

# INSIGHT



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## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Capital Impact Group

Unveiling his first election year spending plan, Governor Chris Christie announced his proposed Fiscal Year 2014 Budget, which includes an expansion in the state's Medicaid program to cover uninsured New Jersey residents, an increase in education funding, aid to towns recovering from Hurricane Sandy, and the largest pension payment in New Jersey history, topping \$1.676 billion.

Facing a projected \$300 million revenue shortfall, the Governor's proposed ten-percent income tax cut was not a hallmark of his speech, as it was last year. Democrats criticized the Governor for not addressing the structural problems in the state's budget, and for not providing enough assistance to low-income families.

With an approval rating of 74%, Governor Christie touted the \$120 billion dollars taxpayers will save under this bipartisan pension and benefits reform previously passed. Still keeping the pressure on public employees, Christie called for the end of sick leave payouts. Once again, he called on the Legislature to end cash payouts for sick for government employees. The Legislature, still divided on the matter, will be under pressure as the election season heats up over the upcoming months to move legislation addressing the matter. PANJ, along with the CIG team, is monitoring the situation in Trenton and will keep you abreast of any movement on the horizon.

Last year, Governor Christie signed legislation to help individuals dealing with drug addiction reclaim their lives with treatment, rather than housing them in prison. In fiscal year 2014, Governor Christie is proposing to increase funding by \$4.5 million for drug court treatment services. As the discussion of funding for drug courts unfold, as well as the upcoming Senate and Assembly Budget committee hearings where the Judiciary must present its proposed budget, PANJ and CIG will be engaged to ensure probation services are forefronts of discussion. Campaign Update.

Governor Chris Christie and Senator Barbara Buono are squaring off on a daily basis across the state both making the case as to why they deserve to lead our state for the next four years. As mentioned previously, Governor Christie still holds very high approval ratings among New Jersey residents and continues to out fundraise Buono. Keeping up the pressure, Buono, has landed a series of high level endorsements including the Communication Workers of America, New Jersey's largest state workers union; the Middlesex and Somerset Counties AFL-CIO Central Labor Council; and Emily's List, the political group that supports candidates who back abortion rights.

As for the 120 NJ legislative races this year, PANJ will be initiating its formal endorsement process over the summer months. Key races of note include, Senator Linda Greenstein (D-14), a long-time supporter of PANJ, who may once again find herself in a contested race. Additionally, gubernatorial candidate Buono's Senate seat is vacant, as she is precluded to run for two public offices in light of New Jersey's ban on dual office holding. Assemblyman Peter Barnes III (D-18) is likely to run for the four-year term, leaving his Assembly seat up for grabs in the upcoming Middlesex County Democratic Convention.

PANJ also successfully introduced into the New Jersey Legislature new enabling transfer legislation to accompany ACR116 & SCR91, the concurrent resolution which proposes to amend the State Constitution to authorize the Legislature to enact a statute to establish a Bureau of Probation in the State Parole Board.

The bill is once again being sponsored by a true advocate for our safety, as well the safety of the communities we serve, Assemblyman Gordon Johnson. Joining him on the bill is the chair of the Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee, Assemblyman Charles Mainor. The new version of the bill, A3864, which transfers probation employees from Judiciary to State Parole Board, seeks to move probation officers into the executive branch while addressing several concerns the AOC has with our transfer. Our focus is to have the bill heard, along with the concurrent resolution.

## OFFICIALS

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**Bradley J. Fairchild**  
First V.P., Supervisor's Unit

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Bridgett Patillo, Essex  
Anthony Persico, Morris

### Region 2

Edda Burry, AOC  
Michael LaCosta, HUnterdon  
Susan Smith, Middlesex

### Region 3

A. Francis Nunan, Cape May  
Greg Wolf, Salem  
Susan Lively, Cumberland

## A Message From The President

Brothers and Sisters,

As I write this there is snow falling outside, hopefully for the last time this season! We have closed on our new building, and are unpacked and up and running. The building is beautiful, and I hope that our organization uses it for years to come. I have included an article in this edition about stepping down. It has been my pleasure to speak your voice for all these years, and I am confident that our new leadership will continue to speak your voices. I do want to thank all of the representatives for their hard work and dedication to our Union.



In Solidarity,

*George Christie*

President

## A Message From The Editor

Brothers and Sisters,

As usual this edition of the Insight has a ton of current information for all our members, from negotiations to health and safety.

We are so proud to announce that we have a new building, and there was no lag time in moving from our old office to our new office. Our building is another jewel in our crown, and we appreciate everyone's efforts to make it happen. Our new address is 2409 Paynters Rd, Wall 08719, our phone and fax numbers remain the same.

Our annual golf outing is coming up, in May and we do hope to see everyone out on the course. All of the proceeds go to our Educational Fund for the scholarships that we award at the annual Conference. If you don't golf and want to join us for dinner please reach out to your local representative or Jackie Sheehan for more information.

