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Richard Khavkine/The Chief

Hundreds of retired municipal workers converged on City Hall Park Oct. 23 for a noontime rally in opposition to city officials' plan to switch the retirees to a Medicare Advantage plan.

Unions say effort to preserve retirees' Medicare is unlawful

BY RICHARD KHAVKINE
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Recently introduced City Council legislation that would preserve New York City retirees' current health care benefits is unlawful, the umbrella organization of municipal unions insists. In an Oct. 30 letter to Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, the head of the Municipal Labor Committee, Harry Nespoli, argues that a bill introduced a week earlier that would prohibit wholesale changes to the retired workers' health plans would undermine city public-sector unions' rights and responsibilities.

"The proposed bill would not only reach into and rewrite those established collective bargaining agreements, but it would illegally curtail the ability of City Unions to exercise their state-law right to fully negotiate retiree health benefits for in-service and retired employees going forward," Nespoli wrote. "As such, the substance of the bill is preempted by state law and is illegal."

The MLC last year overwhelmingly approved the Adams administration's effort to switch about 250,000 municipal retirees from their traditional Medicare to a privately administered Medicare Advantage plan when it endorsed an agreement between the city and managed-care giant Aetna.

See MEDICARE, page 2



Courtesy Stefan Hagen

Scabby the Rat has a new home this month, inside a gallery in Brooklyn. The exhibit 'Scabby: A Rat About Town' is an homage to the iconic inflatable rodent and to workers in New York.

Scabby steals the spotlight

Rat art at a Brooklyn gallery

BY DUNCAN FREEMAN
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Scabby the Rat is in the midst of an unprecedented month-long residency. The inflatable creature most commonly seen outside construction sites or side by side with striking workers, Scabby can now be glimpsed in a more rarefied at-

mosphere — a fine art gallery.

"Scabby: A Rat About Town," at the Open Source Gallery, a small showroom in Park Slope, Brooklyn, is both a tribute to the iconic rat and to the New Yorkers who picket alongside him by the Austrian artist Marlene Hausegger.

Emblazoned on Scabby are lines from the Bruce Springsteen song "Factory," a working-class anthem Hausegger said has been translated by an Austrian singer and is very popular in her home country. "A lot of his music is about work-

ing life and workers," Hausegger said in a Monday interview. The artist was inspired to include The Boss' lyrics — while changing each utterance of the word "man" to "woman" — after seeing him in concert last year.

The printed lyrics also resonate with the auditory aspect of the exhibit, a 15-minute recording of an interview that Hausegger conducted with Natalie Monarrez, a seven-year employee at Amazon. Monarrez's voice echoes from the back room of the exhibit and can be

heard throughout.

"The pain and fear of the song related to what she told me about her life and working conditions," Hausegger said of the connection between Monarrez and Springsteen. She recorded both audio and video of her discussion, but the artist intentionally didn't include the visual aspect as a symbolic gesture, pointing out how workers are often forgotten about.

See SCABBY, page 3

Students want to work for city, but spots can't keep up with demand

The city is also facing a high number of retirements in the next few years

BY CRYSTAL LEWIS
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Students are highly interested in working for the city, but demand far outpaces the number of internship and fellowship positions available. That was the takeaway of a City

Council committee hearing last week that assessed the steps the city is taking to recruit the next generation of civil-service workers as it faces an exodus of retirement-age municipal employees in the next few years.

Officials from the Department of Citywide Administrative Services and the City University of New York highlighted programs aimed at creating a pipeline of young and entry-level workers, including the Edward T. Rogowsky Internship Program in Government and Public Affairs, which connects CUNY students to paid internships in state and city government.

But the number of students interested in these opportunities significantly outweighs the number of open positions: There were 68,000 applications for 655 paid public-sector internships in the ETR Program, noted Lauren Andersen, the university associate provost of careers at CUNY.

"Students are hungry for the chance to work with city agencies that keep our city running. Over 16,000 students applied for 150 spots," she said during the joint hearing held by the City Council's Civil Service and Labor and Higher Education committees.

Another program, the Civil Service Pathways Fellowship, was established as a partnership between the city and CUNY to create a pipeline from college to a career in public service. This year, there were 200 spots available in the fellowship, up from 100 positions when the program first began.

Council members questioned why there were such a limited num-

ber of spots open in such critical programs.

Andersen noted that one barrier that stands in the way of connecting students was a lack of paid internships. She added that CUNY is seeking to increase the percentage of students participating in a paid internship from 10 percent to 30 percent. "What that means is we need to find an additional 32,000 paid internships every year in a city that only supports 11,000 of them," she said.

'Limiting ourselves'

Council Member Eric Dinowitz also asked why a 311 internship pro-

gram through CUNY is set to end in March, to which Andersen noted that students in the program were being matched with jobs that didn't align with their degrees.

Katrina Porter, the chief human capital officer at DCAS, explained that the reason there were 200 spots in civil service pathway fellows was because the position is a non-competitive title that has to be approved by the state. "We do understand how important this program is and we will continue to evaluate the scope and the amount of available positions we can offer," she said.

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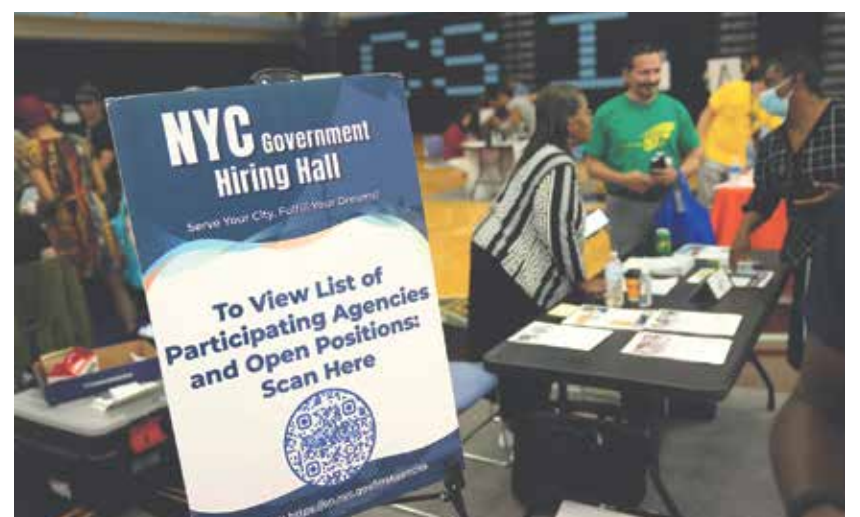
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Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

Members of the City Council and officials at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services and CUNY discussed the efforts the city is making to create a pipeline of young workers interested in civil-service jobs. Some Council members raised concerns that demand for student opportunities in city government far outpaced the number of available positions.

Times tech workers go on strike

Had set Nov. 5 deadline

BY DUNCAN FREEMAN
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Tech workers at The New York Times walked out on strike Monday just ahead of expected Election Day spikes in visitors to the newspaper's website and to app traffic.

More than 600 technology workers at The Times represented by the NewsGuild of New York had set this week as their strike deadline following more than two years of bargaining.

Workers participated in a strike authorization vote in September in which 95 percent of union members who voted authorized a walkout. Since then, union members say, the workers have met with management several times but agreements on key tenets for a first contract — including raises — have yet to be reached.

"Just cause-protections, remote work flexibility, those are still areas where they are not showing up," Sarah Duncan, a software engineer and member of the Times Tech Guild, said on Oct. 30. Duncan was among more than 300 of her colleagues outside The Times' Eighth Avenue headquarters for a lunchtime practice picket alongside union and elected officials.

