

# MTA REPORTER

**RETIREED** The Voice of MTA Retired Members



There are always a number of topics that might be of interest to retired public employees. Some folks might have an interest in pending legislation or the state budget, some in the upcoming political elections, and others in what might be on the horizon with respect to health insurance.

This spring, five luncheons are scheduled around the state. We invite you to join with members of the MTA Retired Members Committee, guest speakers, and your MTA Retired colleagues, on one of the upcoming dates.

**11 a.m. REGISTRATION & LUNCH**  
**11 a.m. – 2 p.m. PROGRAM AND Q&A**  
**Cost of the Luncheon: \$20.00**

## LUNCHEON DATES AND LOCATIONS

<b>Cape Codder, Hyannis</b> Tuesday, April 24, 2018 RSVP Deadline: 4/20/18	<b>Holiday Inn, Taunton</b> Thursday, April 26, 2018 RSVP Deadline: 4/24/18
<b>Verve, Natick</b> Wednesday, May 9, 2018 RSVP Deadline: 5/7/18	<b>Four Points Sheraton, Wakefield</b> Tuesday, May 15, 2018 RSVP Deadline: 5/11/18
<b>Delaney House, Holyoke</b> Thursday, May 17 RSVP Deadline: 5/15/18	

## SPACE IS LIMITED – FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED.

Register online at [massteacher.org/retired](http://massteacher.org/retired)

**OR** by mail, send check payable to MTA, with a note including name, email address, and which luncheon you want to attend to:

Renee Gatewood | 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor | Quincy, MA 02171-2119  
617.878.8208 | [rgatewood@massteacher.org](mailto:rgatewood@massteacher.org)

## RETIREED MEMBERS COMMITTEE 2017-2018

### CHAIR

Richard Liston, *Everett*

### VICE CHAIR

Julia Monteiro-Johnson, *South Dennis*

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Susan Baker, *East Falmouth\**  
Eileen Cleary, *Brockton*  
John DeCicco, *Leominster*  
Mary Gilmore, *South Yarmouth*  
Jacqueline A. Gorrie, *Randolph\*\**  
Kathleen Harrigan, *Hanover*  
Paul Mazut, *Lee*  
Lois Powers, *Quincy*  
Gerry Ruane, *Malden\*\**  
Beth Stafford, *Whitman\**  
Robert Travers, Jr., *Cambridge\*\**  
Anne Wass, *Carver\*\**

### RETIREED MEMBERS ORGANIZER

Robert Whalen  
[rwhalen@massteacher.org](mailto:rwhalen@massteacher.org)  
617.878.8206 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8206

### AFFILIATE SERVICES COORDINATOR

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### MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor  
Quincy, MA 02171-2119  
800.392.6175 ■ [www.massteacher.org](http://www.massteacher.org)

### MTA MEMBER BENEFITS, INC.

800.336.0990 ■ [www.mtabenefits.com](http://www.mtabenefits.com)

### MTA MEMBERSHIP DIVISION

617.878.8118 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8118

\* Appointed Active Member

\*\* MTA Board of Directors

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Richard Liston



MTA Retired Members Committee  
Chair, Richard Liston

**C**ongratulations to the 212 retired candidates who were elected as delegates to Annual Meeting. As a delegate it is your responsibility to make your hotel reservations and attend an MTA Preconvention meeting. The Hotel reservation deadline is April 5th. Preconvention meetings are important as you will hear from all the candidates, listen to the budget, by-laws and resolutions. The last time we had an election many of the alternates were able to go as delegates. Please watch your emails for notification from MTA if your status changes.

Another opportunity for retired delegated will be to vote for candidates to the Retired Members Committee. There are four open seats and 15 certified candidates. Please take time to listen to the candidates speeches at Annual Meeting.

The luncheon schedules are all set and registration information is included in this *Reporter*. Also coming up is our annual conference, The Gathering. This year the conference will be

held September 24-25 at the Sea Crest in Falmouth. The Committee has been hard at work gathering many interesting and different workshops.

Finally I must say a heartfelt thank you to two amazing individuals. First Mary Gilmore who was a major architect in making MTA Retired the vibrant organization that exists today. Mary has decided not to run for re-election to the Committee but her wisdom and knowledge is always there for us to share. Second Jo Ann Fitzgerald who was the Committee's liaison to MTA. As staff Jo Ann guided us, encouraged us to be as daring and innovative as we wanted to be. Jo Ann was instrumental in the growth of MTA Retired. Her leadership and compassion was second to none. Jo Ann retired on January 31, 2018. ■

Introducing a new collaborative effort:

## The Retired Member / Student Member Mentoring Program



***Are you interested in helping a student teacher and want to provide an additional support system outside of the student's practicum? Consider applying to be a mentor today!***



APPLY ONLINE AT [RETIRED.MASSTEACHER.ORG](http://RETIRED.MASSTEACHER.ORG)

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: JOINT RULE 10 DEADLINE PASSES

### Updates on MTA Priority Legislation

A key hurdle in the legislative process is the Joint Rule 10 Deadline, or the date by which all committees, except for the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, must decide whether or not to recommend that a bill proceed in the legislative process. This year's deadline fell on February 7 for the majority of committees, while the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing still has until April 25, 2018. Generally speaking, a committee was required to do one of four things by February 7 for each bill under its jurisdiction:

- **Issue a Favorable Report:** The committee is recommending that a bill pass, either in its original form or as amended, and it moves on to the next steps in the legislative process.
- **Issue an Unfavorable Report:** The committee is recommending that a bill not pass. In most cases, this action will “kill” a bill for the current session.
- **Request a Study Order:** This is a formal request that the bill be studied further by the committee during recess. In practice, this action is another way to “kill” a bill for the session, although it is still possible, albeit unlikely, that the Rules Committee releases it from study.
- **Request an Extension Order:** The committee is requesting additional time, ranging from 30-90 days, to review a particular bill.



