

The 93 Beacon

SUMMER 2025

We Make Northern New England Happen!



WHEN WE FIGHT, WE WIN!

Council 93 Wins Retirement Reform for Maine Mental Health Workers and Secures Funding for Massachusetts Public Health Facilities



Local 1814 President Sally Nichols testifies in support of retirement reform legislation at the Maine State House (Left). Local 1517 members brave the heat during an informational picket to support Pappas Rehabilitation Hospital for Children (Right).

Augusta, ME- Maine Governor Janet Mills, as part of the state budget, signed into law long sought retirement reforms for workers at Maine's state mental health facilities. Thanks to the dedicated advocacy of AFSCME Council 93 and Locals 1814 and 1825, nearly 80 Maine State Mental Health workers at the Dorothea Dix and Riverview State Mental Health Centers will have their retirement reclassified to recognize the dangerous nature of the work they do. This legislation allows the current workforce to retire with dignity and aims to address staffing, recruitment, and retention issues that have put both workers and patients at these critical facilities in danger.

After a years-long multipronged campaign to address the far too common instances of assaults
(*Maine pg. 2*)

Boston, MA- Months of advocacy, standouts, emails, calls, interviews, and testimony by workers, patients and families, and supporters paid off on July 4th when Gov. Maura Healey signed the FY 2026 Budget, which included funding to keep the Pappas Rehabilitation Hospital for Children and the Pocasset Mental Health Center open.

The Budget includes nearly \$34 million in funding to keep both facilities open as well as protective language for the workers and patients served at Pappas and Pocasset.

Workers and advocates emphasized the critical services provided at both facilities. Pappas, which serves medically complex children with a range of disabilities, offers a unique mix of education,
(*Budget pg. 4*)

Maine

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on workers, the retirement reform legislation will go into effect this Fall.

These reforms, which will greatly improve the lives and safety of dozens of Maine State workers, would not have been possible without the help of our labor and elected allies. The Maine AFL-CIO had made the bill (LD579) a priority for this legislative session, providing testimony, lobbying, and resources in support of passing the reforms this year. Meanwhile, lead sponsors Senators Mike Tipping and Dick Bradstreet, along with Senate President Mattie Daughtry and House Speaker Ryan Fecteau, were instrumental in bringing this issue to the forefront and advocating for change to the retirement system for State Mental Health Workers. We also want to thank former Senate President and current gubernatorial candidate Troy Jackson who filed the legislation in the previous two sessions and helped us make important incremental progress, paving the way toward our victory this year.

With its passage, AFSCME and Maine State Employee Association Mental Health workers will be in the same state retirement plan as firefighters, law enforcement, and corrections officers, allowing these workers to retire at age 55 with 25 years of service. This reclassification recognizes the dangerous nature of the work done by these dedicated state employees.

"This retirement bill has truly been a team effort, we all worked hard to pass this bill," said Sally Nichols, Local 1814 President. "We thank everyone who heard our stories over and over again and supported us in this fight."

As part of the retirement reform campaign, Council 93 pushed for an investigation by the Maine Legislature's Joint Committee on Government Oversight into the working conditions at both Riverview and Dorothea Dix. In the fall of 2023, the committee voted unanimously to direct the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability (OPEGA) to launch an in-depth, independent investigation. The preliminary report released in February validated years of worker complaints, revealing a workplace rife with preventable violence and inadequate safety measures. A survey of psychiatric center workers conducted by OPEGA found that less than half of Riverview staff and 60 percent of Dorothea Dix staff said they usually or always feel safe at work.

Employees at Riverview and Dorothea Dix work with some of the most acutely mentally ill patients in the state. This retirement reform allows workers to retire with dignity after working in extremely dangerous situations, as evidenced by the OPEGA report. Council 93 will continue to work with Locals 1814 and 1825 to improve working conditions, because every worker deserves to come home safely to their family at the end of their shift.



Former Maine Senate President, gubernatorial candidate, and good friend of AFSCME Council 93 Troy Jackson attended the June Executive Board Meeting in Portland.

