



# 1274 NEWSLINE



NORTH SUBURBAN TEACHERS UNION – LOCAL 1274, CFL, IFT/AFT, AFL-CIO



## November 3, 2020 Election Issue




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### IFT ELECTION ENDORSEMENTS

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The IFT Political Action Committee (PAC) gathers feedback from members around the state. The Executive Board uses that information to decide on candidate endorsements for the 2020 election.

IFT endorses Joe Biden for President. IFT President Dan Montgomery (former Local 1274 President) notes Biden's record of supporting public education:

*“A longtime and vocal supporter of the rights of working people and a powerful labor movement, Biden has the strength, experience, and compassion our nation needs to lead us out of this healthcare crisis and put our economy on the road to recovery. We're proud to stand with him.”*



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### Targeted Illinois General Assembly Races in NSTU Member Districts



#### Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz

*Illinois House, District 17 (Glenview, Wilmette, Skokie, Evanston: 228 Local members)*

Jennifer defeated four candidates in a heated 2018 primary election and went on to win the House seat vacated by Laura Fine, who moved to the Illinois Senate. Jennifer earned the endorsement of Local 1274 and the IFT ([February 2019 Newsline](#)). She impressed us with her human rights work as an attorney, including her advocacy for immigrants and her work for victims of child trafficking and forced marriage. Jennifer has stood by her principles on public education, worker rights, and protection of retirement security during her first two years' of office. She deserves our support again as she faces two opponents, an out-of-the-mainstream Republican and a Green Party candidate.



**Denyse Wang Stoneback**

*Illinois House, District 16 (Skokie, Lincolnwood, far-Northside of Chicago: 236 Local members)*

Local 1274 and the IFT endorsed Denyse in the March primary, where she ran and won against an unelected incumbent who was out of step on our issues ([March 2020 Newsline](#)). She is running unopposed but deserves our support. Denyse was raised in Skokie, is a product of its public schools, and has chosen to raise her own family in the community. As the founder and director of [People for a Safer Society](#), Denyse has promoted the cause of gun violence prevention. She will be a strong and reliable supporter of our issues in Springfield.



**Michelle Darbro**

*Illinois House, District 20 (NW Chicago, Norridge, Rosemont: 143 Local members)*

Michelle is a paramedic and a member of Chicago Firefighters Union Local 2. A graduate of Environmental Studies from the University of Chicago, she is a first-time candidate for public office who won her contested primary and the chance to flip this Republican seat. She is running against Republican Brad Stephens, an unelected incumbent who is the mayor of Rosemont and a member of the well-connected family that has run that town for decades. Local 1274 and the IFT endorsed her in the primary election ([March 2020 Newsline](#)). Michelle is the candidate who will best represent our interests and values.



**All IFT Endorsements**



**Mary Edly-Allen**

*Illinois House, District 51 (Libertyville, Lake Zurich, Hawthorne Woods: 34 Local members)*

Mary is an IFT member. As the incumbent, she serves on the Illinois House Education and Human Services committees. Mary demonstrates how every vote counts - she won election in 2018 by six votes, flipping a seat in a historically conservative district. She needs and deserves our support for re-election.



**Maggie Trevor**

*Illinois House, District 54 (Palatine, Rolling Meadows: 40 Local members)*

This is a rematch of the 2018 election in which Maggie fell 43 votes short of defeating a far-right opponent who is out of touch on our issues. Maggie graduated from University of Chicago with a bachelor's degree in chemistry and a master's degree and Ph.D in political science, and has a 30 year career in academia and research. Maggie has the strong endorsement of our local, Local 1211, and the IFT.



**Melinda Bush**

*Illinois Senate, District 31 (Far-Northeastern IL - Warren Township, Wadsworth)*

Melinda is a former teacher and IFT member who was elected in 2013 and serves in a fairly conservative district. She has been a champion for public education and deserves our support for another term.