### Below are the statuses of MTA's priority legislation post-Joint Rule 10 deadline:

#### **S.1481, An Act to provide fair and affordable public retiree benefits (Support)**

The bill was sent to study. However, a number of other bills related to retired public sector employees were reported favorably and are currently being reviewed by MTA Government Relations.

#### **S.308, An Act strengthening and investing in our educators, students, and communities (Support)**

The bill was reported favorably with H.235, Rep. Marjorie Decker's recess bill. While the H.235 language was substituted for a commissioned study to be administered by DESE, the bill number remains alive and we will work with Rep. Decker to restore the original intent of the bill. As an FYI, the S.308 language pertaining to the foundation budget will fold into S.223, Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz's foundation budget bill, which was also reported favorably.

#### **H.639, An Act investing in public higher education (Support)**

The Joint Committee on Higher Education reported out favorably the section of H.639 that would provide certain adjunct faculty with access to health insurance. The legislation is now numbered H.4153 and has been referred to the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing.

#### **H.2365/S.1004, An Act to improve the Commonwealth's economy with a strong minimum wage and a strong tipped minimum wage (Support)**

The Joint Committee on Labor & Workforce Development voted to extend the deadline by which it must report on the bill.

#### **H.2172/S.1048, An Act establishing a family and medical leave insurance program (Support)**

The Joint Committee on Labor & Workforce Development voted to extend the deadline by which it must report on the bill. ■

## MEET THE RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE

### A highlight



**Jackie Gorrie**  
*Randolph*

Hi friends! Thank you for your continued commitment to our Union by being an MTA Retired member.

I'm Jackie Gorrie and I live in Randolph with my husband Steve Gorrie who is a past President of MTA.

Currently, I represent you as one of your two Statewide Retired Directors on the MTA Board and I am a member of the Retired Members Committee. I also serve as one of two elected members on the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement Board where I continue our work to protect and grow our pensions.

I began and ended my 36 year teaching career in Taunton as a Second Grade and Kindergarten teacher. Locally, I served as Public Relations and Political Action Chairperson, Secretary, Vice President/Grievance Chair and President of the Taunton Education Association. My local advocacy and activism led me to leadership roles as a member of both the MTA and NEA Boards of Directors.

My union involvement was born at home in Fall River as my dad was a union steward and officer in his local; it was nurtured in Taunton and it matured at the state and national levels. So, continuing my commitment to union ideals as a retired MTA member was never a question, it was automatic.

Like you, I am proud to work to preserve our hard won benefits, to improve our health care benefits and to protect our defined benefit pensions. Our activism for these causes doesn't end when we retire. It just gets better. So, join me in my MTA commitment and ask a friend, either active or retired, to become a proud MTA Retired member. Thanks.

**Gerry Ruane**  
*Malden*

Gerry is a long time union activist. He taught middle school social studies in the Malden Public Schools for 35 years. During this time, he served as local president, a member of the MTA Board of Directors, MTA Executive Committee and NEA Board of Directors.

Currently, Gerry represents Retired Members on the MTA Executive Committee. He also serves on the Retired Members Committee, the MTAB Board of Directors and is chairperson of the Bylaws and Rules Committee.

Aside from his work with MTA, Gerry supervises student teachers and is adjunct faculty at Cambridge College. Traveling, reading and genealogy are hobbies that also keep him busy.



**Bobby Travers**  
*Cambridge*

Bobby Travers is a library paraeducator from Cambridge. He currently serves on the MTA Executive Committee representing ESPs. Bobby has served on the National Education Association and MTA Board of Directors. He serves on numerous MTA committees including the ESP, Retired members, Advisory Budget, Strategic Action Plan and MTAB Benefits Board of Directors. Locally, he serves as the treasurer of the 1,300-member Cambridge Education Association. Bobby enjoys traveling in his spare time.

## MEET THE RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE

*continued*

### **Anne Wass** *Carver*

Anne Wass was president of the Massachusetts Teachers Association from 2006 to 2010. She is a champion of students, public schools and public higher education.

Mrs. Wass has spent all of her adult life in public education and has served in many leadership positions. She taught at the Hanover Middle School for 31 years. She has served on the MTA Board of Directors and state Executive Committee, and she has been president of her local association in Hanover at two different times. Before taking office as president in July 2006, she served as state association vice president for four years.

Mrs. Wass has won several awards honoring her abilities as a teacher. They include the Bristol County Educators' Association Kathleen Roberts Human Relations Award, the Plymouth County Education Association Honor Award and the Loretta Quinlan Award, the highest honor bestowed by PCEA. In 2010, she received the first MTA Friend of Labor Award and the very special Louise Gaskins Lifetime Civil Rights Award.

At the national level, she served on the National Education Association Resolutions Committee two different times for a total of twelve years. In that role, she helped define many policy and professional issues that affect educators. Working with educators from other areas of the country broadened her perspective on many of education's more controversial issues.

Since retiring, Anne was selected by Governor Patrick to serve on the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement Board as his appointee. She has fought to protect retirees' health insurance and defined benefit plans. Anne works to make sure there is a strong retirement system for our current active members.