Union members at the rally blamed newspaper management for the slow pace of bargaining, alleging that management only started taking the tech workers seriously after the strike authorization vote. "We've had very limited bargaining time and we've also seen non-substantial proposals from management," said John Cruickshank, a technical product manager and union shop steward.

He said management has been delaying bargaining and has responded to the union's proposals with curt proposals of their own where many of the provisions that the union demands are rejected with no response. Up until last Wednesday, most of the agreements that the two sides had reached had been on non-economic matters, such as a ban on machine learning.

"The Times has opposed us every step of the way on this," Cruickshank said. "We've had to be strong every single juncture all the way through."

According to Times' management, the average total compen-



Technology workers at the New York Times rallied and formed a practice picket line on Oct. 30 outside of the newspaper's headquarters. Workers began their strike on Monday.

sation for a tech guild member is \$190,000, including benefits, which is higher than the average for the newspapers' journalists.

'Unnecessary and at odds'

"We look forward to continuing to work with [the] Tech Guild to reach a fair contract, that takes into account that they are already among the highest paid individual contributors in the Company and journalism is our top priority," Danielle Rhoades Ha, the Times' senior vice president of external communications, said in a statement. "We have robust plans in place to ensure that we are able to fulfill our mission and serve our readers."

Ha said that the union's strike deadline is "arbitrary" and was set unilaterally by union leadership. "While we respect the union's right to engage in protected actions, threatening a strike at this time, feels both unnecessary and at odds with our mission," she said.

Duncan, the software engineer, argued that a strike would be necessary given how little progress was made in bargaining before the strike authorization vote was held.

"They are really disrespectful in how they treat us," she said. "It's very clear that they wish we were not a union at all, that we had never won that original vote."

The tech workers voted to unionize in March 2022. Journalists at the Times are also represented by the NewsGuild of New York, a subsidiary of the Communication Workers of America.

Employees at Wirecutter, the paper's product reviewing service, are also represented by the NewsGuild and they secured a contract this spring that established a \$66,300 minimum salary. Journalists' most recent contract was settled in spring 2023, less than six months after staff walked out on a 24-hour strike.

Susan DeCarava, the president of the NewsGuild of New York, told

the hundreds of workers assembled at last week's rally that "there's something rotten in the state of The New York Times."

"This is a company that we have been bargaining with for over two years and we are fighting for things that should be a no brainer," she said. "The New York Times says they have a mission, that they have values, but we haven't seen them at the [bargaining] table."

"These people are greedy," she added, pointing out that executives at the newspaper recently gave themselves raises over 50 percent. "They're greedy with your labor and your money."

Members of the union's bargaining committee met with newspaper management during the rally and continued bargaining throughout the end of the workweek. Workers hope to reach a deal but Cruickshank said that he and his coworkers are "absolutely" ready to strike. "There's no question about that," he said.

SCABBY: Rat art

Continued from Page 1

"For me it was very important to add this testimony, but I didn't want to put the video," Hausegger said. "You don't see the faces or lives of the people behind who are working like hell to get you the package."

Surrounding Scabby are photos that Hausegger took of a 2022 picket on the Upper East Side at which the rat was present. She cut lashes into the photos with a knife to mimic scratches doled out by the rodents.

'Even the rat needs some rest'

Hausegger first encountered Scabby in 2008 outside of a construction site in Manhattan when she was living and working in New York. She had been familiar with unions, strikes and protests in her home country but had never seen any kind of inflatable used alongside them.

More than a decade later, fascinated by the rat and in the middle of projects for unions in Austria, Hausegger pitched the idea of highlighting Scabby to the Open Source Gallery as an exhibit that would be humorous but also drive home a political message. The hardest part of setting up the exhibit was getting the inflatable rat in the first place, Hausegger said.

Local unions in New York were unwilling or unable to give up their own inflatables and buying one from Big Sky Balloons, the non-union Plainfield, Illinois, company that makes rats, was too expensive for the budget she had been given. Ultimately, Hausegger ordered an off-brand version of Scabby from China, also made from non-union labor.

"It was the only solution," she said.

Each time the recording of Monarrez repeats in the exhibit, Scabby automatically deflates and then slowly reinflates. Hausegger said that it symbolizes the exhaustion and fatigue that workers face.

"Even the rat needs some rest," she said.

"Scabby: A Rat About Town" is on display until Nov. 29. Hausegger will join Monarrez on Nov. 20 for a question-and-answer session and screening of the documentary "Union," a film featuring Monarrez that details the unionization campaign at an Amazon warehouse in Staten Island.

SEIU LOCAL 300 CIVIL SERVICE FORUM

The forerunner of all public-employee organizations, the SEIU, Local 300 again joins in the celebration of Public Employees Recognition Month.

Many of the benefits enjoyed by present City and State employees are a direct result of successful efforts by SEIU, Local 300, through the diligence of its dedicated leaders and membership through the years.

The SEIU, Local 300 Civil Service Forum, the certified union representative for numerous City occupational groups, continues to pursue an active course of action, with betterment for the Civil Servant always our goal.

Our sincere thanks and appreciation to THE CHIEF LEADER for the long years of support and for the valuable service it has rendered on behalf of the civil servant.

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COMMENTARY

The Chief

A VOICE FOR WORKERS

BEN AUGUST
Publisher

RICHARD KHAVKINE
Editor

The city's Medicare Advantage ruse

BY MARIANNE PIZZITOLA

When retirees talk about the “Big Lie,” they are referring to the ruse that the city forcing retirees off traditional Medicare and into Medicare Advantage will save money. It has been repeated so often that electeds and journalists say it, but it is not true.

Here is the proof that Medicare Advantage does not save money. And to that end, I never thought I would have lived to see unions agree to give up health care and pass costs to workers, and make them jump through hurdles to access medical care, but this is what the leaders of the Municipal Labor Committee did.

The other “Big Lie” is unions collectively bargain for retirees. That is false on its face as state and city law only allows a union to bargain for wages, hours and work conditions. Retirees do not have those. Instead, what they are really saying is that they want to be able to liquidate the benefits of a current retiree to fund their contract.

Over the last three years, even after begging the current City Council to do the right thing, as Councils had before this one, and protect retirees' health care, our pleas were blatantly ignored — defiantly at times — and they accepted the lies a few union leaders have spread.

In fact, had anyone listened to our presentation, they would have known that in 1967, a personnel order from Mayor John Lindsay gave city employees health care paid for by the city could not grant the same benefit to retirees in the same way. Why? Because they were not employees and were not represented by unions. Lindsay, in effect, had to legislate health care for retirees. He enlisted two councilmen to do it. The Council then passed a law known as 12-126 of the NYC Administrative Code. Since then, the law has been amended a few times by the City Council, for instance to extend health care to spouses of deceased workers and to ensure premium reimbursement.

The Independent Budget Office testified in 2021 and 2023 before the Council that the shift would not save money. In 2023, Council Member Charles Barron invited NYC Organization of Public Service Retirees attorney Jake Gardener and me to appear before the Council Progressive and Brooklyn Caucuses to explain our position. We were questioned why we were asking them to get involved! They had no knowledge that Lindsay and the Council had legislated health benefits for retirees that were not collectively bargained, which is why the Council passed all previous bills to maintain Medicare B Reimbursement over the years to protect current retirees. Council Member Althea Stevens even asked the IBO what savings would be achieved by this change. The reply was that legislation introduced by Barron to preserve our benefits would have no financial impact to the city and because current retirees' health care is legislated and funding is mandated by statute.

Look in any collective bargaining agreement, nothing speaks to current retiree benefits — and that is because retirees are not in unions — but the labor leaders of yesterday ALWAYS protected

these benefits — until recently.

