



Legislative Session 2019

An Extremely Successful Session

- On both offense and defense, VSEA excelled.
- VSEA-penned bills were passed into law helping our members, and strong pushes to eliminate positions were shot down.
- In a session where many other organizations struggled, VSEA thrived.

How?

Member Participation

Hundreds of members from across the state pitched in to support our Legislative efforts:

- **Dozens of members came to the State House to talk with legislators, testify before committees, and monitor discussions— many taking their own leave time to do so.**
- **Hundreds of members answered action alerts by calling their legislators, and getting coworkers to call**
- **Almost 100 members attended Legislative Dinners, letting lawmakers hear their concerns first-hand.**

This incredible member buy-in, combined with excellent lobbying, brought about some impressive wins.

Securing Contract Arbitration for Our Members

Last bargaining, an attorney from union-busting law firm cast the deciding vote to impose our contract. Now, VSEA will get a say in choosing the person who will hear our contract disputes.

- **We successfully passed H. 16 through four committees, overcame the opposition of the powerful Senate President Pro Tempore, passed it through both full chambers of the Legislature, and got it signed by the Governor. Your calls helped overcome a massive statewide lobbying effort by the other side.**
- **It effects all Executive Branch members and members in the Department State's Attorneys and Sheriffs.**
- **An addition to the new law that will secure this change for the Judiciary in the Spring has already been drafted.**

Getting Relief for a Safe Staffing Crisis

The Department of Corrections has been terribly understaffed for years, leading to dangerous situations for our members.

- VSEA legislation, signed into law this year, requires the Secretary of Administration to create *30 new Correctional Officer I positions* in facilities around the state.
- The same bill requires new studies on misuse of temporary positions in State government—including reporting requirements on Judiciary temps for the first time

Protecting State Workers Instead of Private Contractors

Some legislators proposed cuts to the Economic Services Division of DCF that would have resulted in up to 24 RIFs— in order to allow the private contractors at the Parent Child Centers to continue doing the same work.

- **Members from across the State flooded the switchboards with calls in support of ESD members.**
- **Members from the Division came to the State House and helped write the arguments we used to make our case.**
- **When the dust settled, the cuts fell 100% on the Parent Child Centers, and 0% on ESD.**

Batting Away Other Attacks on Our Facilities

- The Governor had proposed closing the Salisbury Fish Hatchery and RIFing our members there. Instead, we secured full funding for the facility.
- We got language inserted in the Capital Bill that makes clear that the State plans to replace the temporary Middlesex Secure Residential Facility with a *State-owned, state-staffed, physically-secure residential facility*.
- Significantly reduced a planned cut to Woodside's budget and secured the facility's continued operation for another budget cycle.

Winning Additional Funds and Programs in the Budget

- We helped to secure a \$2.5 million dollar increase in funding to the Vermont State Colleges, and a \$500K increase in one-time funds.
 - Also began the roll-out of our plan to secure stable funding for the State Colleges through a free-tuition program, with multiple positive hearings in the Senate.
- Secured 7 new positions in the Family Services Division of DCF

Empowered Members Advancing our Common Goals



**Hundreds of members stepped up this session to
support our Legislative Priorities**

Met with the Governor to secure passage of the Arbitration Bill

- **President Bellini**
- **First Vice President Towne**
- **Rep. Bob Hooper**
- **Bob Stone**
- **Dan Broe**
- **Brian Smith**

Fighting for ESD

Came to the State House to speak with Legislators:

- **Aimee Towne**
- **Dave Bellini**
- **Sue Viens**

Helped draft fact sheets that were crucial in making our case:

- **Sue LaFleche**
- **Cheryl Reed**

Met with Legislators to win a new study on Defensive Weapons

- **Mike Arace**
- **Leona Watt**
- **Carl Davis**
- **Ethan Bacon**
- **Herb Sinkinson**

Fighting for Woodside

Members came to Montpelier to meet with legislators in an informal legislative dinner, and also testified at the State House to share information about the crucial work done at Woodside.

Matt Messier

Alex Hodgetts

John Dubuc

Nathaniel Noble

Chris Hamlin

Bringing Corrections Issues to the Women's Caucus

- **Hannah Buckleybradley**
- **Erika Weaver**
- **Steffen Flibotte**
- **Roy Catella**

Thank You to You All!

This is just a small cross-section of the hundreds of members who met with lawmakers this year to produce such a successful session.

Let's Repeat Our Success!

Like all parts of our legislative program at VSEA, our Legislative Priorities come from you—the members.

If you have ideas or suggestions about what we should work on next session, there are pens, blank paper, and a box to submit your idea at the sign-in table.

Please submit your idea before you leave!