In the coming months we will have new leadership, our President has announced his retirement in this edition of the Insight. Most of us as representatives have only worked under George as our President. I know that we all share the same feeling as we wish him well in his future endeavors!

In Solidarity,

*Ellen Cribbin*

Editor

## *Farewell to My Brothers and Sisters*

**By George P. Christie, PANJ President**

Brothers and sisters in PANJ I want to take this time to tell you all that I have decided to step down as president of PANJ effective June 30, 2013. I have been blessed to serve as your president since 1993 and we all have come a long way over these many years.

During my tenure we united our probation officers and supervisors under one contract for each group thereby ending the local county contracts. We equalized salaries by filing a federal law suit, and put increments in place so our members could actually move from base salary to maximum over a period of years. This of course was a great accomplishment due to the excellent hard work of your state and local union leaders.

I could not be more proud of all the probation officers and supervisors in PANJ. You have all be consummate professionals keeping the judiciary functioning efficiently and effectively. However, your efforts have not always been recognized by our administration which is disappointing.

There will be a new president in a few months that will follow our tradition of defending and representing our members. I hope that you will all support that person as you have supported me. I also want you to support your elected state and local officials who work for you often without any compensation to make your employment lives better.

Thank you all and God bless you.

## *Don't Let Resentment Replace Solidarity*

**By Dwight Covalleskie, First Vice President Line Staff**

We need to look at the big picture in order to understand what this statement means. Our current economy seems to be taking steps towards recovery, however we all know it will continue to be a long and arduous process.

Depending on who you ask this definitely has a different meaning that can be deep rooted in their beliefs. A common statement that we all hear is "Unions are destroying this State and this Country." When in fact Unions have for over a hundred years improved safety in the workplace, negotiated fair wages, created the weekend, and an eight hour work day. These examples are just a few of the many accomplishments that Unions are responsible for. Financially Unions created the middle class. Wages are negotiated on behalf of members by Unions which directly affect what non Union employees are paid. It is no wonder that with declining Union membership Country wide that there is a growing disparity between the classes and the middle class is slowly eroding. Unions have always fought for FAIR wages and benefits, not exorbitant wages and benefits.

It saddens me to see those who are struggling in the midst of the worst economic climate ever. I was talking to an individual who at the time said something that hits home now. "Know your audience, because others aren't informed or don't care." A few years ago big corporations gave out huge bonuses, a practice which has not stopped. Those corporations give out more money that we as the middle class will never in our lives see. We don't receive bonuses, while we dedicate our careers to the service of the public. We continue to do our job, pay into our pensions, contribute to our healthcare, and pay our bills. Now we are told that we're overpaid. It doesn't add up.

We are currently involved in a very contentious negotiation with the Judiciary, and they think we are overpaid. This belief fosters resentment not only among private and public sector employees, but between Labor and Management.

In order to combat these feelings of resentment, we need to be informed as public employees, and Union members. We need to be knowledgeable about the services we provide, and current working conditions.

The way we see ourselves and our members through this storm is not letting resentment replace solidarity.

## Supervisor Update

**By Brad Fairchild, First Vice President, Supervisory Unit**



The Professional Supervisors contract presently being negotiated is proving to be most difficult ordeal. PANJ believes that many changes are necessary to make the Judiciary a more just and fair employer. The removal of Supervisors through the continued misuse of Article 9.8 remains the most contentious issue but sadly many other management contract provisions appear to be punitive in nature.

Recently the Judiciary put forth a salary proposal that would seriously damage the ability of PANJ members to receive increases that would help mitigate the financial damage that will occur in the next several years due to the dramatic increases in health care. In July of 2013, 2014, and 2015 there will be huge increases in health care deductions which will result in significant reductions in the net pay of all PANJ members as well as all state workers. The Judiciary's current salary plan does not take this factor into account which will further erode our family's income.

The Judiciary also wants to increase hours of work without compensation beyond the traditional 35 hour work week. Increasing hours and reducing salaries will make resolving this contract problematic at best.

Other priorities for PANJ supervisors involve making our disciplinary provisions fair through a truly independent Hearing Officer who does not work for the Judiciary. PANJ Supervisors do expect to win every case but the fact we have not won any case at the Local level in over ten years is a clear indication that there are serious flaws in the present system. The Judiciary should have the same commitment to fairness for its employees that it extends to the criminals who appear before the bench.

PANJ is well aware that the current anti state worker environment that is promoted by too many politicians and state policy makers has created major challenges for collective bargaining. PANJ remains committed to the principals of fairness and impartiality and will work round the clock to make sure our members receive the fairness they deserve. Supervisors who have specific concerns about the contract are encouraged to contact myself or the PANJ office at 732-223-1799.