Medicare retirees' health plan only pays 20 percent of their medical bills, unlike an active worker where the plan pays 100 percent. Medicare retirees are the least expensive to the city. What the United Federation of Teachers and District Council 37, together with several other city unions, agreed to do was privatize a federal public health benefit, eliminate choices of plans for everyone, force everyone into managed care with a narrow network of doctors and hospitals, and allow managed-care corporation Aetna to be a gatekeeper between retirees and the treatment and tests doctors order. That does not exist with traditional Medicare. The value of the senior care plan that was sold back to the City was going into a pot of money that was often misused by the Municipal Labor Committee and mayors and paid for raises for active workers.

There is no nice way to say that. Some union leaders led the push to literally sell off the choice of health plans of retired unionists to fund their contracts. Many unions in the MLC were angry over this, but because of the weighted voting structure (every union gets one vote for every 250 members), essentially, DC37 and the UFT can pass motions on their own without the backing of the other 100 unions that make up the MLC.

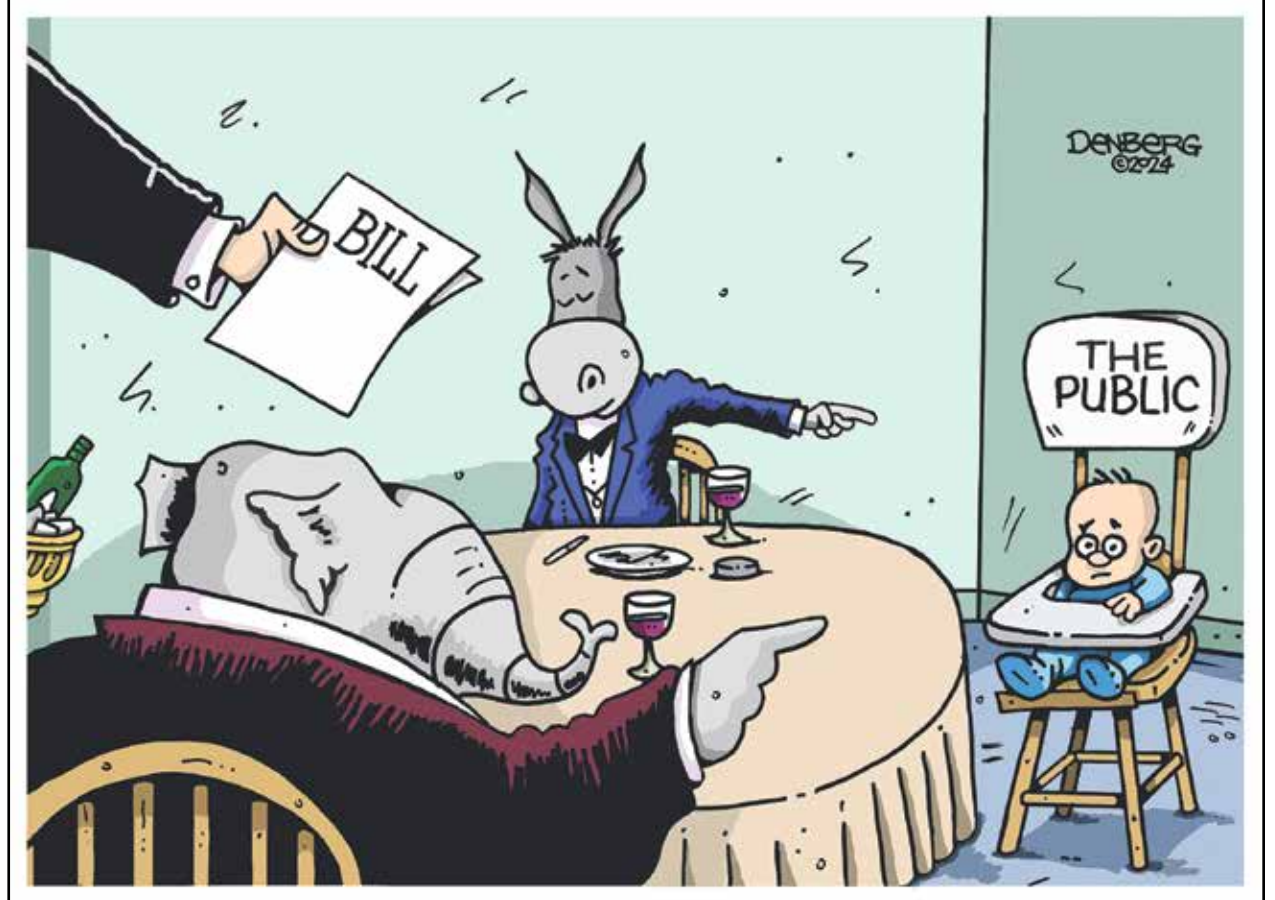
The MLC can act like a coalition but has no bargaining rights unless the unions in the coalition agree to participate in the coalition and convey their bargaining power to the MLC. A fairer vote would be one union, one vote since EVERY union member is valuable. The two largest municipal unions — who sold the fib that the privatized version of Medicare was “enhanced” and “better” than traditional Medicare — should not be making decisions that negatively impact smaller unions.

I am going to say this loud and clear to every union worker reading this paper: Your future health benefits are at stake unless you get involved and protect what was promised to you!

To fund the UFT contract in 2014, and the DC37 contract in 2018, they liquidated retiree health care benefits and tried to privatize federal Medicare. Shocking, right? More so is that this shift to privatizing Medicare and pushing us all into one plan (with a narrow network where the insurer becomes a gatekeeper delaying and denying the care your doctor orders) is the default plan in the Project 2025 blueprint the national unions have denounced. Why then are the City and the leaders of the MLC trying to implement this?

Once you retire, the maximum cost of living adjustment you will ever receive is \$540 a year. If the MLC continues to pass copays and deductibles on to retirees and forces us to pay for our doctors because they are not in the network of the single plan they want for us, you will never be able to afford to go to the doctor.

Marianne Pizzitola, a retired emergency medical technician, is president of the NYC Organization of Public Service Retirees and the FDNY EMS Retirees Association.



IN MEMORIAM

Pen name, Denberg

When Dennis Eisenberg was in college 40-some years ago, he aspired to be an editorial cartoonist. Post-college life, though, has its squiggly twists and turns and Eisenberg, through what he would later call great luck, became a magazine and newspaper art director and designer.

But like any true artist, he continued to draw, “but just for fun,” he said a few years ago.

Eisenberg began drawing in earnest again during the Covid shutdown. His self-titled “pan-

dem project” explored topics making headlines across newspapers and the internet: Covid’s toll, the Black Lives Matter movement, immigration, the George Floyd protests. He drew single-panel editorial cartoons and what he called “illustrated reportage.”

“This work has been extremely rewarding, and I would very much like to finally follow that long-ago college dream,” he wrote to us in early March 2023.