While in the Senate, Jackson was instrumental in the passage of legislation important to AFSCME members including, but certainly not limited to, the Heart Law for state corrections officers, Janus response legislation to protect public sector workers, and mandatory reviews of state privatization proposals.

Jackson (second from left) with Local 481 President and Executive Board Member Jim Vance, Local 1373 President and Executive Board Member Cindy Pebenito, and Maine Field Services Coordinator John Nuttal.

Dartmouth College Library Workers Ratify First Union Contract with AFSCME Council 93

Hanover, NH- In early May, Dartmouth College library workers officially ratified their first union contract with the newly formed Dartmouth College Library Workers Union-AFSCME Local 603. The milestone agreement came after intense negotiations with the college's administration and was overwhelmingly approved by the members. This contract marks a major victory for not just Dartmouth College library staff, but all workers on campus.

The new three-year contract includes important gains on wages, workplace protections, and job security. Among the highlights are guaranteed annual raises, stronger grievance and discipline procedures, and a new system for addressing workload and staffing concerns. The agreement also ensures more transparency, giving library workers a greater voice in decisions that affect their careers.

"Going into negotiations, we knew that bargaining with the College was going to be tough. Our goals ranged from the basics, like codifying unwritten policies, to securing better pay, creating a promotion system for all, and other goals," said Daniel Abosso, Local 603 Bargaining Committee Member. "We achieved some of these goals, and have laid the groundwork for future gains." Library



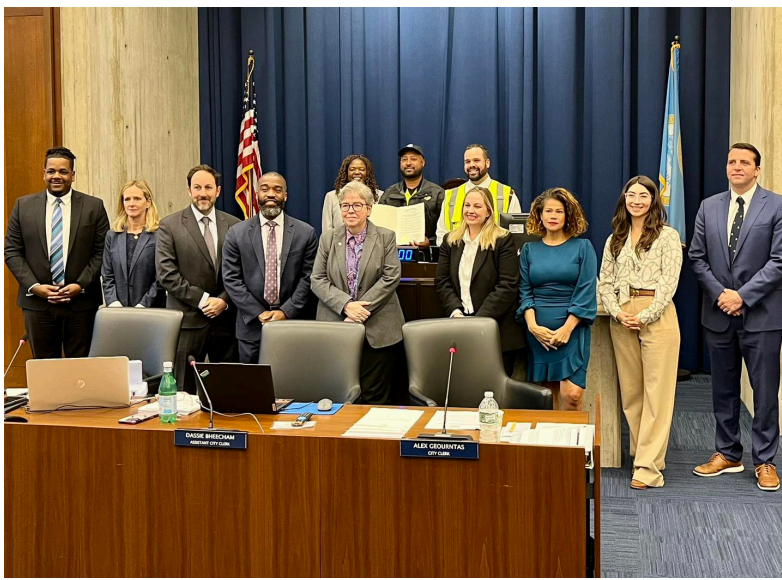
workers at Dartmouth first voted to form a union with AFSCME Council 93 in 2023. Asked why Dartmouth College Library workers formed a union, Abosso said, "Because the library and college administration were making decisions that directly and negatively impacted us. We had no say in these decisions, and we were not forewarned. We didn't want these sorts of things to happen again without us having a voice in the work that we do." Since then, the members and bargaining committee have worked closely with Council 93 staff to secure a contract that reflects the vital role they play in supporting students, faculty, and the college's overall academic mission.

AFSCME Council 93 Executive Director Mark Bernard praised the group's determination: "This contract sends a powerful message that when workers organize, they win. This is not the end, but the foundation and a building block for what's to come as the members of Local 603 work together to achieve even more in the future! We're proud to stand with Dartmouth Library workers as they begin this new chapter."



Tammy Morse and Hannah Courbron from AFSCME Local 1373 carried the Union banner in the Portland Maine Pride Parade on June 21st.

Council 93 is proud to support our members for who they are, not just what they do. LGBTQ+ rights are workers' rights, and protections on the job matter.



Council 93 Executive Board Member and Local 1631 Vice-President Emanuel Dorosario accepted a resolution from the Boston City Council declaring May 18, 2025 as Public Works Day in the City of Boston.

Council 93 represents thousands of public works members across our region who provide a number of indispensable services for maintaining, developing, and modernizing our communities so that they can function day-to-day.