# From our President: Vote Yes on the Fair Tax Amendment



## The Fair Tax Amendment is a Simple, Necessary Fix to our Broken Tax System

Approval of the Fair Tax Amendment would make a simple, needed change to the Illinois constitution, providing an essential benefit to the state and all of its citizens at the expense of the small few who can afford it most - the wealthiest 3% of Illinoisans. But if you follow the ad campaign of the opposition you might be led to believe that this is a nefarious plot to give "Springfield" extraordinary new powers to bankrupt small businesses, destroy the middle class, seize grandma's farm - and tax away her retirement savings as well. It's all nonsense, of course. But the well-financed campaign of misinformation and scare tactics directed against the Fair Tax amendment threatens to derail a once-in-a-generation opportunity to correct a serious flaw in our tax system that prevents the wealthiest Illinoisans from paying their fair share. We cannot let them win.

## The Wealthiest Illinoisans are Funding the Deceitful "Anti" Campaign

So let's set the record straight, first by outing the powers behind the anti-fair tax campaign: the wealthiest Illinoisans and the captains of its businesses and industries. That includes Ken Griffin, the richest man in Illinois, who has contributed \$46.7 million of his own vast wealth in an effort to derail this common sense amendment that would raise taxes on him and the other fat cats while lowering or keeping the same tax rate on the rest of us. And they are enabled by the usual suspects, chiefly the Illinois Policy Institute (IPI), a faux "think tank" that in reality is the mouthpiece promoting the interest of the 1% against the rest. This is the same coalition that brought forth the Janus case in an effort to destroy unions.

Before shining a light on the lies and misinformation of the "anti" campaign, let's remember what the Fair Tax amendment is really about and why all of labor, retiree groups, and leading economists are calling for its passage.

## Passing This Amendment Means the Top 3% will Pay Their Fair Share

The amendment proposes striking a line in the current Illinois constitution that states that "a tax on income...shall be at a non-graduated rate." That's it. In doing so, the state would then have the same ability as the federal government and almost every other state to have the wealthy pay their fair share. A graduated tax is one in which rates are based on one's ability to pay - hence it is what most mainstream economists consider to be a fair tax. As income rises, so can the tax rate. Our current constitution mandates a flat tax structure, in which all Illinoisans pay the same rate (currently 4.95%) regardless of income. It is viewed as a regressive tax - one that places a higher burden on the lowest earners. To illustrate, a worker earning \$20,000 a year is left with \$19,100 after taxes to pay all of her bills. Meanwhile Ken Griffin, who earned \$1.5 billion in 2019, had \$1,425,750,000 after taxes - he's doing just fine. No wonder he had a spare \$46 million laying around to put into trying to sink this amendment.

## A Tax Increase for only Those Earning Over \$250,000 . . . the Top 3%

Wisely, the General Assembly has already passed legislation setting what the higher rates on the wealthy would be if the amendment passes (see chart below). In that way we know exactly what we are voting for. 97% of Illinoisans will see no increase, or a slight decrease in their tax rates; the wealthiest 3% will pay more.

Single & Joint Filers		
Marginal Rates	Net Income Level	% of IL Taxpayers
4.75%	\$0 - \$10,000	27.2%
4.90%	\$10,001 - \$100,000	58.9%
4.95%	\$100,001 - \$250,000	11.1%
7.75%	\$250,001 - \$500,000	1.9%
7.85%	\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	0.6%
7.95%	Over \$1,000,000	0.3%

**This Amendment does NOT Give Springfield New Power to Tax the Middle Class**

Meanwhile, the IPI, Ken Griffin, and the other elites funding the "anti" side are trying to preserve their privilege through misinformation and deceit. The central theme of their campaign is to scare voters into thinking that a "yes" vote would confer upon Springfield a new and unfettered power to raise your taxes willy-nilly, anytime they please. The truth is that Springfield already has that power. As with any other legislation, a tax increase can be imposed by a majority vote of both houses of the General Assembly along with the signature of the Governor. This amendment would simply allow for an increase on just the wealthy. The IPI insists that Springfield will surely use that power to tax the rest of us at the next opportunity. But graduated income taxes exist to allow for rates to rise with income levels; no one uses a graduated system to make rates higher for the working class.

**This Amendment does NOT Tax Retirement Income**

Another, even more crazy, IPI attack on the Fair Tax is meant to worry senior citizens and retirees. They falsely claim that the Fair Tax amendment would give Springfield the right to tax retirement savings. Completely untrue. Under current Illinois law, all forms of retirement income - including TRS and IMRF pensions - are exempt from taxation. There is NOTHING in the Fair Tax amendment would give the state a new right to tax retirement income. The fact is the state already has that right! It just has never used it because taxing retirement income is considered a "third-rail" issue in Springfield - one so unpopular that it would doom those who passed it. In fact, passing the amendment would actually make it LESS likely for Springfield to begin taxing retirement income because the revenue that would be generated from the top 3% would obviate the need for that more drastic and unpopular measure.