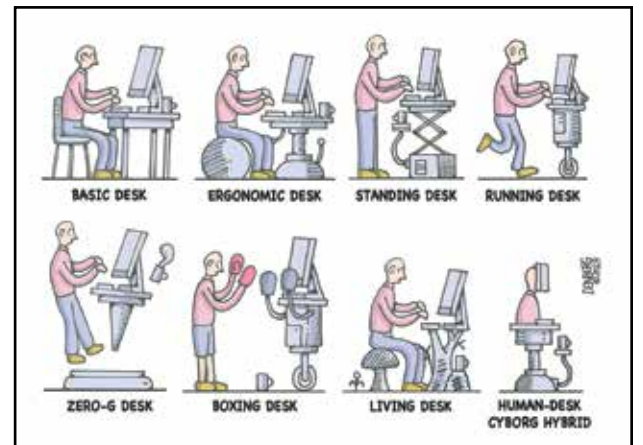
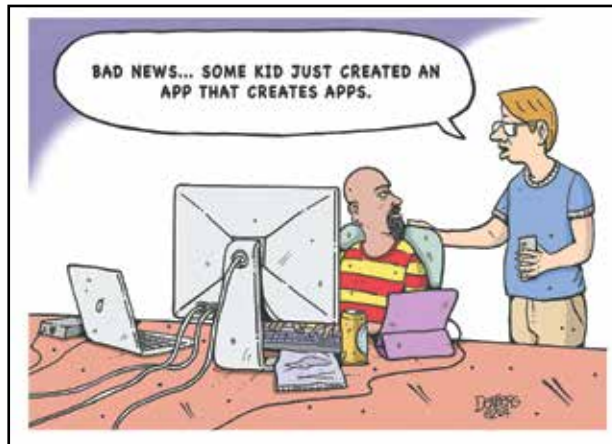
“Perhaps we can put our heads together and figure something

out,” he said. “I think it would be a lot of fun.” And so it was. What followed was “Reports from the field,” a collaboration that bridged the soberness of news coverage and whimsy born of a prolific imagination.

Dennis Eisenberg was 61 when died of heart failure Oct. 13. He will be missed, for his warmth, his spirit and his verve.

Thank you, Denberg, for bringing color and humor to our pages.

Below are a few of our favorites from Dennis, including, above, his last, and very topical, cartoon.



TAX STRATEGIES

Understanding capital gains and losses

BY BARRY LISAK

CAPITAL ASSETS INCLUDE a home, household furnishings and stocks and bonds held in a personal account. When a capital asset is sold, the difference between the amount you paid for the asset and the amount you sold it for is a capital gain or capital loss. Here are some facts from the IRS about gains and losses and how they affect your federal income-tax return.

Almost everything you own and use for personal purposes, pleasure or investment is a capital asset.

When you sell a capital asset, the difference between the amounts you sell it for and your basis, which is usually what you paid for it, is a capital gain or a capital loss.

For example: You buy 100 shares of XYZ at \$35, paying \$3,500 plus a brokerage commission of \$20. Your basis is \$3,520. Later, you sell when the stock is at \$39. You receive \$3,900 minus a brokerage commission of \$20, so your amount realized is \$3,880. Your capital gain is \$3,880

minus \$3,520, or \$360.

Capital gains and losses are classified as long-term or short-term, depending on how long you hold the property before you sell it. If you hold it for more than one year, your capital gain is long-term. If you hold it for one year or less, your capital gain or loss is short-term.

If you have long-term gains in excess of your long-term losses, you have a net capital gain.

The tax rates that apply to net capital gain are generally lower than the tax rates that apply to other income. For 2022, there is a 20-percent capital-gains rate for higher-income taxpayers that are subject to the 37-percent income-tax rate. The capital gains rate for most people is 15 percent.

High-income taxpayers may have a 3.8-percent unearned Medicare-contribution tax applied to their capital gains and other net investment income. Thus, the highest tax rate that could apply to capital gains is 37+3.8 = 40.8 percent on short-term gains or 23.8 percent

(20+3.8) on long-term gains.

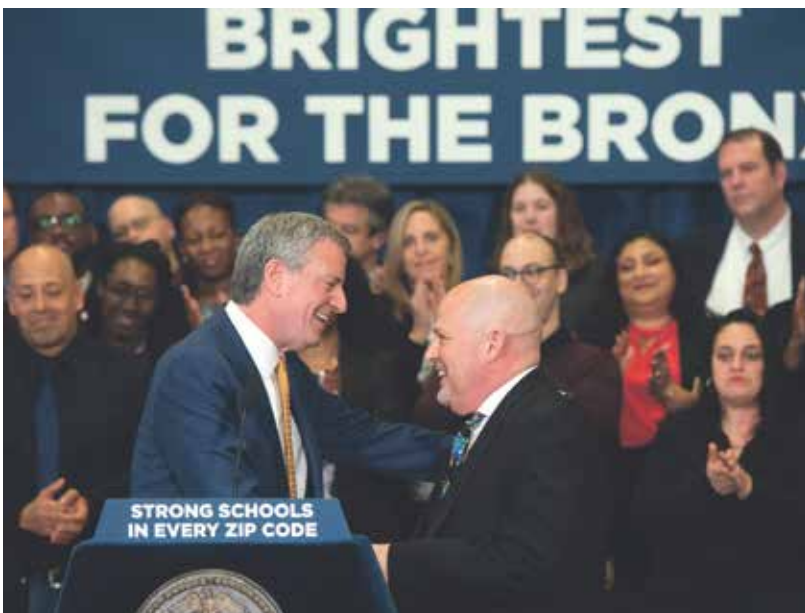
If your capital losses exceed your capital gains, the excess can be deducted on your tax return and used to reduce other income, such as wages, up to an annual limit of \$3,000, or \$1,500 if you are married filing separately.

If your total net capital loss is more than the yearly limit on capital-loss deductions, you can carry over the unused part to the following year.

Capital gains and losses are reported on Form 8949 and Schedule D, Capital Gains and Losses, and then transferred to the Form 1040.

For more information about reporting capital gains and losses, refer to IRS Publication 550, “Investment Income and Expenses.”

Barry Lisak is an IRS enrolled agent specializing in personal and small business taxes for 30 years. Any questions can be directed to him at 516-829-7283, or mrbarrytax@aol.com.



Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

Then-Mayor Bill de Blasio and United Federation of Teachers President Michael Mulgrew at the Highbridge Green School in the Bronx in 2019.

COMMENTARY

WAKE-UP CALL

At ease

BY RON ISAAC

We all remember this feral kid. I'll call him Tom.

Teachers who had him in their class decades ago still wake up with clammy hands and palpitations. He raised hell in school and always got his way, because the Chancellor's Regulations effectively barred any disciplinary action, because the concept of behavioral correction was equated with fascist oppression.

His five siblings were also disruptive in all subject classes, regardless of who their teacher was. But they were usually more or less manageable.

Their hapless guardian at home was stuck between the hardest of circumstantial rocks and hard places. She was useless, though not by choice. She struggled as a single parent, but wasn't savvy at tapping the system for survival benefits.

Because Tom cut class at will (which was a break for those of his classmates who wanted to be educated), deans and the principal's administrative cabinet would spend much of their day trailing him up and down the halls and staircases, casing every possible hiding and crawl space with walkie-talkies, occasionally affirming sightings with a "10-4", role-playing Dragnet with slapstick alacrity.

Sometimes they'd get close to Tom, but physical apprehension was too chancy. The slightest touch could trigger a lawsuit alleging corporal punishment. Tom always got the last laugh. In fact, the adults got no laughs at all. They just got winded.

Whenever the school got "distinguished visitors," such as a local politician or superintendent (often wearing a Ferragamo scarf and carrying a clipboard), and the facade of a thriving learning environment had to be activated, the school leadership would huddle in advance and strategize how to keep this kid out of sight for the duration of the visit. They'd humor and cajole him with beguiling rewards, like being honored as a dean's monitor, in exchange for not embarrassing the school administration.

It was the administration's unilateral self-imposed truce. That kid was in control. Not of himself, but of the adults. He had the staff chasing their tails and spinning their wheels.

When he "graduated," we all



Members of the United States Marine Corps on Fifth Avenue during the St. Patrick's Day Parade in 2022.

Gabriele Holtermann/Sipa USA via AP Images

wished him well and fell to our knees with gratitude that at last we were rid of him. Finally, he would be out of sight but given the collective concussion he had given our psyches, we could never be out of our minds. But the hangover faded.

A few years later Tom returned for a visit. In a U.S. Marine Corps uniform. He was transformed. All who knew him were transfixed.