Her strong interest in minority issues began when she was in high school. She volunteered after school tutoring children in a downtown store front building in Albany, New York, where she grew up. She served on an MTA Affirmative Action Committee, which helped create the first Ethnic Minority Director seat on the MTA Board. At NEA, she has been and continues to be very involved in the American Indian/Alaskan Native Caucus. She is an Honorary Life member of that caucus. Her involvement with and commitment to members continues.



## SPRING SAVINGS WITH MTA BENEFITS

If you plan to travel this spring or summer, make sure you look into the discounts available to you, including up to 25% on car rentals. Some of these discounts can even be combined with separate coupon offers for additional savings. Use the MTA Benefits-specific links on our website to compare prices between Budget, Hertz, Avis, Alamo and National.

An important travel component that is often overlooked is travel insurance. Travel Insured International provides dependable coverage to help you avoid unexpected costs – all at a group rate. If you need to cancel a trip or have the unfortunate need for medical treatment away from home, travel insurance can help cover costs. With two plans to choose from, you'll be able to find the right coverage for your needs.

April is BJ's Wholesale Club enrollment month! If your membership to BJ's is currently expired or expires before June 30, don't miss the chance to enroll or renew now. You must have an account on our website to access the application. Once April ends, you won't be able to enroll again until July. Visit [www.mtabenefits.com](http://www.mtabenefits.com) for full details on all of these member discounts.

*As an MTA member,  
you are entitled to the  
discounts and programs  
offered by MTA Benefits.  
[www.mtabenefits.com](http://www.mtabenefits.com)*

## MARCH FOR OUR LIVES RALLIES, MARCH 24



Students organized protests all over the country including the March For Our Lives rally in Boston.

MTA members showed their support for young people seeking to end gun violence by joining student-led March for Our Lives demonstrations across Massachusetts on March 24.

In Boston, the site of the largest march in the state, educators walked together from Madison Park Technical Vocational High School in Roxbury to Boston Common behind MTA and Boston Teachers Union banners.

Most of the speakers at the Boston Common rally were students. Leonor Muñoz, a junior at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, site of the February 14 tragedy that sparked the actions, and her

sister, Beca Muñoz, a student at Northeastern University, led the huge crowd in chants of “Not One More!”

Rockland physics teacher and MTA member Graciela Mohamedi was a featured speaker in Boston. A former U.S. Marine, Mohamedi spoke with passion about why it is wrong to arm educators with guns as a deterrent to school violence. “A handgun in the hands of an untrained, overworked teacher will not be an effective measure against an armed gunman,” she said. “I do not want a gun!”

She continued, “Arm us with science equipment. Arm us with pencils and paper to last a whole year. Arm us with books that aren’t missing pages. Arm every school with equitable funding!” ■



**—SAVE THE DATES—**

**MTA 2018 Retired Gathering**

**September 24 & 25, 2018**

**Sea Crest Beach Hotel, Falmouth**

## BILL SIGNED SAVING RETIRED TEACHERS ON HEALTH INSURANCE

Urgent legislation required to spare a group of retired public employees, mostly teachers, from a spike in health care costs next year sped through the legislative chambers on March 26 and was signed by Governor Charlie Baker the next day. Passage was just in time to prepare for the start of open enrollment on April 4.

The new law will merge roughly 10,000 retirees into the main pool of Group Insurance Commission members, enabling them to avoid cost spikes. The merger of Pool 2, which includes retired teachers and a small group of elderly government employees, became a priority after GIC Executive Director Roberta Herman and her staff informed their board last month that without action about 955 retirees in Pool 2 would have to switch health plans and absorb premium spikes of 30 percent to 80 percent beginning on July 1.

Only one insurer – UniCare – had bid on the business for Pool 2, limiting choices for members and potentially requiring many employees to switch plans. The merger of Pool 2 with Pool 1, which includes 97 percent of the more than 440,000 state employees and retirees covered through the GIC, is not expected to materially change the rates offered to Pool 1 members.

MTA continues to advocate for reconfiguration of the commission to ensure more labor representation, and for other changes that will protect members from unnecessary cost-shifting. ■

### UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION TODAY:

The MTA communicates via e-mail regularly with our retired members about topics and issues of importance, including “Save the Date” notices for retired programs, legislative updates and calls to action on issues important to public-sector retirees. It is important that the MTA have an updated e-mail for you to keep you informed.

UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION NOW  
BY SENDING AN E-MAIL TO  
***RETIRED@MASSTEACHER.ORG.***

### Chorus to perform at Annual Meeting

The MTA Chorus will perform at the 2018 MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates, which will be held May 4 and 5 at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston.

MTA Retired member Bob Lague is the choral director. Rehearsals will be held at his home at 9 Cronin Way in Woburn on

three Monday evenings — March 19, April 9 and April 30.

 A dress rehearsal and sound check will be held on the morning of May 4 in the convention hall. If you are interested in joining the chorus, please notify Lague by calling him at 781.983.6151 or e-mailing [NEAorgan@aol.com](mailto:NEAorgan@aol.com).

Please indicate whether you are a new or returning chorus member, identify your district, and state whether you sing soprano, alto, tenor or bass.

Returning members should bring folders from past performances to rehearsals.