## Statewide Safety Subcommittee

**By Donald DeHart, Northern Regional Vice President, Supervisor's**

In order to assist the Administrative Committee with issues concerning staff safety, a Safety Subcommittee has been established. Subcommittee members were appointed by the Conference of Chiefs and should be representative of the various titles and geographic areas of the State. The purpose of this subcommittee is to review safety trends and issues that impact training and policy and to bring to the attention of the Administrative Committee. The Administrative Committee, in turn, will charge the Safety Subcommittee with specific task as needed, such as modifying or designing safety training, developing or modifying safety procedures, and researching or recommending new safety practices.

The Statewide Safety Subcommittee had discussed at the length the disparity around the state in the availability of field equipment for probation officers to safely perform required field activities. Specifically, the Subcommittee had identified field radios, body armor and state vehicles as three critical equipment necessities that were disparately available to probation officers from vicinage to vicinage. The Subcommittee has engaged, reviewed, monitored the ways vicinages are implementing the present equipment being used in the field and language used for safety communication purposes. Field protocols, agendas, training's, and practices of individual vicinages are discussed. TACPRO/NRCT self-defense training and trainer participation are ongoing concerns.

The 2013 Draft Goals are; Develop Statewide Standardized Field Protocol, Develop Module II Warrantless Search Training, Promote the Development of Local Safety Committees and Clarify the Incident Reporting Process.

# Ad Hoc Committee Update

## By Stuart Martinsen, PANJ Legislative Assistant

Our third meeting was held on December 11th, 2012. Present for PANJ; President G. Christie, 1st Vice President of the Line Staff D. Covaleskie, Legal counsel Dave Fox Esq., 1st Vice President of Supervisor Staff B. Fairchild, and this writer. The AOC's committee members included the Acting Chair Judge Volkert Jr., Acting AOC Chief John Pizarro, the late Camden TCA Mike O'Brien, Chief of Employee Relations Janet Zatz and Judicial Assistant Erin Catalfamo.

Judge Volkert again conveyed that the priority of the committee is to address how the Judiciary can assist PANJ with resolving health and safety issues.

One topic covered was the need for TAC PRO trainings to include more PO's and Supervisor's outside Probation services, along with annual refreshers for everyone. Chief Pizarro advised that he would look into this issue, and added that he would like to review online trainings options for TAC PRO.

Thanks to the efforts of the committee Probation Services managers and staff are receiving Critical Criminal Alerts from the New Jersey State Police and the Regional Operations Intelligence Center. Other issues discussed included communication with police and law enforcement for safety reasons while officers are in the field. This was addressed based on the AOC's directive #14-06, and Best Practices standard 5-11. PANJ formally requested that a survey be conducted by the AOC to review how the vicinages are communicating with local police and law enforcement agencies. PANJ spoke about the need for two-way radios while officers are in the field. Chief Pizarro and Janet Zatz reported that they would look into radios and report back at the next committee meeting. PANJ also requested that field protocols be improved specific to calling in while officers are in the field. PANJ asked that this be addressed by the Probation Staff Safety Committee, as per Chief Pizarro.

PANJ reported that we currently keep statistics on new violent crimes committed by probationers. Further, we requested that the committee review these statistics, due to the high levels of probationers involved with shootings and murders. Since July 2012, PANJ has identified 28 persons on Probation who were victims of shootings, and two who were murdered. Field officers are in the line of fire as a result of supervising offenders that are victims of these shootings. The committee recognized PANJ's concerns and agreed to address it further.

Brad Fairchild requested that an additional section be added to the current Judicial Workplace Violence form to include a community violence section. Judge Volkert Jr. indicated that the statistics of persons on Probation committing violent crimes can be compiled by management. President asked the committee to distribute an annual statistical report of active bench warrants who have absconded and total warrants. Chief Pizarro advised that he would contact an administrative specialist to get the information.

Continuing with recidivism rates for probationers, Dwight Covaleskie asked that we receive a report from the AOC with the actual recidivism rates. The AOC indicated that there has been an ongoing discussion as to how to define recidivism. This will be further explored at the next meeting.

President Christie brought up the issue of clothing for officers performing field work, and the need for officers to be better identified by law enforcement agencies. Field warrantless searches were discussed and the committee advised PANJ that trainings are in the process of being completed and rolled out.

PANJ has the expectation that the Ad-Hoc Committee will continue to meet to address mutual concerns. Our next meeting is scheduled for May 7th. If you have any issues that you would like us to address please contact us at the PANJ office at 732-223-1799 or at panj1@optimum.net.

The PANJ delegation wants to acknowledge here the passing of TCA Mike O'Brien from Camden. TCA O'Brien sat on this committee for the last year. He was instrumental in addressing our concerns and improving relations between labor and management. TCA O'Brien will be greatly missed and we extend our condolences to his family, friends and colleagues.