It wasn't the spiffy uniform and perfect posture. Not the shallow trappings of demeanor. It was as though he had undergone a total character transplant.

The kid we all had bet would be top on the FBI's Most Wanted, turned out to be not just a gentleman in terms of mere etiquette, but a profoundly evolved, balanced and mature person. He was sharp, civic-minded, motivated to be a positive contributor to society, aware of social and economic injustices and ready to contribute to remedying them.

He had become academically disciplined and focused responsibly on acquiring valuable skills and professional credentials of lifetime

value. He became an independent thinker, at least as tolerant and sympathetic to differences of opinion as one finds in the general population.

The Marine Corps worked for him. It was a last resort, after a long list of social workers, psychologists, counselors and psychotropic medication. For Tom it was "a good fit."

For many other kids, immersion in military culture would be a disaster. It is not a panacea, any more than is psychotherapy. But it should be more widely advertised as an available option to all high school kids in New York and elsewhere.

Since at least the days of the Vietnam War, there has been hostile resistance to allowing military recruitment in our schools. Some of it is strictly ideology based, the claim being that the military specifically targets minorities who have been denied equal opportunity to pursue the "American Dream" by traditional means, and devalues their humanity by foreclosing other options and relegating them to

"cannon fodder."

According to the Rand Corporation, recruiter access "varied by state, with up to 14 percent of schools in some states failing to provide student contact information, not allowing recruiters access, or both." They note that "problems were greater in large schools, schools with lower proportions of students receiving or reduced-priced lunch, and in schools in urban areas."

Some people caricature the military mindset and depict soldiers as block-headed killing-machine robotic global police, voided shells and heartless puppets who enforce global American imperialism.

That appears to be the view of the nonprofit The World Can't Wait and its New York City-based project "We Are Not Your Soldiers." Ironically, many military-bashing self-styled "civil libertarians" are more militarist than they are militant, and could teach Delta Force a few tricks.

The truth is that overall, they have been a positive, occasionally majestic force in our history. The military criminal justice system is

fairer than is the civilian charade, and since President Truman integrated the armed services, there has been more authentic advancement of principles, policies and practices of racial equity than elsewhere.

When our high schools have College Night and other future-planning events for graduating seniors, are the military branches invited? Can they speak at assemblies? Do they have active ROTC-type activities?

The National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth (NNO-MY) has an anti-recruitment video called "Before You Enlist," but according to a 2019 poll by the Pew Research Center, 81 percent of post-9/11 veterans said they recommend military service.

The city's Department of Education is federally mandated to provide military recruiters certain personal information of 11th and 12th graders. If students are over 18, they can opt-out in writing. If younger, their parents or legal guardians may do so. Unless the opt-out letter is on file, confidential information will be released to recruiters on request.

It's been argued that there should be a presumption of a student being opted-out, and that special notification should be required only if they wished to have their private information released.

An abstract published in the National Library of Medicine says that military "recruitment behaviors are disturbingly similar to predatory grooming." You'd think that this group, on the campus of the National Institutes of Health, would be less flagrantly biased, but even institutions like the Smithsonian, National Geographic and Nature, have become supercharged politically.

The New York Civil Liberties Union once demanded that the Department of Defense be billed for the information they sought, asking why the Department of Education, with a budget that exceeds that of many sovereign nations, was "subsidizing the armed forces."

Military recruitment is among the least dire of our schools' problems. By the time the most severe, endemic and stubborn ones are resolved or even courageously identified and tackled, giraffes will have learned to fly.

In the meantime: at ease.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Recycled news

TO THE EDITOR:

On Oct. 30, 1975, the Daily News printed a story with the now-classic headline, "Ford to City: Drop Dead."

Fast forward exactly 49 years from that date, and the chair of the Municipal Labor Committee wrote a letter to Council Speaker Adams that might as well have had the subject: "Nespoli to Retirees: Drop Dead."

He penned a deceptive missive vehemently opposing legislation recently introduced by City Council Member Christopher Marte that would preserve retiree health benefits. The letter shamelessly recycles the lies and misrepresentations that the MLC spewed last year that helped tank a similar bill.

Nespoli argues that the bill is illegal and violates collective bargaining. This is false and reeks of hypocrisy. The MLC has no statutory bargaining power — it is an administrative body with a non-bargaining certificate. This has been affirmed by the city's Office of Collective Bargaining. The MLC does not represent its member unions. It largely facilitates and coordinates activities and does not represent anyone in collective bargaining.

The MLC has taken away the power of member unions, which, ironically, hold actual bargaining certificates. MLC leaders control the agenda and voting, and unions have sheepishly ceded power to the MLC's leaders.

Retirees will tirelessly lobby, and inform, Council members of the truth. Which is more than the MLC will provide.

Harry Weiner

Diligence on Medicare

TO THE EDITOR:

There's an old saying that goes "God save me from my friends. I can protect myself from my enemies." And another from my Irish

grandmother, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." I recalled both when I read the announcement of City Council Member Christopher Marte's introduction of a bill to protect retiree health care. It has a big flaw. It removes our unions' leaders as integral to the negotiations for health care. I'd prefer someone I trust representing my interests than elected officials with "their own fish to fry," preferably not me!

Vincent Gaglione

No confidence vote

TO THE EDITOR:

I'm hoping that by the time this letter has been published, a Kamala Harris victory will make my point redundant. But I don't have the confidence Nat Weiner has that Donald Trump, who already tried to make himself a dictator, will not succeed in doing that if he regains the White House.

Consider how many politicians, not to mention Supreme Court justices, have already kowtowed to him. I'm not confident that everyone responsible for maintaining checks and balances on the president's power will do so.

I supported the Green Party's Jill Stein in 2016. I gave money to her campaign, wrote letters to the editor in support and voted for her. I agreed with her positions then and I agree with her 2024 platform, which I have read.

But because I wrote "If people would abandon the Republicans, perhaps we could weigh Harris' proposals against Stein's," Weiner assumes I haven't looked at Stein's platform. I don't mind criticism of what I say but don't criticize me based on fact-less assumptions.

Harris is far from being an ideal candidate. But she's far better than Clinton or Trump. So by the time you read this letter, I will have voted for her to stop Trump.

Richard Warren

To recap

TO THE EDITOR:

The 2024 presidential campaign was an eye opener. On the one hand, it had former President Donald Trump make endless rants echoing 1930s fascists such as Hitler, Mussolini and especially Franco.

One example was a campaign ad that talked about creating a "unified reich" and called political opponents "vermin." The second example was when Trump on Fox News said, "The worst people are the enemies from within ... more dangerous than Russia and China.... These people should be put into jail, the way they talk about our judges and our justice system."

On the other hand, Vice President Harris rejected previous progressive positions such as the Green New Deal, Medicare For All, transferring police department funds to social services and decriminalizing border crossings.

She and her advisers shifted to the right to attract moderates, dissatisfied Republicans and the undecided. This shift did not help to mobilize the party's left base in battleground states, and raised questions about what political principles she has.

Harris said we need to work "with the private sector to ... create tax incentives so that we can create more housing supplies and bring down the price." That strategy has enriched developers and rarely produced sufficient affordable housing. Harris barely mentioned climate change and made a dubious claim that "we can invest in a clean energy economy...and not ban fracking." She repeatedly reminded audiences that more than 400 members of former Republican administrations had endorsed her candidacy.

Harris also said, "I never intended nor will I ever allow America to have a border that's not secure," as if the southern border is not already over-militarized and asylum

seekers are not already dehumanized.

Howard Eterman

Cleanup time

TO THE EDITOR:

Election Day has come and gone. It reminds me of the 1960s television show "The Outer Limits." With the end of round the clock commercials by politicians, political parties, political action groups and pay-to-play special interest groups, we now return control of your television back to you until the next election cycle.