The often overlooked jobs AFSCME members perform allow for clean, orderly, and well-maintained communities and they deserve recognition.

Budget

(Continued from pg. 1)



Local 1517 President Nancy Silva spoke at a community forum held in Canton to discuss the situation at Pappas (Above). Denise MacKinnon, Local 1517 Vice-President Testified before the Pappas Working Group (Below Left).

therapy, and long-term care not available elsewhere in the state. 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, and plays a key role in keeping Cape Cod's emergency rooms from becoming overwhelmed.

"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," Nancy Silva, President of AFSCME Local 1517 at Pappas, warned.

While the funding in the budget is welcome news, AFSCME Council 93 and its coalition partners are keeping the pressure on state leaders to fully support public health in Massachusetts.

"Our members care deeply about the people they serve—and they knew these closures would have been devastating," said Council 93 Executive Director Mark Bernard. "This budget victory is proof that when we stand together, speak out, and organize, we can make a real difference. But know this- we are not letting up, these workers—and the people they care for—deserve permanent solutions, not temporary delays."

Council 93 will continue to work with elected leaders, state officials, the communities served by Pappas and Pocasset, and labor allies to come up with permanent, sustainable, and predictable funding for these- and all- state public and mental health facilities.



AFSCME Council 93 Charitable Foundation Tees Off New Tradition to Help Members in Need

Plymouth, MA- AFSCME Council 93 teed off a new tradition on June 30th, with the first-ever AFSCME Council 93 Charitable Foundation Golf Tournament at Crosswinds Golf Club. The event brought together members, supporters, and community partners for a day of friendly competition and fundraising for a great cause.

Hosted by the AFSCME Council 93 Charitable Foundation, the tournament aimed to raise funds to support the Foundation's growing mission—providing scholarships, disaster relief, and assistance to working families in need throughout Council 93's Northern New England region. The field of 200 golfers was made up of AFSCME Council 93 leaders, rank-and-file members, friends, supporters, and allies. Locals from all four Northern New England states were well represented, with several Locals fielding multiple teams to support the fundraising efforts.

While the final results are still being tallied, it appears the tournament raised nearly \$70,000 for the AFSCME Council 93 Charitable Foundation through donations, raffle ticket sales, and sponsorships.

Tournament Co-Chair and Council 93 Vice-President Kevin Drake, who helped launch the Charitable Foundation and also acted as emcee for the awards ceremony and raffle, praised the outpouring of support. "We know that our members are selfless and quick to help when someone is in need, but the generosity from our Locals, individuals, and our partners was beyond what I could have imagined. Today is just the beginning of a great new Council 93 tradition and we will be able to provide some relief when our members are in need."

The tournament would not happen without the dedication and commitment from the dozens of volunteers who generously donate their time to help set up, register players, sell raffle tickets, monitor on-course games, and make the day special for everyone.

The success of the inaugural event sets a strong foundation for future tournaments and reflects the strength and solidarity of AFSCME members when they come together to give back. Plans are already underway to make the tournament an annual tradition.

AFSCME Council 93 Charitable Foundation Tournament Sponsors

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- AFSCME Local 1801
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- AFSCME Council 4, Connecticut
- Krakow, Souris & Landry, LLC

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- AFSCME Local 2948
- AFSCME Local 362
- AFSCME Local 408
- Local 385 General Laborers
- Committee to Elect Kim Driscoll
- Joseph Delorey
- Liberty Mutual

Thank you to all of our generous sponsors for their donations and support of the AFSCME Council 93 Charitable Foundation!

AFSCME Council 93 Charitable Foundation Golf Tournament



In a Win For Billionaires, Budget Bill Signed That Hurts Working Families

Washington, DC- By slender margins in both the House and the Senate, just before Independence Day Congress passed a piece of legislation that will provide trillions of dollars in tax cuts for billionaires by cutting public services for ordinary Americans, like health care and food stamps.

This legislation will mean billions of dollars in cuts to the services that AFSCME members provide – in nursing homes and hospitals, K-12 and higher education, Head Start, food programs, and other essential public services. Thousands of our members throughout the four Northern New England states could face layoffs, and the remaining employees will be confronted with extremely difficult contract negotiations and demands for givebacks from employers.

