



# Paying attention to safety for all workers

Sisters and Brothers:

In April, we focus our attention on worker and workplace safety.

During the first weekend in April, we host our biennial Conference on Occupational Safety and Health, held this year virtually and in-person, to help *educate, motivate, and activate* union members like yourself to be more powerful advocates for workplace safety and health. In these times we are living through, this has never been more important.

We are very fortunate to have a highly trained and respected professional staff in the Occupational Safety and Health Department who constantly work to *educate* members on the rules and regulations designed to protect them and train activists on the best practices to avoid hazards and improve health. They *motivate* members to act and to better realize the costs we pay when health and safety protocols are not followed, and hazards are left unaddressed. They work to *activate* union leaders and staff to work collaboratively with management to implement the policies and procedures that will keep workers and workplaces safe and protected.

We appreciate the effort and dedication that went into the preparations for the Conference as well as the contributions made by the Statewide Occupational Safety and Health Committee. I hope all who attend gain valuable information that they will bring back to their workplaces.

We also observe *National Work Zone Awareness Week*.

One of the most dangerous, and often underappreciated jobs CSEA members perform is working along roadside and highway work zones. Imagine you are a public works, highway or transportation department worker, working in all sorts of difficult weather conditions to keep our roads and highways drivable and safe. There are often only a few feet and some flimsy plastic cones separating you from tons of aluminum, steel and glass hurtling past you at speeds upwards of 30

miles per hour. Add to that an increase in distracted driving that seems to worsen all the time, and the results can prove deadly. I've watched far too many families of CSEA members mourn the loved ones they've lost due to preventable work zone tragedies.

Our union has long put a priority on work zone safety. Not just for a week in April, but every day, raising awareness of work zone safety issues with campaigns like our *Don't Zone Out* and *Slow Down to Get Around* campaigns. We take action like successfully advocating to pass legislation that places speed cameras in work zones that force drivers to slow down.

As drivers, we all need to pay more attention near work zones and SLOW DOWN! The lives we save could include a union sister or brother who deserves to go home at the end of each day.

Many CSEA members perform deadly jobs in sanitation and disaster cleanup. Our union works hard to protect these workers as well. Just this month, we're releasing our newly updated *Clean Up Safety* mobile app designed to inform these members of the rules and regulations they should be following, and best practices to follow to stay safe.

On April 28, we will observe Workers Memorial Day. This is the day when we in labor honor those who have died on the job and recommit ourselves to do everything we can to prevent the loss of life on the job. We mourn for our dead, and fight like hell for the living! Let's all take a moment that day to remember our fallen sisters and brothers and commit to making safety in the workplace our highest priority.

Best wishes for a safe and healthy month ahead!

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary E. Sullivan, President