No more robocalls, text messages and campaign mailings clogging mailboxes and weighing down our hard working postal employees. Finally, some peace and quiet! (Maybe.)

Larry Penner

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Cleaners at Jamaica mall rip switch to 'low-road' contractor

BY CRYSTAL LEWIS
clewis@thechiefleader.com

Cleaners at Gertz Plaza Mall in Jamaica, Queens, are railing against a recent decision by the building's owners to switch to a cleaning contractor that is moving to cut the workers' wages and benefits.

The mall is owned by Wharton Realty Group, which recently began transferring custodial services from longtime union contractor Electra Cleaning Company to L&J Commercial and Residential Services.

Wharton expects to fully switch to L&J next month, according to the employees' union, 32BJ of the Service Employees International Union. The four cleaners at the building have already seen their health insurance, while their hourly wages have been reduced from \$29 to \$16, according to a union spokesperson.

The plaza is home to a mix of retail and office spaces, including the Queens borough office for the New York State Homes and Community Renewal and the city Administration for Children's Services.

Workers and elected officials rallied outside of the mall on Oct. 30 to protest the switch to what the union called a "low-road" contractor. Fernande Neas, who has worked at Gertz Mall since 2011, called the cuts "an attack on our well-being and livelihoods."

"I have relied on my union quality affordable health insurance for a knee replacement last year and for an upcoming eye surgery. I needed those surgeries," the 32BJ member said. "And I have an appointment for my second knee replacement in December. What will I do with no affordable health insurance? Today we are standing up for our livelihoods. Essential workers like me and my co-workers demand to be treated with dignity and respect."

For months, 32BJ has been fighting against the same contractor for slashing cleaners' pay and benefits at a building located at 529 Fifth Ave. in Midtown Manhattan. In June, L&J unilaterally reduced the Midtown workers' hourly wages

from \$29 to \$16 and eliminated their paid sick time and health insurance. 32BJ proceeded to file an unfair labor practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board in July, alleging that the company had failed to bargain in good faith.

"Workers showed up today to stand up for middle class wages and benefits in Queens. It's time for L&J to do the right thing by committing to fair wages at Gertz and at all other sites," said Denis Johnston, 32BJ's executive vice-president.

State Senator Leroy Comrie and Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr. also came out to support the workers.

"Queens was, is and always will be a union town. That is as ironclad as our support for the union laborers like those who keep Gertz Mall and this entire borough running every single day," Richards said. "I'm proud to stand with the essential workers of 32BJ and Electra Cleaning against this indefensible decision to save a few bucks on the backs of blue-collar workers."

Comrie added that the real estate sector's "hard-fought" labor standards have been under attack by L&J.

"Investing in a skilled, trustworthy and professional building maintenance workforce is a successful business practice that 95 percent of the New York City commercial real estate industry follows. I call on L&J to commit to paying middle class wages and benefits for Queen essential workers," he said.



Courtesy of 32BJ
Members of 32BJ SEIU rallied outside of Gertz Plaza in Jamaica, Queens, last week in support of cleaners who had seen their benefits and wages reduced. The building's owner recently switched to a different cleaning contractor, L&J Commercial and Residential Services.



Courtesy 1199SEIU

Laboratory workers held a picket last week outside of Northwell Health Laboratories Little Neck facility to call on Northwell's management to settle a contract. The workers are calling for the same pension benefits, raises and no-cost health care plan that other unionized Northwell employees already have.

Queens Northwell lab workers picket over contract stall

BY CRYSTAL LEWIS
clewis@thechiefleader.com

Northwell Health Laboratories workers participated in an informational picket outside of the health provider's Little Neck Parkway facility last week as part of their push for a fair contract.

About 100 lab technologists, technicians, accessioners and clinical assistants at the northeast Queens labs are seeking their first contract, having voted to join 1199SEIU in December 2023.

The employees want pay raises, an education fund and health care and pension benefits comparable to what other unionized lab workers have. The union noted that 1199SEIU represents thousands of workers at Northwell facilities, including 21 microbiologists working at the Little Neck lab who have a contract.

Jesse McDade, who has worked as a clinic laboratory technologist at Northwell for five years and is a member of the bargaining committee, said that workers at the facility do not have a pension plan. Unlike the union's health care plan, the lab workers are responsible for copays and out-of-pocket costs. McDade noted that they also don't receive guaranteed health insurance after retirement.

"At the end of the day, we're seeking equality," he said. "We deserve the same type of compensation that tens of thousands of other 1199SEIU members have won

in their contracts with Northwell — and nothing less."

The union and Northwell have been in negotiations for about six months. According to the union, Northwell's management offered 3-percent raises, which was about half of the rate other unionized Northwell workers received in salary increases.

The lab workers decided to hold a picket soon after, McDade said. "Their proposal for wages was just so far from our proposal we felt it was necessary to make a statement," he said during a phone interview. "All of my colleagues are dedicated to making the change we're looking for."

The workers also want to address understaffing issues.

"They called us healthcare heroes, but now those feel like meaningless words as management refuses our pleas for fair wages like other Northwell staff," Mahmudur Khan, a clinical laboratory technologist, said in a statement. "Improved wages would help us recruit and retain more lab professionals which is vital as we analyze more and more specimens from both Northwell facilities and other health systems."

Barbara Osborn, a spokesperson for Northwell, said in a statement that "We are committed to engaging in constructive, good-faith negotiations with 1199SEIU to reach a fair contract that supports our dedicated laboratory workers and upholds the high-quality care our

patients deserve."

In September, 850 lab staff at Northwell Health's Core Testing Facilities in New Hyde Park also voted to join 1199SEIU.

Workers at the Little Neck microbiology lab, which processes specimens such as blood tests from Northwell and other health facilities, say their workload has increased while their salaries have remained stagnant.

"Although our patients may not see us, we prioritize their care every day by analyzing thousands of specimens, aiding in diagnosis, and determining the best treatment — often putting ourselves and our families at risk for serious diseases," said Nicole Eichel, a clinical laboratory technologist. "We do this because we genuinely care about our patients' health and well-being, yet Northwell refuses to agree to a fair contract."

McDade, the bargaining committee member, called last Wednesday's picket "exciting."

"We have a bargaining session coming up and I'm optimistic because I think the picket was strong," he said. "I think we got the message across."

An 1199SEIU spokesperson, Rose Ryan, noted that Northwell management has already set aside funds for the members' pension, training, childcare and health care funds, but that the two sides haven't yet agreed on a start date.

"I'm confident that we'll get them," she said.

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Feds announce rule to protect rail transit workers

BY RICHARD KHAVKINE
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The MTA is among rail transit agencies across the country that must now institute a workers protection program for persons who work on or around tracks. According to a newly published Federal Transit Administration rule, the transit agencies must also implement comprehensive training for employees and devise a mechanism for workers and others to report unsafe acts and conditions and near-misses.

The programs must be created and receive approval from the FTA's State Safety Oversight Agency by late October 2025.

"This is a massive step forward for safety. President Joe Biden and DOT are TELLING transit agencies across the USA their top priority must be protecting critically important workers. We do critical work in perilous conditions and now we have the right to refuse inherently dangerous assignments," Transport Workers Union of America International's president, John Samuelsen, said in a statement.

The union noted that notice of the final rule comes nearly a year after Hilarion Joseph, an MTA track worker assigned on flagging duties, was struck and killed by a D train near the 34th Street-Herald Square station.

An MTA spokesperson said New York City Transit already has in place a rigorous worker safety program that includes compulsory training for agency personnel that goes onto the tracks.

"Safety is the MTA's number one



Track workers repaired damage in the Rutgers Tunnel under the East River caused by Superstorm Sandy.

