

Local 1075

April 2025

## Meet Our Executive Board:

**Kelly Erinakes** – President  
**Debra Lathrop** – VP  
 Elementary  
**Joe Fargnoli** – VP Secondary  
**Tiffany Risch** – Secretary  
**Greg Wightman** – Treasurer  
**Sue Toohey-Kaye** –  
 Professional Development  
**Ted Mitchell** – Public Relations

**Donna Beaudoin** – CHS Rep.  
**John Kelly** – CHS Rep.  
**Matt Paiva** – CHS Rep.  
**Christine Conklin** – ASFMS Rep.  
**Derek Larguinho** – ASFMS Rep.  
**Jennifer Limoges** – Western Rep.  
**Colleen Riessen** – Western Rep.  
**Tara D'Aleno** – Tiogue Rep.  
**Julie Marran** – Hopkins Hill Rep.  
**Kristin Hill** – Washington Oak Rep.  
**Michelle Gallagher** – Washington Oak Rep.  
**Helen Tiernan** – Blackrock Rep.

## Membership Meeting Dates:

May 8th

ASFMS @ 4PM



### Coventry Teachers' Alliance Awards \$125,000 in Scholarships to High School Seniors

On Tuesday, April 8, 2025, the Coventry Teachers' Alliance (CTA) awarded \$125,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors at Coventry High School. The annual event, held during the school's awards night, highlighted the union's ongoing commitment to supporting students as they pursue higher education.

The awards were made through the CTA Scholarship Fund to assist students enrolling in post-secondary schools. These financial awards are random drawings and will follow each student through his or her post-secondary education, providing lasting support beyond high school.

"It's truly a blessing to see our union work with and match community donations to help our students go to college," said CTA President Kelly Erinakes. "We hope they too pay it forward someday!"

This year's total reflects the collective generosity of teachers, families, and community partners—all working together to invest in Coventry's students and their future.

For more information or to contribute to the scholarship fund, visit [covteachalliance.org](http://covteachalliance.org) or contact CTA at [CTA1075@aol.com](mailto:CTA1075@aol.com).

### The SMITH HILL REPORT Support the Rule of 90 for Public Employees

Legislation to improve retirement eligibility—known as the "Rule of 90"—is currently under consideration in the Rhode Island General Assembly.

The RIFTHP has prioritized strengthening pension benefits for public employees. The "Rule of 90" would allow eligible employees to retire a few years earlier than is currently permitted under Rhode Island law. Legislation to enact this proposal has been introduced by Representative Deborah Fellela (H 5198) and Senator Frank Ciccone (S 450).

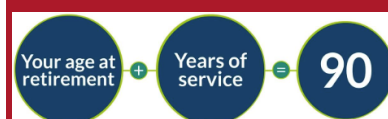
This proposal impacts public employees in the state, teachers, and the Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS). It allows employees to retire without penalty at age 60 with 30 or more years of service, a meaningful change from the current "Rule of 95" system.

We know this change won't benefit every member immediately, but it represents meaningful progress. Most employees would gain new retirement flexibility—even if they choose not to use it.

Please take a moment to send a message to your legislators urging them to support S 450 and H 5198.

Thank you for standing with us to make public service stronger and fairer for all.

In Solidarity,  
 Maribeth Calabro-President, RIFTHP



## Fight for a Fair Pension

These bills impact teachers, state workers, and municipal employees in the Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS). Currently, the normal retirement age is tied to Social Security—typically age 67.

Since 2015, early retirement is allowed under the "Rule of 95", where age + years of service = 95. S 450 and H 5198 would create a "Rule of 90", allowing retirement at age 60 with 30+ years of service, without penalty.

### Why the Rule of 90 Matters:

1. Corrects Past Pension Cuts
  2. Provide Flexibility
  3. Aligns with Private Sector Norms
  4. Helps Employers
  5. Addresses Workforce Shortage
  6. Affordable Investment
- ([Learn more here](#)).

Write Your Legislators Today!  
 ([click here for letter form](#)).

# CTA Newsletter



**Washington Hilton**  
1919 Connecticut Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20009

Join us for this energizing professional learning event that offers an inspiring and collaborative experience for presenters and attendees alike; the conference is filled with timely strategies and practical resources you can take back to your school for a successful year ahead.

