

# ***M.O.S.E.S. MONITOR***

February 2014

## **MOSES Lobby Day a Success; Members Urged to Keep up the Pressure**



LEFT: Joe Dorant, president, MOSES, listens attentively as Mike Epstein (right), survey supervisor with MassDOT, testifies to the drastic impact of H.59.

BELOW: It was standing room only at the public hearing on H.59, An Act to Reform Retiree Healthcare Benefits. More than 100 MOSES members crowded into the Gardner Auditorium in opposition of the proposed legislation.



**UPDATE:** H.59 is still in committee, but your voice continues to matter. Please take time to call, email or write your State Representative and State Senator (the main number for the State House is 617-722-2800), and ask them to "reject H.59 as drafted and grandfather current employees."



MassDEP's Jennifer Wang, Kathy Flannery with EOL and Madhuri Tummalapalli, also with MassDEP, lend their support.

President Joe Dorant explains, "More than 100 members took time off to attend and stand in solidarity against the devastation House Bill 59 would have on upwards of 60% of our membership." MOSES' solid advocacy, testimony and presence definitely captured the attention of the members of the Public Service Committee. So much so, Chairman Aaron Michlewitz and Committee Member Sen. Dan Wolfe specifically noted the impressive showing made by MOSES advocates.

MOSES members, correctional officers, social workers and higher education teachers spoke movingly about how H.59 will wreak havoc on their financial health, and in some cases their physical health. We are hopeful that the Public Service Committee will recognize H.59 for what it is: a broken promise to thousands of state employees.

Special thanks to panel members Sara Cohen (DCR) and Mike Epstein (MassDOT) for their excellent job testifying.

Dear MOSES member,

First, Happy New Year!!! This is the beginning of what I hope is a good year for MOSES represented employees and their families.

Last year at this time, Governor Patrick caused quite an uproar on Beacon Hill and with thousands of state employees when he filed House Bill No. 59. The bill, if signed into law, would force state employees to work longer for a reduced health insurance benefit, resulting in great financial hardship for 60% of our membership. We educated you on the bill and asked you to take action. Many of you called and wrote emails to your legislators, delaying action on the bill. Then, at the end of October, the Public Service Committee held a public hearing on the bill and we asked again for your help. The MOSES staff and Board of Directors organized a hugely successful "Lobby Day," that drew over 100 of our members to Beacon Hill to attend the hearing and lobby their legislators on the adverse effects the bill would have on their families. Again MOSES members responded! I was so proud of what we had accomplished. That is the way that you make an impact on Beacon Hill. While the bill has not been released from the committee, we expect there will be some action on this issue in the future. We must continue our efforts to oppose this bill. So we ask again, please keep up your calls and emails to your elected officials!

Also, last year, our lobbying efforts paid off during the budget process. MOSES was successful in restoring funds in many of our agencies that had seen deep cuts in their programs due to the recession. We were also effective in advancing our OSHA protection bill through the legislative process. This will be a major effort during the remainder of this legislative session.

While much was done last year, there are still challenges for us to confront for this year. MOSES has three separate contract negotiations going on simultaneously (MassDOT, MWRA and the Commonwealth). The chairmen and the committees have been very busy incorporating your ideas into new proposals that will be brought forward during the discussions. At MassDOT, we continue to work on the classification study and vacation buyback. At other agencies we have unique issues to resolve and we will continue to participate in Labor/ Management meetings in attempts to settle problems and concerns before they become grievances.

Recently I have appointed Travis Hinton from DCAMM and Will Morin from MassDOT (D-2) to vacant MOSES Board of Directors seats and I also appointed Mary Richmond from DCAMM as a steward. These folks have stepped up to help run the organization and I am very appreciative of their time and efforts. I will be making more appointments in the future as the board has vacant seats in public health and impending vacant seats at other agencies. Folks who are willing to serve should contact either me or B. Marie Cunningham in the MOSES office.

With several members of the legislature leaving, there will be many special elections in the coming months. I urge you to support candidates that understand the efforts of public employees. The MOSES legislative committee at the last board of directors meeting chose to endorse Representative Christopher Fallon from Malden for the Fifth Middlesex Senate seat. Chris has been a strong supporter of MOSES throughout his tenure as a state representative and has earned our endorsement. He has sponsored many of MOSES legislative proposals over the years. I ask all of the 145 members in the senate district to support Chris and help to get him elected. (If you wish to participate in his campaign please contact Bridget Quinn in the MOSES office.)

Many members attended one or more of the annual holiday parties sponsored by MOSES and feedback was mostly positive. Of course the best attended party was the luncheon in Charlestown where over 350 members packed the Knights of Columbus Hall. Thanks to the board members who arranged and managed these galas and of course to Janet from the MOSES office for her outstanding support and organizational skills!

I hope to see you at the next membership meeting at Ken's Steakhouse in Framingham.