This legislation represents the largest transfer of wealth from working- and middle-class people to billionaires in U.S. history.

While not a single member of Congress in the Council 93 region voted for the bill, that will not prevent Northern New Englanders in general and AFSCME members in particular from feeling the effects over the coming years.



We will not sit back while Congress sells our futures to billionaires. Income inequality has continued to skyrocket. CEOs are paid nearly 300 times what the average worker is paid, and billionaires' wealth is already growing exponentially. To unrig the system and build a country that rewards work over wealth, working people will keep organizing. We will organize to defend our jobs, our dignity and our safety at work. We will organize to protect our retirement and Social Security. And we will organize to hold every elected official accountable who voted to betray working families and hurt our communities.

We face tough times ahead, but when working people stand together, we have the power to reclaim what was stolen and build a better future for our families.

Visit www.afscmego.org to learn more and get involved!



ASFCME Council 93 Local 2948 and 3485 members with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation participated in a recent Chainsaw Assessment. Funded by the Training and Career Ladder Program negotiated into the Unit 2 contract, this assessment allowed participants to demonstrate their chainsaw skills in limbing and bucking, which are essential to the safety of DCR staff and members of the public who enjoy DCR state parks.

North American Training Solutions (NATS) provided a tailor-made assessment for participants, and we congratulate all those who have completed this assessment.

Maine's DPW Workers Shine at Annual Snowplow Rodeo Run by AFSCME Local 481

Skowhegan, ME- The sunshine and mid-June heat were at odds with the dozens of snowplows and highly trained drivers which were prepped and ready to go for what looked like another one of Maine's infamous winter storms. The plow drivers from across Maine were not getting ready for a storm, but had gathered at the Skowhegan Fairgrounds for the state's annual Snowplow Rodeo to spotlight the expertise of Maine's public works professionals.

For the last thirty years, AFSCME Local 481-07 members from Portland have helped organize and run the annual Snowplow Rodeos for the City of Portland, Cumberland County, and the State of Maine. Local 481-07 members Jim Vance, Don Noyes, Gary Dobson, Shawn Perkins, and Jay Gilbert set up the course, coordinate registrations, judge the competitions, and even BBQ so spectators and contestants are well fed.

The annual event invites DPW crews from across the state to compete in a timed obstacle course that mimics real-world challenges: maneuvering around cones, backing into tight spaces, and even using plow blades to knock a soccer ball off a cone. With a stopwatch and penalty points determining the winners, teams strive for precision and speed, but most importantly, safety.

"This isn't just a contest—it's a skills showcase," said Jim Vance, President of AFSCME Local 481 and Council 93 Executive Board Member. "It allows our plow operators to demonstrate the finesse required to keep our roads safe during a harsh Maine winter."

The event, part of the Maine Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA)'s Highway Congress, draws teams from municipal DPW departments, the Maine Department of Transportation, and the Maine Turnpike Authority. Winners from local, state, and regional



competitions are invited to the National Snow Rodeo held each September during the APWA Western Snow & Ice Conference in Colorado, where they compete against the best plow drivers from across the country in a test of elite driving and handling skills.

Council 93 members have been well represented at the Nationals over the past few years. Local 298 in Manchester, NH sent members Shawn Maurice and Chris Belanger and Local 481-07's team of Stan Mason and Justin Cusack both participated in the 2023 Nationals after advancing through their respective local, state, and New England Regional competitions.

While awards include plaques, cash prizes, and jackets, the real honor is advancing to Nationals—and earning the respect of fellow operators statewide. "These workers take great pride in their work," said Vance. "It is their chance to not only show off their skills, but learn new techniques and best practices from other highly skilled professionals which they can take back to help make their own communities better prepared to handle whatever Mother Nature throws at us."



Council 93 Locals Clean Up at Clean Water Awards



Members of Local 1703, managers and staff of the Townsend Water Department receiving the MassDEP 2025 Regional Recognition Award.