Ken Griffin is using his great wealth to try to fool regular Illinoisans into putting his interests above their own. Don't let him win! Vote Yes on the Fair Tax!

In solidarity,




**Support Staff Council of D38 joins the North Suburban Teachers Union Local 1274**

We are happy to welcome the support staff of Joseph Sears School in District 38 as the newest council of our local. The vast majority of our approximately 1,900 members were fortunate enough to be able to join established unions upon being hired. Sears School support staff took the bold step to organize and create their own union. Their organizing campaign began prior to the pandemic but the pandemic heightened the urgency and appeal. We commend the new members of Support Staff Council of District 38 for their vision, courage, and solidarity:

*Deborah Beluch, Max Casas, Patricia Culhane, Ann Endre, Giovanni Geurero, Deborah Keegan, Debra Kruse, Angela Lascola, Marqus Ledoux, Sherry Nash, Jonathan Quijanda, Joseph Rodriguez, Tamara Schoof, Susan White, and Laura Wise*

**Mission Statement of the Support Staff Council of District 38**

We, the support staff of Joseph Sears School, are forming a Union to guarantee a fair and equitable work environment, and to improve the educational experience of our students, their families and caregivers, school faculty and staff, and community stakeholders. We seek to ensure that support staff:

- Participate in decisions related to our work responsibilities and working conditions;
- Earn fair wages based on an equitable and transparent pay schedule;
- Enjoy opportunities for professional development, job security, and promotion;
- Use our collective voice and power to advocate for our students, our colleagues, and community.

## NSTU Unions Fight for Safe and Healthy Reopening Plans

When the pandemic hit last March, our union was able to reach an agreement with the Governor's office and other stakeholders that kept students home for remote learning while protecting the health, safety, and livelihood of teachers and other school employees. But the state left it up to our 852 individual school districts to determine their own reopening plans, as long as those plans adhered to the state's broad health guidelines and mandates. As a result, districts throughout the state -- and across our local -- developed a variety of school plans ranging from fully remote to all-in-school, with many different hybrid models in between.

In districts where teachers and other school employees are represented by unions, those unions have a right to negotiate the impact of those reopening plans. Our council leaders have been busy all summer and up to the present negotiating with district officials to protect the health and safety of their members and students.

A survey of council leaders has revealed some of the biggest challenges for their teachers and support staff, and improvements in working conditions achieved through impact bargaining.

Here are some of the biggest challenges council leaders reported for teachers and/or support staff:

- *Teachers who are required to teach students in-class and remotely at the same time have found it to be exceedingly stressful, challenging, and ineffective.*
- *Protecting jobs and working conditions for our support staff members.*
- *Providing professional development for teachers to give them with the tools and skills needed to be successful under these conditions.*
- *Access to proper technology for students and staff.*
- *Anxiety about returning to in-person instruction.*
- *Poor communication from school districts.*
- *Lack of accountability for student engagement and attendance.*
- *Maintaining social distancing and mask wearing for students in school.*
- *Unrealistic expectations and unsafe conditions for custodial and maintenance workers.*

Here are some things that council leaders were able to impact bargain to improve health/safety/learning conditions:

- *Eliminated, delayed, or greatly reduced in-class teaching when infection rates are high.*
- *Added staff to reduce class size.*
- *Accommodations made for teachers and staff with underlying health conditions to work remotely.*
- *Secured more robust plans for cleaning, temperature checks, and providing PPE.*
- *Opened gyms and outdoor spaces to create better social distancing and an open-air environment.*
- *Allow in-person teachers to teach from home via Zoom under certain conditions.*
- *Modified teacher evaluation plans.*
- *Provided extra stipends for support staff supervision duties.*
- *Creation of a new COVID Sick bank.*
- *Requirement that parents commit to their choice of remote or in-person learning instead of switching their children back and forth at will.*

Our councils will continue to assert their right to bargain the effect of any changes to instructional plans as the school year moves forward.