Joe

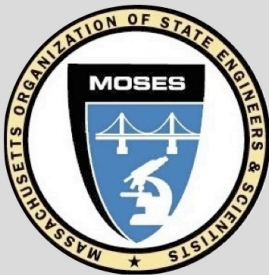
## Increased H&W Benefits, Death Benefit, and More

When making out your dental/optical reimbursement form you will notice several improvements and changes over last year. Some of the changes include: an increase to the reimbursement amount on the open plan; limited reimbursement for laser surgery; the decreased waiting time from 6 months to 2 months for new employees; a \$5000 death benefit; a 1+1 plan from Altus; and an extension of COBRA benefits for 5 years for retirees. All dental work done or all optical purchases made on or before 12/31/13 should be submitted as a 2013 expense regardless that the bill was not paid until 2014. If you don't submit these 2013 expenses before June 30, 2014, you **cannot** get reimbursed for them on your 2014 claim. If you need an additional Health and Welfare form, please contact MOSES Office Administrator Janet Vitiello at (617) 367-2727 x 319. If you become aware of any employee or retiree who dies during 2014, please contact Paul Donohue at (617) 367-2727 x 317.

Last year, two MOSES members died a few months after retiring. If any MOSES member knows that death is imminent, it is almost always best to remain on the payroll by using the Mutual Aid provision under Article 13A.5 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement or the Employee Illness Leave Bank which provides up to 120 days paid leave. Even if you have to go off the payroll for a short period of time by using the Medical Leave provided under Article 8.7B of the Collective Bargaining Agreement this should be considered particularly if you are married. The reason is that under Option D, survivors receive a pension at least 50% higher when a person dies while employed rather than retired. If you are not married, you must choose an Option D beneficiary before you die because failure to do so prevents a survivor from receiving a pension and the only option is a return of your contributions. If uncertain what to do, email me at: [pdonohue@moses-ma.org](mailto:pdonohue@moses-ma.org)

I am available to discuss with any MOSES represented employee retirement issues for those considering retirement. Everyone knows birthdays are important for people under 65 but sometimes a few days more or less can change your retirement amount by up to 1%. Call me or email me with your questions.

Paul Donohue, Esq.



## We're online, are you?

From news items about the great work members do each and every day to finding all the forms you might ever need in regards to MOSES member benefits, it is worth the few minutes it takes to log into the MOSES web site. Do it today!

## It's as easy as 1...2...3...!

1. Type [www.MOSES-MA.org](http://www.MOSES-MA.org) into your web browser.
2. Click on "Get an Account."
3. Fill in a user name of your choice, your email and your first & last name (plus answer an easy match question). That's it. You will be provided a temporary password within 48 hours and everything MOSES will be just one click away.

Get an account

or

Login with your username

Log in

[Request a new password](#)



**MOSES MONITOR**  
**90 North Washington Street**  
**Boston, MA 02114**

**General Membership Meetings**

MOSES holds nine General Membership meetings a year at various locations around the state. All MOSES members in good standing are invited. Dinner is provided. Come to learn what's going on with your Union, to meet old friends, or to make new ones. Dinner starts at 6:00 p.m.; the meeting begins at 7:00 p.m.

**February 11, 2014 Ken's Steak House, 95 Worcester Rd, (Route 9) Framingham, MA (508)875-4455**

**Directions: From Mass Pike East:** Exit from the Mass Pike at Exit 13. After the tollbooths, bear right onto Rte 30 West towards Framingham. Follow Route 30 to the third set of lights. Take a left hand turn, at the stop sign take a right. Follow the road to the end, at the light take a right onto Route 9 West. **IMMEDIATELY**, take a right into Ken's Steak House parking lot located adjacent to Border Books. **From 128 North/South:** Exit for Route 9 West (2 exits south of the Mass. Pike). Follow Route 9 west through Wellesley and Natick. Ken's is on the right after Shopper's World, in the same parking lot as Border Books. **From Route 495 North/South and the Mass. Pike West:** Exit from Route 9 East (Framingham). Follow Route 9 east, approximately 8 miles. Ken's is on the westbound (left) side of Route 9 (opposite Jordan's Furniture and Tweeter). Take a U-turn at the lights just after Ken's steak House Parking lot.

**March 11, 2014 Stoneforge, 90 Paramount Drive, Raynham, MA 02767 (508) 977-9845**

**Directions:** From Route 24 (North or South) take Exit 13A (Route 44 East). Go to the second set of lights and take a right on to Paramount Drive in the Raynham Woods commerce park. At the second break in the divided road, reverse direction on Paramount Drive. Take your first right into the Stoneforge parking lot.

**April 8, 2014 Mazzeo's Ristorante, 1015 South Street, Route 7, Pittsfield, MA (413) 448-2095. (Formerly Asters)**

**Directions:** Take the Mass. Turnpike (Rt. 90) West to Exit 2 (Lee). Travel north on Rt. 20W to the intersection of Rt. 7N in Lenox. Continue North on Rt. 7N/20W to Pittsfield. At the Lenox/Pittsfield line, proceed through one light and Mazzeo's Ristorante will be on the right.

**May 14, 2013 Meeting - Teresa's - 140 South Main Street, Middleton, MA (978) 647-1111**

**Directions:**

**From Boston:** Take Route 1 North over the Tobin Bridge. Take Route 114 West towards Middleton. Teresa's is about 2.4 miles down Route 114 on the left.

**From West:** Take I-95, Route 128 North. Take Route 1 North towards Danvers. Take Route 114 West towards Middleton Teresa's is about 2.4 miles down Route 114 on the left.