

**Aug 16, 2011**

### **CSEA members ratify five-year state contract**

ALBANY - CSEA-represented state Executive Branch employees have ratified a contract agreement with New York state that keeps people working and protects rights and benefits. Each of CSEA's four bargaining units (Administrative, Institutional, Operational and Division of Military and Naval Affairs) individually approved the agreement.

The agreement was approved by a total vote of 16,896 yes to 11,856 no nearly a 60 percent approval with more than 28,000 votes cast.

"These are not ordinary times and CSEA worked hard to reach an agreement that we believed would be in everyone's best interest," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "CSEA members agree that this contract is reasonable and responsible for the long term. CSEA will move forward as we always have."

The five-year agreement includes strong job protection provisions to keep CSEA-represented state employees on the job delivering essential services to New Yorkers. The agreement includes money in each of the last three years. It preserves step increments and longevity increases and holds the line on health insurance, increasing employee premium contributions based on salary level while keeping co-payment changes minimal.

The CSEA negotiating team is comprised of 23 CSEA state employees selected to represent their co-workers. They were led at the table by CSEA Director of Contract Administration Ross Hanna and the union's professional negotiating staff.

The tentative agreement was reached in June. Members of the team conducted dozens of meetings across the state to explain the details of the agreement to CSEA members. The union also provided every member with the contract language before the vote and had other information available on the CSEA website.

Some of the key provisions:

**Wages:**

- No across the board salary increase in FY 2011 and 2012;
- \$1,000 (not added to base pay) starting April 1, 2013; (\$775 lump sum payable April 1, 2013; \$225 lump sum payable April 1, 2014)
- 2 percent across the board increase payable April 1, 2014;
- 2 percent across the board increase payable April 1, 2015
- No changes in payments of step increments;
- No changes in Longevity payments

**Furloughs:**

- Five unpaid days off in FY 2011 (The value of the five days will be spread over the remaining pay periods equally);
- Four unpaid days off in FY 2012 (The value of the four days will be spread equally over pay periods in the fiscal year - employees will be reimbursed for the value of these days starting in year five of the contract.)

**Health Benefits:**

- Grade 9 employees and below - 2 percent increase in Premium (Individuals -10 percent increasing to 12 percent. & Family coverage - 25 percent increasing to 27 percent of premium cost)
- Grade 10 employees and above - 6 percent increase in Premium (Individuals -10 percent increasing to 16 percent. & Family coverage - 25 percent increasing to 31 percent of premium cost)
- Various incremental changes in coverage provisions, co-payments and prescription drug benefits;
- Maintains funding for dental, prescription eyeglass and other benefits provided through the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund;
- No change in ability to use sick leave credits to help defray the cost of health insurance premiums in retirement

The agreement would also maintain all side letter labor-management agreements currently in place between CSEA and New York state and establishes a committee to address the state's use of temporary employees, consultants and contractors to determine how state employees can be better utilized to fill this role.

The state legislature already approved the agreement contingent on the CSEA ratification.