## UNION POWER FORCES GIC TO REVERSE COURSE ON HEALTH CARE CARRIERS



*January 30 rally against the Group Insurance Commission plan to eliminate health care carriers.*

Hundreds of union members packed into the Boston Teachers Union Hall for an emergency rally about the GIC's plan to eliminate health care carriers. The GIC voted to reverse course.

Intense pressure applied by members of the MTA and other public-sector unions has forced the Group Insurance Commission to reverse its recent decision to eliminate most of the insurance carriers currently available to active and retired employees.

The GIC voted February 1, 2018, to retain three carriers that it had voted to eliminate for active employees: Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Fallon Health and Tufts Health Plan.

"This is what union power is all about," said MTA President Barbara Madeloni. "We still have work to do to make the GIC's process more democratic and transparent. And we still must prevent harmful cost-shifting to members as the GIC works on plan designs and rates. But because so many members attended hearings and our rally or made calls to elected officials, we were able to undo a terrible decision that would have compromised the health care of hundreds of thousands of people."

Some retirees will still need to shift carriers under the GIC's revised scenario if their existing carrier did not bid to cover the particular insurance pool to which they belong

or failed to meet the parameters of the bid.

On Jan. 18, the GIC, which includes several members appointed by Governor Charlie Baker, voted 8-5 to eliminate more than half of the insurance carriers used by the 440,000 active and retired public employees who receive health care benefits through the commission and to shift the bulk of the business to Indiana-based UniCare. The five labor representatives on the commission all voted against the plan.

They voiced anger over the fact that they had received packets of information only hours before the vote and did not have sufficient time to study the impact of such a drastic change.

Public-sector unions immediately assailed the decision. Both active and retired employees flooded Baker's office and the GIC with phone calls and e-mails calling out the attack on working families.

The GIC attempted to explain the decimation of benefit options at a series of public hearings, but outrage grew as participating members learned that those hearings were often being held when most people were working — and that the hearings were taking place at venues that quickly filled to capacity, leaving hundreds locked out.

***Continued on page 13***



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“HONOR OUR OWN”



AWARD

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## NOMINATION FORM

AWARD TO BE PRESENTED  
AT THE 2018 MTA RETIRED GATHERING

## IS THERE AN MTA MEMBER WHO:

- Encouraged you professionally or personally?
- Fostered your involvement in the MTA?
- Mentored you as a beginning educator?
- Helped you as a student?

## “HONOR OUR OWN”



## AWARD

## NOW IS THE TIME TO RECOGNIZE HIS OR HER CONTRIBUTION.

Each year, the MTA Retired Members Committee sponsors the “Honor Our Own” award. The award honors an active or retired MTA member for his or her outstanding influence on students, beginning educators and association members. To nominate an educator, complete the nomination form and provide a written explanation of why you believe the candidate meets the guidelines for the award. The guidelines include demonstrated professional responsibility and achievement in one’s field; displays of leadership, creativity or innovation; evidence of the nominee’s impact on the school community, students and association; and examples of how the nominee has improved the image of public education.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE AND WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR THE AWARD?

**Nominees must be active or retired members of the Massachusetts Teachers Association at present.**

Please explain why the nominee should be honored. Consider the following about the nominee when you are writing your submission:

1. Professional responsibilities and personal achievements in his/her field.
2. Leadership, creativity or innovation.
3. Impact of the nominee’s professionalism on the school community, the students, the association and/or the community.
4. Advocacy for association members, the profession and public education.
5. Improving the image of public education.

## HOW DO I SUBMIT A NOMINATION FOR THE “HONOR OUR OWN” AWARD?

1. Complete the nomination form.
2. Attach a written explanation about why the nominee meets the guidelines for the award. Follow the award guidelines listed above.
3. Mail or e-mail the completed application. Materials must be received no later than June 1.

**“Honor Our Own” Award**  
**Attn: Robert Whalen, MTA**  
**2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor | Quincy, MA 02171-2119**  
**[rwhalen@massteacher.org](mailto:rwhalen@massteacher.org)**

For a copy of this nomination form, please visit: [www.massteacher.org/honorourown](http://www.massteacher.org/honorourown)

# 1

## Complete the nomination form.

### Nominee Information:

(Please check one)

Member of \_\_\_\_\_ Association

MTA Retired

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Submitted By:

(Please check one)

Member of \_\_\_\_\_ Association

MTA Retired

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

This form may be printed and mailed or completed electronically and e-mailed. For best results, view the PDF in Adobe Reader.<sup>®</sup> Complete any fillable areas by typing in the fields or clicking on check boxes. Save a copy to your computer for your records.

# 2

Attach a written explanation of 250-500 words on why the nominee meets the guidelines for the award.

# 3

Mail or e-mail the completed application.

“Honor Our Own” Award  
Robert Whalen, MTA  
2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor | Quincy, MA 02171-2119  
rwhalen@massteacher.org

Materials must be received by the MTA no later than June 1. The decision of the Retired Members Committee is final.

# Recent Recipients of the “Honor Our Own” Award

2017

## Springfield Education Association Committee of Retirees

Nominated by SEA President Tim Collins

“The mission of the Tools 4 Teaching recycling store is to provide Springfield Public Schools teachers, especially new teachers, with quality educational materials for their classrooms at no cost. The Tools 4 Teaching store is a nonprofit organization that receives educational materials through many varied sources. Donations are received from local businesses and retiring teachers. This keeps quality and usable school materials out of landfills and puts them into SPS classrooms.... The T4T store and the social events that these hardworking, dedicated retirees manage promote unity among teachers and the community. This demonstrates to the public that we can all come together for the benefit of students — our future leaders.”

