



# New York State Public Employee Conference

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On behalf of the New York State Public Employment Conference representing more than 80 member unions and I offer the following statement about the proposed legislation to enact and institute a Single Payer Health Program throughout New York State.

At the outset, let me state that the proposed legislation appears to be an attempt to offer better health services to lower income New York residents as well as undocumented aliens by further bending the working middle class over the table by forcing a two wage earning family to foot the outrageously exorbitant bill in a scheme that is ill conceived and will ultimately result in the complete annihilation of hard earned union contracts which historically provided negotiated health benefits as part of the overall employer costs in wages and overall compensation.

To be more succinct in my evaluation of this legislation as an amalgamation of inconsistent thought processes that attempts to coagulate like oil in water in a feeble attempt to form a cogent health law. I refer you all to the first part of the Bill in the Legislative Findings of Section 2, paragraph 3. It states:

"This Act does not create any employment benefit nor does it require, prohibit or limit the providing of any employment benefit."

Yet, as I look deeper into the legislation, Section 5111 entitled, Regional Advisory Councils, Section 4, Financing of New York Health, Paragraph 29a) that the basic structure of the program is that its benefits will be paid for by a tax on all payroll and self employed income and a non-payroll tax on taxable income not subject to payroll tax. Thus, every employee in New York State is expected to pay 20% of their entire income for this healthcare which flies in the face of negotiated premiums and employee contributions that are already negotiated in their collective bargaining agreements. Therefore, this legislation will change their benefits package by legislative fiat and thus become a changed benefit by definition which is inconsistent with the legislation's stated intent.

Another point of schizophrenia is in regards to the effect of this legislation on retirees. Section 5101 (10)(a) states: "this subdivision does not create or increase any eligibility for any public employee retiree health benefit that would not otherwise exist and does not diminish any public employee retiree health benefit". Yet, sub. B requires all retirees living in New York State to enroll for the State Healthcare System because if they don't, the State Retirement System is mandated under this law to enroll them.

Also, the Rand report which is heavily relied upon in fashioning this incomprehensible legislation relies on unfathomable assertions that every high income residents, including medical professionals who will be overtaxed and no longer paid competitive wages due to state caps on medical services, will continue to reside in this state while they're basically shaken down by the highest taxed state in the country to give more. All I can say is one word, "SALT". In one year, the state stands at a 2.6-billion-dollar deficit and will continue to climb as legislation like this will eviscerate the working middle class and continue to accelerate income flight from this state. While the Rand report attempt to gloss over the exorbitant costs to this boondoggle it at least admits that in a perfect world, there may be a reduction of 2 percent in overall costs by 2031. That assumption does not take into account the true economic realities of economic recessive cycles as well as an aging resident population with diminished high-income earners remaining in the State to be fleeced. Simply put, this is an insanely sick legislative scheme that needs to be quarantined from those who deal in our state's reality that the cost does not equal the cure.

Thank you.

*Peter D. Meringolo*





## 2019 Member Units

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1056  
Amalgamated Transit Union Local 726  
Assistant Deputy Wardens/Deputy Wardens Ass'n  
Association of Supreme Court Reporters  
Bridge & Tunnel Officers Benevolent Association  
Bridge & Tunnel Superior Officers Benevolent Association  
Captains Endowment Association  
Citywide Association of Law Assistants  
Civil Service Coalition  
of Building Trades and Municipal Unions  
Correction Captains Association  
Correction Officers Benevolent Association  
Court Attorneys Association of the City Of New York  
Court Officers Benevolent Association of Nassau County  
CWA AFL-CIO  
CWA Local 1180  
CWA Local 1182  
Detectives Endowment Association  
Detective Investigators Association  
I B E W Local 3  
I B T Local 237  
I U O E Local 15A-B-C-D  
I U O E Local 30  
I U O E Local 211  
I U O E Local 891  
Lieutenants Benevolent Association  
Local 372, DC 37  
Local 983, DC 37  
Long Island Public Service Employees Local 342  
MTA Commanding Officers Association  
MTA PBA  
Nassau County Deputy Sheriff's Benevolent Ass'n  
Nassau County Detectives Association Inc.  
Nassau County Fire Marshalls Benevolent Association  
Nassau County PBA  
Nassau County Police Conference  
Nassau County Sheriff's COBA  
Nassau County Superior Officers Association  
New York District Council of Carpenters  
NYC Deputy Sheriff's Association

NYS Correctional Officers & PBA  
NYS Court Clerks Association  
NYS Court Officers Association  
NYS Nurses Association  
NYS Police Investigators Association  
NYS Professional Fire Fighters Association  
NYS Public Employees Federation, AFL-CIO  
NYS Troopers PBA  
NYS Supreme Court Officers  
PBA of New York State Law Enforcement  
Police Conference of New York  
Port Authority Maintenance Supervisors Association  
Port Authority PBA  
S E I U Local 246  
S E I U Local 300  
S E I U Local 621  
Sanitation Officers' Association  
Sergeants Benevolent Association  
Social Services Employees Union Local 371  
Subway Surface Supervisors Association  
Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees  
Suffolk County Court Employees Association  
Suffolk County Deputy Sheriffs PBA  
Suffolk County East Hampton Village PBA  
Suffolk County South Hampton Town PBA  
Suffolk County PBA  
Suffolk County Police Superior Officers Association  
Suffolk Detectives Association  
Teamster Local 237  
TWU Local 100  
Uniformed EMS Officers Union  
Uniform EMTs and Paramedics Local 2507  
Uniformed Fire Alarm Dispatchers Benevolent Association  
Uniformed Firefighters Association  
Uniformed Fire Officers Association  
Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association  
United Public Service Employees Association  
United Service Workers Union Local 74  
United Transit Leadership Organization  
Westchester County Correction Officers Association  
Yonkers Fire Fighters Local 628  
Yonkers Uniformed Fire Officers Association