | Raffle | Prizes | Awards Ceremony

The golf tournament is the premier fundraising event for the Council 93 Charitable Trust to help AFSCME Council 93 members in times of need. All proceeds raised benefit the AFSCME Council 93 Charitable Trust!

**Scan to
Register!**



Council 93 Joins Federal Lawsuit to Save Department of Education

Boston, MA- Council 93 joined a coalition of educators, school districts, and other unions to file a federal lawsuit to stop the Trump administration’s dismantling of the Department of Education and the mass firings that will decimate the crucial services the Department provides to every American. The Department of Education serves students, teachers, parents, and communities across the country. This lawsuit is the first filed since President Trump’s Executive Order attempting to shutter the Department.

The complaint was filed by Democracy Forward in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts on behalf of AFSCME Council 93, Easthampton School District, Somerville Public School Committee, Massachusetts Federation, American Association of University Professors, and Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

“The Executive Order abolishing the Department of Education is not only illegal, but — as is to be expected from this administration — just plain cruel,” said AFSCME Council 93 Executive Director Mark Bernard. “Thousands of families across Massachusetts rely on the vital services and protections under the IDEA Act to provide educational support for our most vulnerable

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-Mark Bernard

children. As the home of the first free public school in America, Massachusetts has long been a leader in public education allowing for accessible, equitable, and appropriate education for all students. Thousands of dedicated AFSCME Council 93 members across Massachusetts work tirelessly to support our public school children in safe, welcoming, and caring school communities.”

From distributing funds to helping schools work with students with disabilities, to providing support and assistance to parents and families, protecting students’ civil rights, and making sure higher education is affordable for deserving students, civil servants at the Department of Education are essential to the success of students. Mass firings of these hardworking people planned by the Trump administration will harm students and schools.



One of Council 93's newest locals, Local 1365 Billerica, MA Town Hall Employees, held their first union elections. Congratulations to the newly elected officials!

Council 93 is growing and adding new members all the time.

Joining Council 93 starts with a conversation - to learn more contact our Organizing Staff at info@afscme93.org

Right-to-Work Stopped in New Hampshire, Again

Concord, NH- In February 2025, New Hampshire's House of Representatives voted 200-180 to indefinitely postpone House Bill 238, defeating the latest attempt to enact right-to-work legislation. Over the past four decades, Right-to-Work has failed every single time it has been brought before the New Hampshire State Legislature.

Council 93 joined a coalition of public and private sector unions headed by the New Hampshire AFL-CIO to mobilize members, submit testimony, and rally in support of collective bargaining rights for all New Hampshire workers. Over several weeks a number of actions took place at the State Capitol to convince legislators that right-to-work is wrong for New Hampshire.

Right-to-work is the name for a policy designed to take away rights from working people. Backers of right-to-work laws claim that these laws protect workers against being forced to join a union. The reality is that federal law already makes it illegal to force someone to join a union.

The real purpose of right-to-work laws is to tilt the balance toward big corporations and further rig the system at the expense of working families. These laws make it harder for working people to form unions and collectively bargain for better wages, benefits and working conditions.

Several Republicans joined with Democrats to "indefinitely postpone" consideration of the bill, effectively spelling its demise this legislative session.

Council 93 Stands Up and Fights Back!



It's our hard work – not corporate greed – that makes our communities stronger. AFSCME and Council 93 have been on the frontlines getting organized and fighting back. We are taking to the streets, taking our case to the courts, and fighting in the halls of government to build power together and tell those in charge that we aren't going anywhere!

WHEN WE FIGHT, WE WIN!

Salem Hospital Physicians Union Honored

Dorchester, MA - The Salem Hospital Physicians Union was honored at the 25th Annual Labor Seder with the Bread and Roses Award for Organizing in a New Field by the New England Jewish Labor Committee on March 30th.

The Committee is a social justice organization dedicated to building the power of workers through educating, mobilizing, and organizing the Jewish community, both inside and outside of the established labor movement, to effectively advocate for collective liberation and economic justice.

The Physicians overwhelmingly voted to form a Union with AFSCME Council 93 in 2024 and are in



the process of negotiating their first union contract. Physicians and Healthcare Professionals, like the Salem Hospital Physicians, are part of a growing trend of organizing among doctors across the country who want to focus on care and advocate for their patients while increasing quality of life and reducing burnout.

Local 926 Members Advocate for Increased Vacation Time



Bangor, ME- AFSCME Local 926 packed a recent City Council meeting to speak out after non-union departments were unilaterally given an extra week of vacation time by the city while Local 926 members were told they must give up comp time in order to receive the extra vacation time.

Local President Chris Nile spoke to the press after the meeting. "We put the work in for them, they ask us to do all this work. We work a lot of hours during the winter, and take away time from our families. Now they are telling us we are not important enough, we are going to have to negotiate and give up something to get something when they didn't have to."

Council 93 is growing and adding new members all the time. Here are just some examples of the progress Council 93 is making on the organizing front:

- **Fitchburg, MA Library** – 20 New Members
- **Waterbury, VT Water Department** – 5 New Members
- **Spectrum Youth and Family Services Burlington, VT** – 26 New Members
- **Waterbury, VT Town Employees** - 23 New Members
- **North Shore, MA Physicians Group Endocrinology Doctors** - 9 New Members

Joining Council 93 starts with a conversation - to learn more contact our Organizing Staff at info@afscme93.org

Council 93 Organizing Update



Join THE FIGHT

to **PROTECT** public service jobs
in Northern New England!



Talk to your co-workers about what's happening in Washington and how it will affect them!



Contribute to the PEOPLE program – AFSCME's Political Action Committee – or increase your current contribution!



Talk to your member of Congress about what's happening!



Share your story!

**GET INVOLVED
TODAY!**



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