### 1274 Newsline

Produced and published by the North Suburban Teachers Union Local 1274 – IFT/AFT, AFL-CIO

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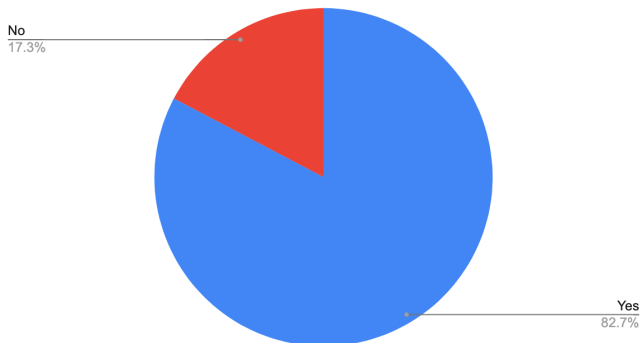
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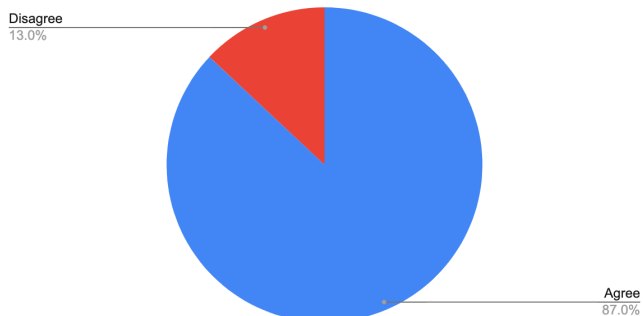
# IFT Survey Results

In a recent survey of IFT members, Local 1274 had the second highest reply rate, and the highest level of support for the fair tax amendment. This reinforces our knowledge that our local has a high level of engagement and is on the right side of fair tax.

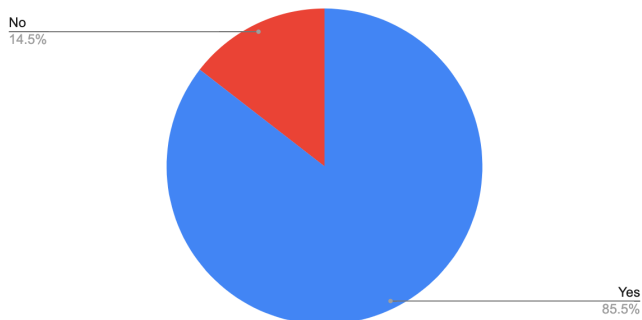
Do you plan to vote "yes" on the Fair Tax Amendment?



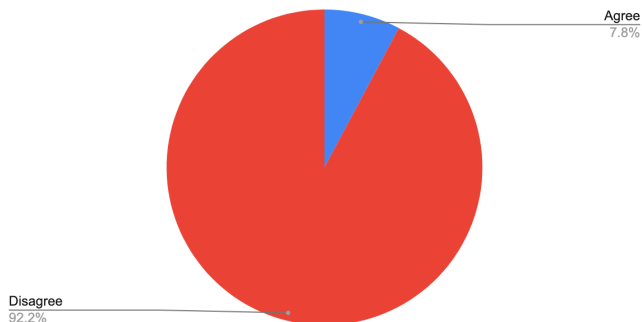
Governor J.B. Pritzker is doing a good job handling the coronavirus outbreak.



Do you think your union has been doing a good job handling COVID related work issues?



President Donald Trump is doing a good job handling the coronavirus outbreak.



## Councils of Local 1274

- West Northfield Teachers Association, District 31
- Support Staff Council of District 38
- Wilmette Support Staff Union, District 39
- Support Staff Council of District 64
- Golf Teachers Association, District 67
- District 69 PSRP Council
- Park View Council, District 70
- Niles Council of Teachers and Support Staff, District 71
- Fairview Teachers Association, District 72
- East Prairie Council, District 73
- Lincolnwood Support Staff Union, District 74
- Lincolnwood Teachers Association, District 74
- Niles Township Federation of Teachers and Support Staff, District 219
- Ridgewood Teachers Association, District 234
- Niles Township Federation of Special Education Educators and Paraprofessionals, District 807