



September 8, 2025

I write in support of the Nassau Retirees' Legal Fund, and all Nassau Retirees who have faced the injustice of having their health care benefits stripped away from them by the County.

Nassau County's public servants deserve our support and respect, both while serving our residents and in retirement. We—the people of Nassau County, through our elected representatives—promised to always take care of our public workers, with the same standard of care throughout their lives. County Executive Bruce Blakeman and his administration have broken that promise. Our civil servants deserve better.

Nassau CSEA Retirees have long been covered under the NYSHIP Empire Plan. They were promised under multiple collective bargaining agreements that they would be covered under the Empire Plan, or one with equal benefits, for life. However, in 2023, their health insurance benefits were altered by an MOU between the County and CSEA—a bargain that wrongly included changing Retiree benefits, which should have remained secure under the CBA at the time of their retirement. The substitute "Excelsior" plan is not an equal of the Empire plan. Under the Excelsior plan, many medications and essential medical equipment, including hearing aids and walkers, are not covered. Co-payments have increased. Our Retirees, often living on a fixed income, face losing access to the doctors and hospitals that they rely on, because they cannot afford the expenses under the Excelsior plan. This is a travesty. They accepted serving us for lower wages, in exchange for a promise of lifetime care, and the County betrayed them.

I support the work the NRLF is doing, and I agree that:

- The 2023 MOU was negotiated between the County and the CSEA without a representative for the Nassau Retirees to bargain on their behalf.
- The CBA for Nassau Retirees, at the time of their retirement, promised County-paid health insurance that vested for life, with benefits—the healthcare items or services covered under a healthcare plan—that cannot be reduced.
- Nassau Retirees are entitled to fully-paid health insurance for life, with benefits at least as good as the NYSHIP Empire plan. Negotiations between CSEA and the County that do not include a separate representative for the Nassau Retirees has no effect on the Retirees.

If elected, I will work on behalf of the Nassau Retirees to correct the improper 2023 agreement that tried to diminish retirees healthcare benefits and to prevent this from ever occurring again..

With gratitude for your service to our community,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn Russo".

Lynn Russo

Democratic Candidate for Nassau County Legislature, District 19