

SEIU Members and Community Allies Demand Fair Revenue for Rhode Island's Future

"With more cuts, we will not be able to meet the growing demand for services." -
Kaitlyn Stewart, SEIU Local 580

PROVIDENCE, R.I. -- On Thursday, May 7, dozens of SEIU members and community allies from across Rhode Island gathered at the State House for Rhode Island's Budget Revenue Day of Action. During a press conference and lobby day, frontline workers from SEIU Locals 1199NE, 580, CIR-SEIU, 401 and 32-BJ as well as the Economic Progress Institute called on lawmakers to pass Rhode Island's Revenue Bill (H7313 - Alzate | S2238 - Murray), to create a fairer tax system that works for all Rhode Islanders, not just its wealthiest few.

"My job is to help ensure adults with developmental disabilities can live where they want and make their own decisions. But funding is a major challenge. Unfilled positions are often the first to be cut, even though they are critically needed. We are already struggling with delays in assessments and case management. With more cuts, we will not be able to meet the growing demand for services."

Kaitlyn Stewart, Conflict Free Case Manager for the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals and member of SEIU Local 580

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In the wake of historic tax breaks to the wealthy and sweeping funding cuts, progressive revenue is vital to fund Rhode Island's broken healthcare system, support children and families, and protect critical public services. This legislation would establish an additional 3% personal income tax rate on taxable income above \$640,000, generating nearly \$200 million in annual revenue for the state.

SEIU members - who work in healthcare facilities, social services, schools, hospitals, child care centers, airports, public sector social workers and more - are struggling with the rising costs of groceries, rent, and medical care while wages fail to keep pace. At the same time, proposed federal cuts to Medicaid and SNAP threaten essential healthcare benefits and food assistance to tens of thousands of Rhode Islanders.

"The need for tax justice in RI has never been greater. The "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" cut more than a trillion dollars in SNAP and Medicaid funding to pay for tax breaks for the richest Americans. Fifty-three thousand Rhode Islanders will lose health insurance, and beginning fiscal year 2028, the state will be losing more than

\$400 million a year in federal funding - \$275 million a year in lost federal Medicaid funding alone. The time to raise revenue by taxing the Top 1% is now."

Nina Harrison, Esq., Policy Director for The Economic Progress Institute

Rhode Island's state budget is heavily dependent on federal funding, making up 36% of all expenditures in the 2026 budget, much higher than previous years. Not accounting for the impact of lost federal funding, Rhode Island faces an estimated \$100 million budget deficit for fiscal year 2027. Governor McKee's proposed millionaire's tax doesn't go far enough to offset these losses as well as his proposed phase-out of the Social Security income tax which will equal a \$60 million loss in revenue annually once fully implemented in 2030.

"As a home care worker, I receive no vacation, sick days or health insurance. This is especially concerning as I have osteoporosis and fibromyalgia and the insurance I buy myself went up from \$500 to \$1,022 a month in January. It should not be this way. And with federal cuts ahead, we need our elected officials to act now and protect families like mine."

Wanda Seed who works as both a nursing home CNA and home care provider, member of SEIU 1199NE

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ABOUT SEIU 1199NE

District 1199 SEIU New England represents 29,000 health care and service workers in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Southeastern Massachusetts. In Rhode Island, 1199 SEIU NE represents almost 5,000 members. 1199 SEIU NE is affiliated with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) - a union of over 2 million members across the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada. SEIU has been a national leader in pushing the growing Fight for \$15 and a Union movement.