



CHARLES D. LAVINE  
Assemblyman 13<sup>th</sup> District

CHAIR  
Judiciary Committee

THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

COMMITTEES  
Codes  
Ethics & Guidance  
Rules  
Insurance

November 1, 2024

Dear Nassau Retirees Legal Fund Members and Nassau County Retirees,

I want to assure you that, while NYS Assembly members do not oversee the daily operations of Nassau County, we are fully aware of your fight to protect the health benefits you worked for, paid for, and were promised. Public service workers often choose lower-paying jobs in exchange for the assurance of contractual pension and health benefits in retirement. It is essential that public employers uphold these commitments, especially when they are embedded in Collective Bargaining Agreements.

Nassau County and County Executive Blakeman are breaking the law and these commitments, which were guaranteed to you both in writing and orally. The County must keep you on the Empire Plan, as well as enact protections to prevent future changes.

I understand and support the following points:

- Upon retirement, retirees are no longer part of any bargaining unit. The law prohibits unions from representing both retirees and active employees simultaneously, so you could not have been part of the 2023 MOU negotiated between the County and the union of active employees.
- The CBA in effect at the time you retire governs your rights in retirement. Your CBA promised you County-paid health insurance that was vested for life with benefits that cannot be reduced, ever.
- The Collective Bargaining Agreement for retirees clearly states that health benefits cannot be diminished. The Federal Government defines the “benefit” as the healthcare items or services covered under a health insurance plan.
- The current negotiations between the CSEA union and the County has no effect on past retirees. Retirees are entitled to fully-paid health insurance for life, with benefits at least as good as the NYSHIP Empire Plan.

I urge the County Executive and the County Legislature to stand with retirees, who are among the most financially vulnerable individuals in our community by Publicly Standing down and leaving the retirees alone.

Sincerely,

Charles D. Lavine  
Member of Assembly