2016

## Gladys Durant, *Retired* — *Bristol County Educators’ Association*

Co-Chair Richard Liston spoke for the Retired Members Committee

“As the Retired Members Committee contemplated the Honor Our Own award for 2016, it was a no-brainer that we needed to honor the life, career and service of Gladys Durant. She embodied everything this award was created to honor. Gladys was a dedicated educator in the Attleboro school system for over 30 years and was a very active member of her local association and of the MTA. After she retired, she continued to stay active, serving as a representative and former treasurer of the Bristol County Educators’ Association. She was also active within the MTA and was an active member of the Retired Members Committee at the time of her passing.”

2015

## Susan Cogliano, *Stoughton science teacher*

Nominated by John Gunning, Stoughton Teachers Association

“Susan was a leader on the faculty. She served as team leader and then as department head at O’Donnell Middle School. Susan looked out for teachers, making sure they were properly provisioned. She guided new teachers, helping them adapt to their environment. Not one to give speeches, Susan’s leadership was seen in the way she would ‘check in’ with a colleague, offer assistance or guidance when needed, and quietly take the lead without being asked by someone.”

2014

## Neil Clarke, *Lee Education Association*

Nominated by Joshua David Hall, Lee Middle School teacher

“Neil greeted me and all other new teachers with open arms and a joke, and was always ready to lend advice, a story or a friendly ear. He was also a huge proponent of the Lee Education Association and the MTA. Neil was always up to date on the political goings-on with MTA and politics in general. Even after Neil retired from teaching in 2006, the conversations continued and Neil’s involvement with the MTA continued.”

## Questions?

“Honor Our Own” Award

Robert Whalen, MTA

2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor | Quincy, MA 02171-2119

[rwhalen@massteacher.org](mailto:rwhalen@massteacher.org)

For a copy of this nomination form, please visit: [www.massteacher.org/honorourown](http://www.massteacher.org/honorourown)

## UNION POWER FORCES GIC TO REVERSE COURSE ON HEALTH CARE CARRIERS *continued*

*Continued from page 8*

The MTA and other public-sector unions held an emergency rally on January 30 at the Boston Teachers Union Hall, where hundreds of members demanded action. More than a dozen elected officials attended the coalition event, and the message to them was clear: The process by which public employee health care benefits are set is deeply flawed and must be changed.

MTA members shared their health care stories at the rally, describing the negative impact they would face if forced to change insurance carriers — or, worse, lose their doctors and access to the places where they now receive care.

“The GIC’s decision can affect people in a number of ways, none of them positive,” said Bonnie Player, a member of the Framingham Teachers Association who is undergoing cancer treatments.

Andrew Baker, president of the Lexington Education Association, described the plight of his best friend, a fellow educator whose daughter requires intensive ongoing care.

“The history of the GIC is one of broken promises,” Baker said, noting that his friend is considering a move from Lexington to a school district that does not use the GIC to provide insurance to its educators. “If this downward trend continues, municipalities will be the losers in the end.”

Julia Monteiro Johnson, a member of the MTA Retired Members Committee, said that retirees simply no longer trust the GIC.

“We are fighting mad, and we are fighting back,” she said.

Madeloni framed the boundaries of that fight through the actions that took place before the GIC reversed course. In her remarks at the rally and in testimony at a Senate oversight hearing held on Wednesday, she criticized the lack of labor representation on the GIC and the agency’s existing process of holding separate votes to determine carriers, plans and rates.

“This is absolutely outrageous,” she said. “Why do we have to fight for quality health care that we can afford?”

The MTA supports passage of a bill that would increase the number of labor seats on the GIC to balance the say of gubernatorial appointees.

Timothy Sullivan, the MTA’s representative on the commission, forcefully made the point at today’s meeting

that the commission must change its process to allow for greater public input and a sensible decision-making process.

Upcoming decisions by the GIC to set plan designs and rates are of immediate concern. The commission will take up those issues at a meeting that is yet to be scheduled and at its next regularly scheduled meeting on Feb. 22.

“This is no time to let up the pressure,” Madeloni said.

### GIC to Consider Key Procedural Changes

On Thursday, February 22, 2018, Group Insurance Commission (GIC) Commissioner Tim Sullivan, who represents MTA on the panel, introduced a motion calling for the GIC to adopt a more thoughtful and transparent process when making decisions that impact subscribers’ health care. The motion was prompted by last month’s reckless vote to slash the number of health insurance providers available to active and retired public employees, a decision that was ultimately rescinded amid a wave of grassroots opposition. Sullivan’s proposal would require that commissioners be provided with relevant information on proposed health care plan offering or design changes not less than 21 days prior to the date of the vote on such changes. It would also mandate that the GIC hold regional hearings with subscribers and other stakeholders prior to a final vote on proposals that would alter plan offerings or designs. Should the aforementioned reforms run into any statutory roadblocks, Sullivan’s measure asks the GIC to work with the Legislature to make any changes necessary to promote transparency in the commission’s decision-making. The motion will be taken up for a vote in early April.

### Holding the Line on GIC Health Care Costs

More good news coming out of the GIC for most participants. Not only did the GIC reverse its ill-considered plan to eliminate half of its insurance carriers, but most members will see little or no increase in out-of-pocket costs for the upcoming plan year, and premiums will be relatively stable. For more good news, see “Bill Signed Saving Retired Teachers On Health Insurance” on page 7. ■

## WORKERS ‘STICK WITH THE UNION’ AS COURT HEARS JANUS ARGUMENTS



*Working Peoples Day of Action in Boston*

On February 26, 2018, workers took to the streets in cities across Massachusetts — and thousands more wore pro-union stickers at their worksites — to show solidarity as the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in *Janus v. AFSCME*, a case backed by wealthy special interests intent on weakening the power of public employee unions.