Boston, MA- The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) held their annual Public Water System Awards Day in May, where communities across Massachusetts were recognized for their commitment to protecting our water systems from pollution, advancing conservation efforts, and building and maintaining our water infrastructure.

Council 93 Locals all across our region make sure that our public drinking water systems are clean

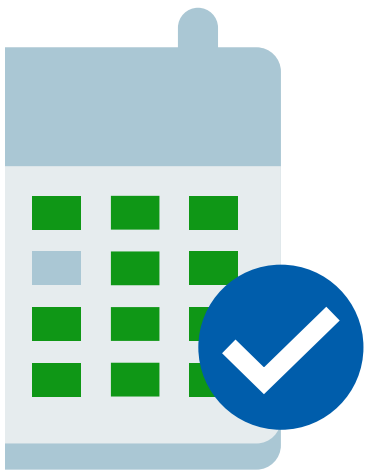
and safe and reliably bring fresh water to our communities each and every day.

Since 1975, MassDEP has been protecting the environment and preserving public health. For the past 39 years, MassDEP has recognized and awarded exemplary systems that have reached meritorious service for their work during the previous calendar year.

Council 93 MassDEP Award Winning Water Systems were:

- Local 3003 Bourne Water District
- Local 1700 Hanson Water Department
- Local 1755 Lynn Water and Sewer Commission
- Local 1462 Provincetown Water Department
- Local 2905 Wenham Water Department
- Local 111 Beverly Water Department
- Local 1358 Brookline Water and Sewer Division
- Local 806 Paxton Water Department
- Local 2610 Swampscott Water Department
- Local 690 Weston Water Department
- Local 1700 Freetown Elementary School
- Local 1703 Burlington Water Department
- Local 687 Gloucester Public Utility Division
- Local 1703 Townsend Water Department
- Local 1364 West Springfield Water Department

Upcoming Events



July Refresher Training

- Virtual
- July 23rd
- 6:00pm
- This training will focus on the upcoming Council 93 Convention, which will be held in November of this year in Danvers, MA. You must register by July 21st
- Register at afscme93.org

South Shore Steward Training

- UMass Dartmouth
- October 18th
- 9:00am to 4:00pm
- The training is free and open to all AFSCME members in good standing
- Register at afscme93.org

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While forming a union is an important first step, the real collective power comes once a first union contract is negotiated and ratified, giving workers a voice on the job, a say over their working conditions, and equal footing with their employer. AFSCME Council 93 staff are skilled in negotiating first contracts and getting workers the respect they deserve. Here are some recently ratified first contracts:

First Contracts Ratified!

- **Local 2905 Topsfield, MA Library**
- **Local 617 Boston Water and Sewer Commission Managers**
- **Local 1365 Billerica, MA Library**
- **Spectrum Health RNs and LPNs**
- **Local 603 Dartmouth College Library Workers**

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

Averte-Trivium Workers Win Union Election, Join Council 93

Bradford, VT- Frontline mental health workers at Averte-Trivium, a behavioral health provider operating in Vermont and New Hampshire, have voted decisively to join AFSCME Council 93 following a union election held on June 13. The victory marks a major milestone in the workers' campaign to improve job conditions and secure a stronger voice in the workplace.

Motivated by concerns over wages, safety, staffing, and employee input in organizational decisions, Averte-Trivium staff launched their union effort to push for a legally binding contract. Workers are seeking better pay, stronger benefits, improved working conditions, and greater investment in training and career development—

all with the aim of strengthening both the workforce and the quality of care provided to residents.

"Voting to form our union is more than a vote. It is a turning point," said Ember Rose, an Averte-Trivium employee and Chair of the Organizing Committee. "We are not just staff. We are the heart of Averte. And we deserve to be seen, respected, and supported like it. We've carried so much—holding space for others in their most vulnerable moments, working long hours, covering shifts—and now it's our turn to be heard, to be protected, and to create the future we've imagined together."

The newly certified union of Averte-Trivium workers will soon start negotiating for the improvements and changes they have long sought.

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!

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:

Council 93 Organizing Update

- **Milford, NH DPW** – 16 New Members
- **Averte-Trivium, Bradford, VT** – 46 New Members
- **Lebanon, NH City Workers** – 62 New Members

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



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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