



Office of Legislator Seth I. Koslow

NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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County Executive Bruce Blakeman
Nassau County Executive Office
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, NY 11501

Dear County Executive Blakeman,

I write to you on behalf of Nassau County's hardworking Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) workforce and retirees, who have served this county with dedication and integrity. These are individuals who chose a career in public service despite lower wages compared to the private sector because of a promise—a promise that their commitment would be met with secure benefits, particularly healthcare. That promise, as evidenced by recent developments, is being shamefully broken.

Your administration's attempt to force workers into less comprehensive and unaffordable health plans is a direct betrayal of these promises. Many of our public employees, who are among the lowest-paid workers in the county, simply cannot afford the out-of-pocket costs associated with these imposed health plans. The recent court ruling by Nassau State Supreme Court Judge Gary Carlton reflects the severity of the situation. Judge Carlton's decision to temporarily reinstate the state-run Empire health plan underscores your administration's failure to negotiate in good faith and to honor the commitments made to these employees.

Let's not forget the agreement reached in August 2023, which was ratified by the CSEA after members accepted longer workdays and moved to the Excelsior plan in exchange for modest salary increases. Yet, when the state discontinued the Excelsior plan, rather than addressing this challenge collaboratively and transparently, your administration scrambled to impose unaffordable, high-deductible options on workers without their consent.

The county's refusal to permanently reinstate the Empire plan is not only fiscally shortsighted but morally reprehensible. This decision, which prioritizes budgetary savings over the well-being of your workforce, undermines the trust and morale of those who keep this county running.

Furthermore, the treatment of Nassau's retirees is an insult to their years of service. Retirees, whose benefits were promised for life, are being dragged into disputes over health coverage in

clear violation of agreements made at the time of their retirement. The law explicitly states that retirees' benefits cannot be diminished, yet your administration persists in targeting these financially vulnerable individuals.

This pattern of behavior sends a clear message to Nassau's public employees and retirees: the promises made to you mean nothing. Your administration's actions are not only legally questionable but also morally indefensible.

As County Executive, it is your responsibility to ensure that Nassau's public servants and retirees are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. I urge you to:

1. **Permanently Reinstate the Empire Plan** for all impacted CSEA members immediately.
2. Honor the legally vested lifetime health benefits for retirees and halt all efforts to diminish or modify these benefits.
3. Halt any plans to hire consultants aimed at reducing employee and retiree benefits, as such actions deepen distrust among the workforce.

The hardworking members of CSEA Local 830 and retirees entrusted this county with their livelihoods and futures. Your administration's broken promises threaten not only their financial security but also the fundamental trust between Nassau County and its employees.

I hope you will do the right thing and restore the faith of these public servants by honoring the commitments made to them.

Sincerely,



Legislator Seth Koslow
Nassau County Legislature

CC:

CSEA President Mary E. Sullivan
CSEA 830 Long Island President Jarvis Brown
CSEA 830 Long Island Political Action Coordinator Sue Castle
CSEA 830 Nassau Retirees Legal Fund, Scott Cohen