MTA

priority, and while New York City Transit is reviewing the FTA's proposed regulations, we are confident the MTA already complies with virtually all of the FTA's new requirements," MTA spokesperson Laura Cala-Rauch said in a statement.

Follows other directives

The rule is the FTA's first regulation establishing minimum safety standards required for transit agencies, and Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg called it "an important step" to improve safety for track workers.

"These transit workers perform vital and often dangerous work to ensure that subways, light rail and streetcars stay moving so that millions of Americans can get to work or school or wherever they need to be," he said during a press briefing last week.

The rule is being instituted after "too many tragedies," Buttigieg said, noting that 29 transit workers have been killed and 144 seriously injured since 2008. "So it was very clear that in this case we needed to act and address the dangers associated with working on and near transit rail tracks," he said.

Buttigieg said the rule was the result of a collaborative effort with labor, and he singled out Samuelsen and John Costa, the president of the Amalgamated Transit Union.

The rule is part of a regulatory package addressing transit workers' safety across the board. In September, the agency issued a general directive designed to combat assaults on frontline transit workers.

Accordingly, more than 700 agencies, the MTA among them, were given three months to determine the likelihood of assaults on transit vehicles and facilities and, if they determine the threat is high, iden-

tify ways to reduce the risk. Transit agencies serving urban areas of more than 200,000 people must involve labor when doing those assessments.

That directive followed a spike in major assaults on transit workers nationwide. According to figures compiled by the Urban Institute, the Washington, D.C.-based think tank, the number of major assaults on buses and trains jumped from 168 in 2008 to 492 in 2022.

In August, citing an increased number of incidents coupled to poor safety practices in the city subway system, the FTA directed New York State's Public Transportation Safety Board, the MTA and New York City Transit to take immediate steps to address the shortcomings or risk losing funding.

The agency cited 38 "near-miss events" involving track workers in 2023, a 58-percent increase from 24 similar events in 2022 and a 65-percent increase from 23 events in 2021. Half of the 38 involved improper flagging, the audit found.

Samuelsen said the federal agency's actions would build on one another.

"The Final Rule requiring minimum safety standards, the General Directive requiring safety risk assessments, and the FTA audit rightfully exposing the MTA's poor safety culture show the strong commitment the Biden administration has for transit safety," he said. "The TWU will continue to fight for safe workplaces for all transit workers, but this Final Rule gives trackworkers more power to keep themselves safe on the job."

GENERATION: Too few spots to keep up with jobs demand

Continued from Page 1

Council Member Gale Brewer suggested that DCAS tap the Council itself to lobby the governor for more spots. "We don't have enough city employees. These are wonderful students and I think we are limiting ourselves and hopefully they'll have a career in city government," she said. "I have so many friends in city government: they are really worried, really worried about the lack of a long-term city workforce."

Recruiting the next generation of workers is particularly important since a large number of city workers are expected to retire over the

next few years. About 30 percent of the city workforce is expected to be eligible to retire by Fiscal Year 2027, according to the most recent NYC Government Workforce Profile Report, which was conducted by DCAS in 2022. The city is also facing widespread vacancies, as are many other municipalities and localities across the state.

To help state and local agencies recruit workers, Governor Kathy Hochul has waived fees for civil-service exams through December 2025. In September, Hochul also enacted a law granting applicants who take and pass open competitive exams a full year to meet the title's edu-

cation requirements. Previously, candidates had until the following January after taking an exam.

In addition to the work the city and partner agencies are doing to recruit students, city officials spoke of the steps they have taken to make it easier to hire workers into entry-level positions.

One success has been the bridge exam, which allows prospective city workers to take one civil-service exam for multiple titles, including clerical associate, maintenance worker, secretary and child protective specialist. So far, more than 8,000 applicants have taken the exam, which has been administered

three times, DCAS officials said.

The city also recently created a public safety exam, which is modeled on the bridge exam in that it allows New Yorkers to take a test for multiple public-safety titles such as school safety agent and traffic enforcement agent, even as interest in public safety jobs is waning, DCAS' Porter said.

And in addition to collaborating with city agencies to spark interest in civil-service jobs among students, CUNY has also been working to fill its own vacancies, particularly among campus peace officers, where there are severe shortages.

Ludwig Vouitsis, the university

director of civil service support at CUNY, said that the university has launched a website aimed at recruiting campus peace officers, who can now apply for the position 365 days a year.

He also noted that CUNY has requested approval from the state Civil Service Commission for over 40 titles to be included in the state NY HELPS program, which temporarily lifts civil-service exam requirements to help state agencies fill vacancies at a faster rate.

"Attracting and retaining qualified individuals for civil service positions poses ongoing challenges," Vouitsis said.

The Officers of Plumbers Local No. 1 would like to acknowledge our Civil Service Plumbers for understanding the importance of remaining Union Members. Well Done!

Make sure to keep up to date on important information by visiting our website.



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LABOR AROUND THE WORLD

Labor, regulation, taxes, tariffs: Trump has sweeping plans for 2nd administration

Campaign rhetoric was high on workers

BY BILL BARROW
Associated Press

Donald Trump has promised sweeping action in a second administration.

The former president and now president-elect often skipped over details but through more than a year of policy pronouncements and written statements outlined a wide-ranging agenda that blends traditional conservative approaches to taxes, regulation and cultural issues with a more populist bent on trade and a shift in America's international role.

Regarding the nation's workers, Trump and Vice President-elect JD Vance framed their ticket as allies of the working class. But Trump could make it harder for workers to unionize. In discussing auto workers, Trump focused almost exclusively on Biden's push toward electric vehicles. When he mentioned unions, it was often to lump "the union bosses and CEOs" together as complicit in "this disastrous electric car scheme." In an Oct. 23, 2023, statement, Trump said of United Auto Workers, "I'm telling you, you shouldn't pay those dues."

Trump insists he would protect Social Security and Medicare, popular programs geared toward older Americans and among the biggest pieces of the federal spending pie each year. There are questions about how his proposal not to tax tip and overtime wages might affect Social Security and Medicare. If such plans eventually involved only income taxes, the entitlement programs would not be affected. But exempting those wages from payroll taxes would reduce the funding stream for Social Security and Medicare outlays. Trump has talked little about Medicaid but his first administration, in general, defaulted to approving state requests for waivers of various federal rules and it broadly endorsed

state-level work requirements for recipients.

Tax policy favors rich

Trump's tax policies broadly tilt toward corporations and wealthier Americans. That's mostly due to his promise to extend his 2017 tax overhaul, with a few notable changes that include lowering the corporate income tax rate to 15 percent from the current 21 percent. That also involves rolling back Democratic President Joe Biden's income tax hikes on the wealthiest Americans and scrapping Inflation Reduction Act levies that finance energy measures intended to combat climate change.

Those policies notwithstanding, Trump has put more emphasis on new proposals aimed at working- and middle class Americans: exempting earned tips, Social Security wages and overtime wages from income taxes. It's noteworthy, however, that his proposal on tips, depending on how Congress might write it, could give a back-door tax break to top wage earners by allowing them to reclassify some of their pay as tip income — a prospect that at its most extreme could see hedge-fund managers or top-flight attorneys taking advantage of a policy that Trump frames as being designed for restaurant servers, bartenders and other service workers.

Trump's posture on international trade is to distrust world markets as harmful to American interests. He proposes tariffs of 10 percent to 20 percent on foreign goods — and in some speeches has mentioned even higher percentages. He promises to reinstate an August 2020 executive order requiring that the Food and Drug Administration buy "essential" medications only from U.S. companies. He pledges to block purchases of "any vital infrastructure" in the U.S. by Chinese buyers.