Several hundred unionized workers crowded together in front of the fire station on Purchase Street in Boston shortly after noon and listened to impassioned speeches delivered before a phalanx of television cameras.

Steven Tolman, president of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, roared, “This is an attack on working people! They’re trying to divide us. We’re going to work hard to make sure that’s not the case.”

Other community-based events were scheduled for communities including New Bedford, Greenfield, Springfield, Worcester, Fall River and Somerville. Employees on the UMass campuses in Boston, Lowell and Amherst also planned pro-union events.

“Sisters and brothers in labor, we are gathering today to show the world that we are going to stay strong and stick with the union no matter what billionaires like the Koch brothers and the backers of the State Policy Network or our own Pioneer Institute throw at us,” said MTA President Barbara Madeloni, who introduced U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren in Boston. “We know our power is in our solidarity.”

The *Janus* case challenges a 40-year-old unanimous Supreme Court decision that gave unions the right to collect “agency” or “fair share” fees from public employees who receive benefits and protections under union contracts even if they decide not to become members.

The court is widely expected to rule against public employee unions along ideological lines, with President Donald Trump’s appointee Justice Neil Gorsuch casting the deciding vote. Senator Warren said that the very day the Supreme Court announced it would take up the *Janus* case, Gorsuch was the keynote speaker at an event financed by David and Charles Koch and the Bradley Foundation, all notoriously anti-union.

“That’s a blatant conflict of interest,” Warren said. “But we’re here today because we have not given up. We are fighting back. We are here to fight for the right to bargain for pay.

“Are we for that?” she asked, drawing loud cheers from the crowd.

“We are here to fight for the right to negotiate for benefits,” Warren continued. “Are we for that? And we are here to fight for the right for workers to be treated with basic dignity. Are we for that?”

Deb Gesualdo, president of the Malden Education Association, said she came to the Boston rally because she wanted to “stand in solidarity with all my other union brothers and sisters.” She left feeling inspired.

“When I woke up this morning, I was feeling the stress of the day, knowing it was *Janus v. AFSCME* day,” she said. “After I went to the rally, I felt so much better. It was awesome. The energy was so good. To see so many different people, so many different lines of work represented and so many different unions was wonderful.”

Since most MTA members couldn’t make it to the events that were scheduled during the day, they were asked to wear stickers that bore messages such as: “#WeRise,” “America Needs Union Jobs” and “We’re Sticking with the Union.”

Lee Saunders, national president of AFSCME — the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees — flew up from Washington, D.C., to speak at the Boston rally. He summed up the fighting spirit of the day.

“This case isn’t about free speech,” he said. “This case is about political power. This case is about those who have wealth and power in this country. They want more wealth and power at the expense of all of you. They can go straight to hell, because we’re fighting back.” ■

## RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE

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### Candidate Biographical Statements

The Retired Members Committee is described in Article X, Section 9 of the MTA Bylaws. There are eight members elected from the Statewide Retired District membership. Four terms expire each year. This election takes place at the MTA Annual Meeting among the delegates representing the Statewide Retired District. Those elected to the committee may serve up to three consecutive two-year terms.

Retired members may self-nominate to run for this committee, with nominations due by the first Friday in March. The election is conducted by the Credentials and Ballot Committee, which also conducts the lottery to determine the order of names on the ballot.

Those on the ballot in 2018 for the four open committee seats are listed below (in ballot order, per lottery):

#### 1. Lynn Russell | Monson, MA

Having served as the member for retirees on SEA's Executive Board, I am self-nominating for the MTA Retired Members Committee. This would be an excellent opportunity to join with peers to focus on pertinent issues, speak out for MTA retirees and plan conferences on the statewide level.

#### 2. Gerald Conefrey | Brockton, MA

Even though I retired from BPS eleven years ago, I substitute teach in Brockton and Easton, MA. I am aware of the myriad of problems that teachers face today. I would like to work with the MTA to help solve these issues. I need your vote. Thank you.

#### 3. Stephen Gorrie | Randolph, MA

MTA values, voice and vision are central to my advocacy on your behalf. As a member of the NEA and MTA Boards of Directors and a past MTA President, I know our issues. I ask for your vote so that I may continue to effectively represent you. Thank you.

#### 4. Bonnie Page | Tewksbury, MA

I am a committed and passionate retired MTA member and would like to become a part of this committee. I know the issues that affect us, and I will be able to help inform our members across the state. Please consider giving me one of your votes. Thank you.

#### 5. Kenneth Haar | Naples, FL

Five years experience in Chapter 766 schools and Wayland Public Schools plus 32 years experience at Westfield State University where I was APA Chapter President and MSCA Chapter President. MTA Candidate Recommendation Committee. MTA Strategic Planning Committee. Multiple time Annual Meeting and NEA-RA meeting delegate. I would appreciate your support.

*Continued on next page*

## RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE *continued*

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### 6. Patrick Patterson | Ipswich, MA

While working I was active in my local union as a building representative and treasurer advocating for our control as teachers of the working conditions in the class room. Since retirement I have remained active in the union and with political issues in general.

### 7. Dale LaBonte | Northampton, MA

No statement.