## Annual PANJ-EF Golf Outing

**By Jacqueline Guarini-Sheehan, PANJ-EF President**

Spring is upon us and time to get ready for golf season! PANJ-EF is having it's annual golf outing on May 6, 2013 at Mercer Oaks Country Club, West Windsor, New Jersey. This is a fundraising event that raises money for the three \$2,500.00 scholarships awarded at the PANJ-EF conference. We appreciate all the support given by PANJ locals in the past, and hope that you will be as generous this year. We encourage our members and their families who golf, and those that don't to join us in a fun filled day.

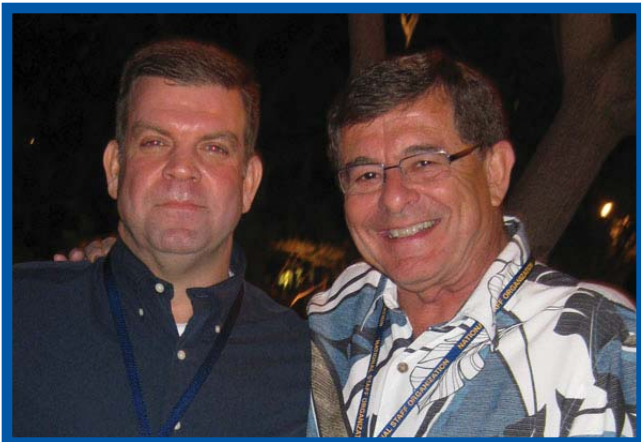
All information will be on the PANJ website, [www.panj.org](http://www.panj.org); as well as, information forwarded to all local presidents. If you have any questions or need more information please contact Jacqueline Guarini-Sheehan, PANJ-EF President.

## PANJ Members Are Priority

**By Jacqueline Guarini-Sheehan, Treasurer and Hudson Local 115 President**

In mid-January the Line Staff 1st Vice President, Dwight Covalleskie along with 13 Local President's attended the National Staff Organization: Winter Advocacy Retreat (NSO:WAR) conference in Anaheim, California. The individuals who attended the conference were required to attend classes to help them handle grievances, disciplines and overall union issues. They also had an opportunity to network with other members of unions throughout the country. In networking with other unions they realized we are all facing the similar issues. In addition, the local representatives from PANJ spent numerous hours discussing issues we face in each of our vicinages and statewide.

The conference provided a wonderful source of information to help guide the Local Shop Stewards in their representation of their members. During the course of the day, those that attended gained the tools necessary in providing the resources needed to handle contract and discipline issues. The conference also provided classes in dealing with the financial aspects of the union. Putting all this information together brings a stronger and more transparent union together. SOLIDARITY is the key to keeping unions fighting for their members.



**Dwight Covalleskie, 1st VP PANJ  
Chuck Agerstrand, President NSO**



**Winter Advocacy Retreat, NSO Attendees**

*“We Must All Hang Together, Or We Shall Most Assuredly All Hang Separately.”  
- Ben Franklin 1775*

**By Brad Fairchild – PANJ First Vice President, Professional Supervisors**

Ben Franklin, perhaps one of the most enduring of the Founding Fathers, wrote these words on the eve of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. He saw that by signing their names the delegates to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia would be virtually signing their death warrants if they did not band together and successfully repel the British invasion and make the American Revolution a reality.

Although we are not facing a life and death situation or “storming the barricades”, Probation Officers and Supervisors in the Judiciary must band together against the Judiciary’s new wage proposal or the future of collective bargaining and labor management relations in general will be seriously compromised. The Judiciary’s plan to implement a seriously reduced separate salary scale for new employees will potentially do tremendous damage to a personnel system that has been carefully developed since state unification almost a generation ago.

Paying new workers substantially reduced wages will further devastate morale by the imposition of a “two tiered” salary scale. Depending on when an employee starts their job, their pay for doing the same job will be considerably less. In these situations can anyone seriously believe that resentment and bitterness will not run rampant through many of our courthouses?

The real motivation for this draconian plan may be simply a matter of union busting. Having a two tiered system may negatively impact union membership in the future and thus further weaken employee benefits, wages, and any sense of fairness in the workplace. With our families already under duress due to the struggling economy and major salary reductions due to dramatic health care increases, we all must collectively fight to reject the divisive Judiciary wage scheme.

First year Probation Officers as well as thirty five year Supervisors all have a major stake in discarding the Courts plan. We must all fight the instinctive reaction to make tradeoffs that may not have the most immediate impact but could do significant long term damage. This may involve waiting many months or longer to settle our contracts but it’s a price we may have to pay.

There is no doubt that these are the most difficult time’s New Jersey judicial workers have ever faced. We can mitigate the damage however; by banding together to reject management’s most punitive proposals.



Congratulations to  
Cumberland County  
Local 100  
on 100% membership!