With regard to immigration, a second Trump administration is expected to echo his "Build the wall!" cry from his 2016 campaign but he has also promised to create "the



Former President Donald Trump pointed to the crowd at an election night watch party in West Palm Beach, Fla.

largest mass deportation program in history." Trump has called for using the National Guard and empowering domestic police forces in the effort. Still, Trump has been scant on details of what the program would look like and how he would ensure that it targeted only people in the U.S. illegally. He's pitched "ideological screening" for would-be entrants, ending birthright citizenship (which almost certainly would require a constitutional change), and said he'd reinstate first-term policies such as "Remain in Mexico," limiting migrants on public health grounds and severely limiting or banning entrants from certain majority-Muslim nations. Altogether, the approach would not just crack down on illegal migration, but curtail immigration overall.

Reducing regulations, bureaucracy

The president-elect seeks to reduce the role of federal bureaucrats and regulations across economic sectors. Trump frames all regulatory cuts as an economic magic wand.

He pledges precipitous drops in U.S. households' utility bills by removing obstacles to fossil fuel production, including opening all federal lands for exploration — even though U.S. energy production is already at record highs. Trump promises to unleash housing construction by cutting regulations — though most construction rules come from state and local government. He also says he would end "frivolous litigation from the environmental extremists."

The approach would in many ways strengthen executive branch influence. That power would come more directly from the White House.

He would make it easier to fire federal workers by classifying thousands of them as being outside civil service protections. That could weaken the government's power to enforce statutes and rules by reducing the number of employees engaging in the work and, potentially, impose a chilling effect on those who remain.

Trump also claims that presidents have exclusive power to control federal spending even after

Congress has appropriated money. Trump argues that lawmakers' budget actions "set a ceiling" on spending but not a floor — meaning the president's constitutional duty to "faithfully execute the laws" includes discretion on whether to spend the money. This interpretation could set up a court battle with Congress.

As a candidate, he also suggested that the Federal Reserve, an independent entity that sets interest rates, should be subject to more presidential power. Though he has not offered details, any such move would represent a momentous change to how the U.S. economic and monetary systems work.

Targets Education Department

The federal Department of Education would be targeted for elimination in a second Trump administration. That does not mean that Trump wants Washington out of classrooms. He still proposes, among other maneuvers, using federal funding as leverage to pressure K-12 school systems to abolish tenure and adopt merit pay for teachers and to scrap diversity programs at all levels of education. He calls for pulling federal funding "for any school or program pushing Critical Race Theory, gender ideology, or other inappropriate racial, sexual, or political content on our children."

In higher education, Trump proposes taking over accreditation processes for colleges, a move he describes as his "secret weapon" against the "Marxist Maniacs and lunatics" he says control higher education. Trump takes aim at higher education endowments, saying he will collect "billions and billions of dollars" from schools via "taxing, fining and suing excessively large private university endowments" at schools that do not comply with his edicts. That almost certainly would end up in protracted legal fights.

As in other policy areas, Trump isn't actually proposing limiting federal power in higher education but strengthening it.

Anxiety over the economy, and a desire for change, return Trump to the White House

3 in 10 voters want total upheaval in how the country is run

BY JOSH BOAK and LINLEY SANDERS
Associated Press

A disaffected electorate wanted former President Donald Trump to return to the White House, with voters broadly believing that Trump would be better equipped than Harris to handle the economy and jobs.

The vote was a blatant rejection of Vice President Kamala Harris and her nearly four years with President Joe Biden.

The Republican's victory came from a public so put off by America's trajectory that they welcomed his brash and disruptive approach. About 3 in 10 voters said they wanted total upheaval in how the country is run, according to AP VoteCast, a sweeping survey of more than 120,000 voters nationwide. Even if they weren't looking for something that dramatic, more than half of voters overall said they wanted to see substantial change.

Both nationwide and in key battleground states, the Republican won over voters who were alarmed about the economy and prioritized more aggressive enforcement of immigration laws. Those issues largely overshadowed many voters' focus on the future of democracy and abortion protections — key priorities for Harris' voters, but not enough to turn the election in her favor.

30% cite finances

Trump's victory, however, wasn't a total mandate. Even as Trump prevailed in the electoral college, there were concerns about how he could wield his power. Most voters said they were very or somewhat concerned that electing Trump would bring the U.S. closer to being an authoritarian country, where a single leader has unchecked power. Still, more than 1 in 10 of those voters backed him.



Supporters at an election night watch party for former President Donald Trump Tuesday in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Voters gave Trump the edge on their top concern, the economy, with anxiety about inflation running high nationally. The key swing states of Pennsylvania and Wisconsin largely mirrored the mood of the nation.

The share of voters who said their family's financial situation was "falling behind" rose to about 3 in 10, up from roughly 2 in 10 in the last presidential election. Many voters were still reeling from inflation that spiked to a four-decade high in June 2022. About 9 in 10 voters were very or somewhat concerned about the cost of groceries, and about 8 in 10 were concerned about their health care costs, their housing costs or the cost of gas.

Trump picked up a small but significant share of younger voters, Black voters and Hispanic voters, many of whom were feeling down

about the economy. Majorities of younger Black voters and Latino voters said the economy is not working well.

Flaws matter little

The economy carried more prominence than in the 2020 election, including for these groups. Four years ago, the Covid pandemic and racism were important issues for Black and Latino voters. But this time, they were more focused on the economy, and Trump managed to make inroads with both groups even as the majority stayed with Harris.

Among voters under 30, slightly less than half went for Trump, an improvement from his 2020 performance. About three-quarters of young voters said the country was headed in the wrong direction, and roughly one-third said they wanted

complete and total upheaval to how the country is run.

There was also a divide between young men and women on which candidate they backed. About 6 in 10 women between 18 to 29 voted for Harris, and more than half of men in that age group backed Trump.

Voters also were more likely to embrace hardline immigration policies than they were four years ago, which aligned with Trump's tough approach.

About 4 in 10 voters said that immigrants living in the U.S. illegally should be deported to the country they came from, up from about 3 in 10 in 2020. And while most voters said that immigrants living in the U.S. illegally should be offered a chance to apply for legal status, that was down from 2020.

Trump has seized on an increase in illegal crossings at the U.S. bor-

der with Mexico as a driver of crime and falsely accused Haitian immigrants in Ohio of eating dogs and cats. That position may have echoed in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin — three states far from the southern border where about 8 in 10 Trump voters said they supported deportation over a chance to apply for legal status.

Trump's return to the White House will likely challenge the established global order, as he has questioned the commitment to defend fellow NATO countries and called for large tariff hikes on allies as well as competitors. Voters were more likely than in 2020 to adopt many of Trump's isolationist stances. About 4 in 10 voters wanted the U.S. to take a "less active role" in solving the world's problems, up from about 3 in 10 in 2020.

Most of Trump's supporters opposed continuing aid to Ukraine in the war against Russia, undoing a Biden administration policy that had strengthened and expanded NATO. But there were limits to their isolationist stance: A majority of Trump voters separately favored continuing aiding Israel in its war against Hamas and Hezbollah.

Some of Trump's voters acknowledged his flaws even as they chose to send him back to Washington.

Nearly half of voters said they were "very concerned" that another Trump presidency would bring the U.S. closer to authoritarianism. Roughly 1 in 10 in this group voted for him anyway. About 6 in 10 voters said he is not honest and trustworthy, but about 2 in 10 in this group backed him. A majority of voters said he does not have the moral character to be president, and about 1 in 10 of those voters supported him.

For all his promises, Trump will likely find it challenging to endow the nation as a whole with a new sense of unity and optimism. Asked if he would bring positive change, voters were about evenly split.

The AP's Amelia Thomson-DeVeaux and Hannah Fingerhut contributed to this report.