### 8. Peter Mili | Belmont, MA

As a retiree, I have enjoyed participating in the various programs designed and offered by the Retired Members Committee. I am grateful for the work of the committee members and welcome the opportunity to contribute as a member of this committee if elected. Thank you for your consideration.

### 9. Eileen Cleary | Brockton, MA

Seeking re-election to the RMC. Your vote allows me to continue advancing retiree concerns: Social Security offsets, COLAs and the always important health insurance issues! Representing member concerns at all levels has given me the experience and background to actively and conscientiously represent my fellow retirees. Thanks for your support.

### 10. Michael Power | Walpole, MA

Please consider me for Retired Members Committee as you vote. Have been a member active/retired for over 40 years from Walpole and am presently the PR&R Chair for the Walpole Teachers Association and a PAL delegate for the Norfolk/Bristol Senate district. Retirees need to be heard.

### 11. Andrei Joseph | Brookline, MA

Let us spend our retirements contributing to the union of our dreams: a fierce defender of public education and a powerful voice for every member, all the time drenched in compassion and hope.

### 12. Ronald Colbert | Wilmington, MA

Fulfilling 40-year career as teacher of grades 1, 2, 3, and 5, urban school principal, and Professor of Education at Fitchburg State University. Retired activist, local leader, MTA Board and Executive Committee Member. Hospitality Chair, NEA-RA Boston 2017. I would be privileged to represent you. Grateful for your vote!

### 13. Kathleen F. Harrigan | Hanover, MA

I'd like to continue working on the RMC. I've attended every meeting, contributing new ideas. At my first meeting, I moved to increase retiree stipend for Annual Meeting. My goal: have 50% new workshops at the Gathering. With your vote, I'll be a strong voice for retiree issues. Thank you.

## RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE *continued*

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### 14. Richard Liston | Everett, MA

It is my honor to currently serve as Chair of MTA Retired Members Committee. I have focused my energy since retiring on moving the issues we face as retirees to the forefront of the MTA agenda. I will continue to advocate for COLA increases and fair health care costs. Thanks.

### 15. Beverly Saccocia | Bridgewater, MA

I ask for your vote for MTA Retired Committee. Worked for 30 years in Bridgewater. I have served as MTA-BOD member, MTA-ESP committee, state contact co-chair for NEA-RA. I want to continue my advocacy for retirees in MA.

## WHY I AM AN MTA RETIRED MEMBER

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### *Millie Ficarra*

I first became a member of MTA/NEA in 2000 as an Education Support Professional. I attended the MTA/NEA Emerging Leaders program intending to learn how I could help the ESPs in my local. Little did I dream that attending that program would give me the desire to become active on the state and national level. President Cathy Boudreau and Vice-President Anne Wass appointed me to the Task Force for Retired Members shortly after I graduated from Emerging Leaders. I was surprised at the appointment because I thought the retired membership was only for teachers. I soon learned that ALL members are eligible to join the retired membership. I immediately joined as a pre-retired life member of the MTA/NEA.

I served my local (Weymouth Teacher's Association) as negotiation chair, Executive Committee Member, Rep Council member, and building rep. Two of my goals while active with the Weymouth Teachers' Association were to change the name of the association to Weymouth Educators' Association. As an ESP unit, we are under the umbrella of the WTA Bylaws. Changing the association name would be more inclusive. The other change I worked for was to have a designated seat for an ESP on the WEA Executive Committee so that our voices would be sure to be heard.

When the seat for MTA/ESP at Large became vacant, Bobby Travers and Donna Johnson encouraged me to run for the seat. I won the election and filled that position until 2011. I then ran for the position of MTA/ESP Executive Committee until 2014.

I'm looking forward to becoming more involved with MTA Retired and will help and speak out for our members whenever I can. I have learned so much during my 18 years as an active member and want to pass my knowledge along to active members. I look forward to attending district meetings and encouraging active members to become a part of the retired membership when they retire.



**We Need You!** We are looking for retired members to sign up to phone bank and talk to our members about what it means to be *All In* for our union and the power of the collective. Sign up information to come on website and at Retired luncheons and Annual Meeting Delegate breakfast.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT, MARCH 23, 2018

### Gerry Ruane

Barbara Madeloni opened the meeting.

We began with new policy changes.

1. Reduce the president and the vice president salary to 2009 levels. Failed
2. A committee of the Board presented policy changes concerning Expense reimbursement for Governance and all members. Voted

Carl Nilsson from Raise Up Massachusetts — He is the campaign manager for the initiatives that will guarantee \$15 minimum wage, paid family leave and the 4% tax increase on all salaries over \$1 million. Carl laid out the plan to continue getting signatures in case the legislature does not pass the minimum wage and family leave. The “millionaires’ tax” will go to the ballot. He presented a plan of media buys, phone banking and canvassing. The cost of the plan will be significant and MTA/NEA’s contribution will be \$6,478,000.

Barbara followed with a presentation on how MTA will be the largest contributor. We have been so well financially managed that we have built up strong reserves. The Board had many questions about the campaign.

Motion brought to the Board by Tom Estabrook:

The MTA Board of Directors recommends that the delegates to the Annual Meeting fund the Raise Up Massachusetts: The 6.5 million dollars will come from the following:

1. Funds committed to the campaign by the January 2018 vote of the Public Relations and Organizing Committee (PR&O) of \$1 million
2. Funds made available to the PR&O Committee for 2018/2019, in the amount of \$1.4 million, also committed to the campaign by the January 2018 vote of the committee.
3. Funds we expect from the NEA, in the amount of \$2.5 million.
4. The balance to be funded by the MTA Board of Directors at its June 2018 meeting, from their reserves.