Participate in energizing, interactive sessions focused on the real challenges educators face every day; Learn practical, classroom-ready strategies designed to boost student engagement and improve learning outcomes; Return to school recharged with new ideas that will ignite inspiration in both your students and colleagues; and Build authentic connections with colleagues nationwide to exchange ideas, resources and support.

#### **Some of the sessions include:**

AI in Education: Building Digital Literacy for the Modern Classroom

How to Bring Labor History Alive in the Classroom Using PBL

Inspiring Student Change-Makers: SEL Strategies for Schools and Communities

Reclaiming Assessment Practices: Union-District Partnerships for Professional Growth

Text Detectives: Cracking the Comprehension Code

Thinking Mathematics: Engaging Math Strategies and Games for the K-5 Classroom

Engineering with Paper: Making Mini Escape Rooms as an Assessment Tool

Deepening Civics Skills Through Classroom Discussion Strategies

**More information here - Registration**

**AFL-CIO**  
AMERICA'S UNIONS



## **Reverse Gutting of Core Worker Safety Agency**

Due to Elon Musk and his unaccountable DOGE, we are facing one of the largest mass firings of federal workers in history, including highly technical federal workers who keep us safe on the job.

More than a thousand workers in six states and Washington, D.C., have lost their jobs at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the federal job safety research agency. By gutting this key organization, America's workers will lose critical safety protections and more workers will get hurt. Every single NIOSH research center is being closed and the few staff remaining no longer have the resources to do their jobs.

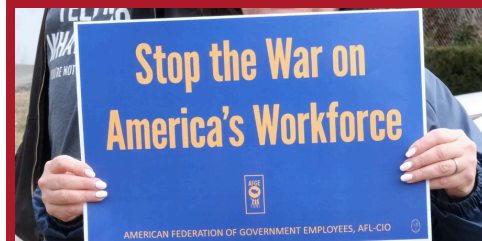
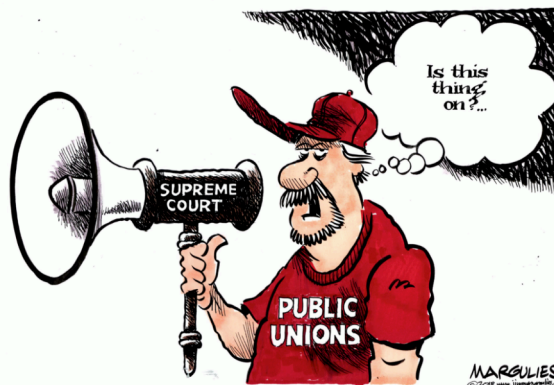
Please call your member of Congress and demand they stand up for this critical health and safety agency and its workers against DOGE and the Trump administration.

Our message is simple: Stop the cuts to NIOSH and reinstate their workers. But here are some other details that may help during your call:

Congress created NIOSH (pronounced nigh-osh) on a broad bipartisan basis.

NIOSH is the only federal government agency that conducts research on worker safety and health, and gathers and analyzes the information to keep workers safe. (More on website)

**Call your representative now!**  
**(Click here)**



## **Stand Up for Federal Workers —Defend the Right to Organize!**

In an unprecedented assault on federal workers and their unions, President Donald Trump has issued an executive order aimed at stripping nearly the entire federal workforce of their collective bargaining rights. This move could impact between 700,000 and 1 million workers—from the Department of Veterans Affairs to the Departments of Defense, Energy, State, Interior, Justice, Treasury, Health and Human Services, and even Agriculture.

This is more than just an attack on workers—it's a direct threat to the heart of the labor movement. The Trump administration is making it clear: unions are the last line of defense standing in the way of its dismantling of the federal government.

Now is the time to act. We must rally together, raise our voices, and fight back to protect the rights of workers across the nation. The future of organized labor—and our democracy—depends on it.

Join the movement. Defend collective bargaining. Protect federal workers.

**Send a letter to Congress right now and tell them: No cuts to education! (AFL-CIO)**

**Click here to access the form**

