

COBANC Political Action Report

The Budget:

- April 02 – The budget was scheduled to be passed, but it failed to pass.
- An Extender Bill was passed to keep the state running.
- The Senate and Assembly should continue with extended bills until the new budget is passed.

Tier 5 & 6

COBANC's Tier 5 & 6 Meeting March 31, 2026

1. Reducing the Retirement Age - Change the full retirement age from 63 to 55 for members with at least 30 years of service. (Currently, Tier 6 members face significant pension reductions if they retire before 63).

2. Reduce Employee Contributions

Unions are pushing to lower and cap employee contributions at 3% of their annual salary.

- Tier 6 Problem: Currently, Tier 6 members pay between 3% and 6% depending on their salary, and they must pay this for their entire career.
- Parity Goal: PEF and others want this to match Tier 4, where contributions were capped at 3% and ended after 10 years.

Improvements to Tier 5 and Tier 6 Pension Benefits

- **Shorter Vesting Period:** As of April 9, 2022, the vesting requirement for Tier 5 and Tier 6 members was reduced from 10 years to **5 years** of service credit.
- **Faster Final Average Earnings (FAE) Calculation:** For Tier 6 members, the FAE is now based on the **three highest consecutive years** of earnings rather than five. This change took effect in April 2024.

- **Lower Contribution Rates (Temporary Overtime Exclusion):** A 2024 law temporarily excludes overtime pay earned between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2024, from the calculation of Tier 6-member contribution rates.
 - This exclusion applies to contribution rates from April 1, 2024, through March 31, 2026.

The NYS Public Safety Alliance

- COBANC has also recently attended two meetings of solidarity with the NYS Public Safety Alliance which is comprised of over 90 NYS unions. The mission of the NYS Public Safety Alliance is to have one voice to impact NYS initiatives, policy, and safety measures.

Fix Tier 5 & 6 Rally held on Friday, April 3rd, 2026

COBANC was honored to join alongside more than 30 other labor organizations in our commitment to advocate for fair and equitable retirement benefits for all public employees.

We heard from several keynote speakers, including:

- Thomas Shevlin, Nassau PBA
- Lou Civello, Suffolk PBA
- Tom DiNapoli, NYS Comptroller
- Ronald Gross, NYSUT
- NYS Senator Monica Martinez
- NYS Senator Jack Martins

Key Takeaways included:

- NYS Comptroller: All the speakers overwhelmingly emphasized the importance of Tom DiNapoli remaining as our NYS Comptroller. He has been a magnificent steward for our pension fund, which is currently 93% funded, and is the best state-funded system in the country.
- The "Two-Tier" Divide: A major theme was the unfairness of colleagues doing the same demanding work side by side yet having vastly different retirement security.

- The Recruitment & Retention Crisis: Speakers repeatedly highlighted that Tier 6 is a "recruitment and retention disaster". Tier 6 members often face working until the age of 63 with significantly higher personal contribution rates.
- Legislative Pressure: Now is the time! Our members must not sit idly by but must join the fight. Email and call your NYS Senators and Assembly members, including the Governor's office, to demand tier equity.
- Solidarity: The presence of law enforcement, teachers, state workers, and labor showed that the "Fix Tier 6" movement is now a unified front across all public sectors.

COBANC remains steadfast in this urgent fight. We will continue to champion reforms that guarantee fairness, dignity, and security for our members.

Other Bills Of Interest:

A5527 Stacy Pheffer-Amato

S4726 Robert Jackson Relates to requests for employees' records. To provide public employees with notice whenever their personal information has been released to the public pursuant to a FOIL request.

A7191 Stacy Pheffer-Amato

S5255 Robert Jackson Procedures for Public Employee Discipline. Provides for procedures to be followed in appointing a hearing officer for removal and disciplinary action against certain public employees.

A8642 Andrew Hevesi

S8157 Jessica Ramos NYS Health Care tax reform act. The purpose of this legislation is to reduce the amount of taxes impose on health care and health insurance consumers and to eliminate all such taxes on public employers.

A8082 Christopher Eachus

S7021 Christopher Ryan Voilunteer Fire Service & retirement credit. Allows volunteer fire and emergency service workers the option of purchasing up to three years of public retirement service credit.

A8593 Stacy Pheffer-Amato

S6840 Jessica Scarcella-Spanton Relates to increasing the amount of years of military service credit a member may purchase. To increase the number of years of military service that are eligible for service credit from three to four.