After much discussion, the Board voted in favor 46-18.

The Bylaws and Rules Report for Annual Meeting. There were 3 Bylaw submissions; 2 specifically affect retirees.

1. One will allow for the election of Retired delegates to the

MTA and the NEA Annual Meetings to be done earlier. Our membership numbers for determining the number of delegates will be set by the membership on January 15.

2. The second bylaw proposal will allow grandchildren to take advantage of the value offered by MTA Member Benefits. It will also allow family members who have policies, etc. through MTAB to keep those policies if the member, active or retired, becomes deceased.

Vice President Erik Champy gave a presentation of the 2018/2019 Budget. Due to the pending “Janus” case at the Supreme Court, the Board is recommending a 10% cut. The Board is hoping that we will not suffer a membership loss. We are hoping that the “All In” Campaign will be successful in showing members the importance of their union membership. The motion was:

The MTA Board of Directors recommends to the Annual Meeting the adoption of the annual operating budget of \$43,805,555 and an operating budget dues level of \$474, based on 79,920 full-time-equivalent active members for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Dues for secretaries, clerks and custodians are to be \$285; dues for aides, food service personnel and other education support professionals are to be \$143. Passed.

After the budget was passed, Erik presented the PR&O Budget. The Motion was:

The MTA Board of Directors recommends to the Annual Meeting the adoption of the Public Relations/Organizing budget of \$1,598,400 and a Public Relations/Organizing budget dues level of \$20, based on 79,920 full-time-equivalent active members for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Dues for secretaries, clerks and custodians are to be \$12; dues for aides, food service personnel and other education support professionals are to be \$6. Passed.

The All In Campaign was reported on by Ann Sullivan and Kim Hoffman. The Campaign has worked on a summer program which will spend \$750,000 to hire people to go door to door to member’s houses to talk to them about staying with the union. The k-12 organizers will talk about local issues as well as statewide initiatives. Suzanne Wall presented the Higher Ed Program.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT, MARCH 23, 2018 *continued*

### New Business:

A Massachusetts Teachers Association retired member is any teacher, college professor or education support professional who worked in a public school, college or university and is eligible by years and age to collect a pension from the state teachers' retirement system, the state retirement system or a municipal or county retirement system. The retired member must also meet all requirements for membership in the National Education Association. The retired member must meet all requirements as stated in this policy. This was the first reading and it will be brought up again at the June Board meeting.

Report of the President: Barbara Madeloni talked about working with other public sector unions on the GIC issues and the Janus Decision at the Supreme Court. She also informed the Board that MTA is preparing for Janus with the All In Campaign which is in full operation.

Report of the Vice President: Erik reported that he has been visiting locals. He attended the NEA Summit in Chicago which featured the opportunity to network with educators across the country as to keeping membership engaged.

Meeting adjourned Saturday at 4:50 PM ■

*If you have some news from your local retired group that you wish to share, please send to Robert Whalen at [rwhalen@massteacher.org](mailto:rwhalen@massteacher.org)*

### FREQUENTLY REQUESTED CONTACT INFORMATION

<p><b>Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System (MTRS)</b> <i>www.mass.gov/mtrs</i></p>	<p><b>Massachusetts State Retirement Board</b> <i>www.mass.gov/treasury/retirement/state-board-of-retire</i></p>
<p><b>MTRS Headquarters</b> 617.679.6877 500 Rutherford Avenue, Suite 210 Charlestown, MA 02129-1628</p>	<p><b>SBR Boston Office</b> 617.367.7770 One Winter Street, 8th Floor Boston, MA 02108</p>
<p><b>MTRS Western Office</b>   413.784.1711 One Monarch Place, Suite 510 Springfield, MA 01144-4028</p>	<p><b>SBR Springfield Office</b> 413.730.6135 463 Dwight Street, Room 109 Springfield, MA 01103</p>

Questions regarding your MTA Member ID Card or Calendar can be directed to:  
Renee Gatewood – [rgatewood@massteacher.org](mailto:rgatewood@massteacher.org) – 617.878.8208



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# MTA **REPORTER**

**RETIRED** *The Voice of MTA Retired Members*

## INSIDE THE MARCH/APRIL ISSUE

DESCRIPTION	PAGE	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
2018 MTA RETIRED SPRING LUNCHEONS. ....	1	UNION POWER FORCES GIC TO REVERSE COURSE ON HEALTH CARE CARRIERS . . . . .	8 & 13
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR . . . . .	2	HONOR OUR OWN AWARD NOMINATION FORM . . . . .	9-12
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: JOINT RULE 10 DEADLINE PASSES. . .	3	WORKERS 'STICK WITH THE UNION' AS COURT HEARS <i>JANUS</i> ARGUMENTS. . . . .	14
MEET THE RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE . . . . .	4-5	RETIRED MEMBER COMMITTEE CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHY STATEMENTS . . . . .	15-17
SPRING SAVINGS WITH MTA BENEFITS . . . . .	5	WHY I AM AN MTA RETIRED MEMBER . . . . .	17
MARCH FOR OUR LIVES RALLIES, MARCH 24 . . . . .	6	BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT, MARCH 23, 2018. . . . .	18-19
BILL SIGNED SAVING RETIRED TEACHERS ON HEALTH INSURANCE. . . . .	7		