



# Communications Workers of America

AFL-CIO, District 1

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**Chris Shelton**  
President

**Dennis Trainor**  
District 1 Vice President

**Hetty Rosenstein**  
NJ Area Director

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Dear CWA Member,

For the past 6 years, our Union, our benefits, and our livelihoods have been under a relentless attack from the Christie Administration. Our pension plan has been deliberately underfunded for more than two decades by both Republicans and Democrats, and the present Governor has failed to make over \$17 billion in payments to the System. We are now 8 – 12 years away from the Pension Plan becoming bankrupt.

**We took the pension case to the New Jersey Supreme Court. The Court said that the State could not be forced to make the payments under the present New Jersey Constitution.**

**The only way to require the State to fund the pension system and to protect our pension benefits is to pass a Constitutional Amendment.**

We must run a campaign to pass an Amendment to the Constitution in November 2016 if we are to save the Pension Plan. In addition, we have to continue to run legal and mobilization campaigns to stop Job Banding (pending before the Appellate Court), restore increments (pending before PERC, Superior Court and Appellate Court) and protect our health benefits, and collective bargaining rights.

After 6 years of struggle, our reserves are depleted. We have already used millions of dollars in funds, significantly subsidized by the dues and voluntary Political Action Fund contributions of private sector members, in order to fight the legal and political battles we have waged since Governor Christie came into office.

We need millions of dollars to run a statewide referendum for a Constitutional Amendment and we need it now. The National Union Executive Board has agreed to loan New Jersey Public Workers up to \$4 million in private sector Defense Funds so that we can continue to fight to protect our Contractual rights to pension funding and benefits and to pass a Constitutional Amendment.

We will have to pay that money back to the CWA Defense Fund. **We can do it, if we increase dues by 50 cents a week until the money is paid back.** Once the money is paid back, or at the end of 5 years, the 50 cent a week dues increase will end.

CWA has never increased dues in the public sector before. But this is an historic moment. We cannot allow the New Jersey Pension System to go bankrupt. We must fight every attack on our job security, our benefits, and our contractual rights. This is a crisis and we must take the urgent and responsible actions that a crisis calls for.

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We are a democratic Union and we are asking you, the Members of CWA, to vote for a time limited (no longer than 5 years) dues increase of 50 cents a week so that we can do what we need to do to protect all of our pensions and rights. Polls for this Referendum will open at 8 a.m. on February 22, 2016 and will close at 5 p.m. on March 4, 2016. The loan will go into effect as soon as the dues increase passes, and the dues increase will begin effective July 1, 2016. This referendum is being conducted electronically and you can vote 24 hours a day by following the instructions contained in this notice.

**Please vote Yes – so that we have the resources that we need.**

In Solidarity,

**John Rose, President**  
CWA Local 1031

**Patrick Kavanagh, President**  
CWA Local 1032

**Gaye Palmer, President**  
CWA Local 1033

**Adam Liebttag, President**  
CWA Local 1036

**Ken McNamara, President**  
CWA Local 1037

**Shawn Ludwig, President**  
CWA Local 1038

**Lionel Leach, President**  
CWA Local 1039

**Carolyn Wade, President**  
CWA Local 1040

P.S. Please note: NO money from this dues increase will be spent on partisan political campaigns. CWA will not use this increase in dues for partisan political work connected to our fights to protect our rights. The money from this dues increase will only be used to support a nonpartisan campaign for a Constitutional Amendment and the legal and mobilization costs connected with protecting these pension and collective bargaining rights.