

NYSUT members interested in submitting ideas to the committee or having their local union become involved in social justice issues can visit the resources section of the social justice page at: www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources-sites/social-justice or contact Sonia Basko, NYSUT special projects coordinator at: sbasko@nysutmail.org or 518-213-6000, ext. 6380.

NYSUT's Social Justice Agenda:

Our agenda promotes equal access to society's opportunities, thereby empowering people to have choices and control over their own destiny. This agenda stems from the belief that injustice and oppression in other communities and nations directly impacts members of the labor movement. The premise behind this agenda is that a socially just world affords individuals and groups fair treatment and an impartial share of society's benefits.

This agenda holds that a fundamental responsibility of labor leaders is to stand in solidarity with the oppressed and fight to ensure that every individual enjoys basic human rights. A social justice agenda is more than token charity; instead it is a strategy that transforms individuals and communities.



This pamphlet is produced by the 2014-17 NYSUT Committee on Civil and Human Rights.

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Representing more than 600,000 professionals in education, human services and health care.

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NYSUT and Civil & Human Rights



"Part of what we do ... is to raise people up. That's what social justice is – empowering people."

– NYSUT Vice President Paul Pecorale



The charge of the NYSUT Standing Committee on Civil and Human Rights is to advance the union's efforts to promote equity and social justice.

The committee addresses civil and human rights initiatives and social justice issues facing members and their communities. Its recommendations are forwarded to NYSUT's Officers and Board. The committee coordinates efforts with civil and human rights committees of the AFT and NEA, as well as the AFL-CIO and other organizations.



The Committee's advocacy has led NYSUT to take action on several key social and human rights issues. Our collective involvement has resulted in positive outcomes for many initiatives such as:

- Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)
- Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)
- Disaster Relief: Hurricane Katrina, Haiti Earthquake, Southern Tier Flood, Hurricane Sandy, Hurricane Irene
- Border Witness Delegation Trips
- Tipped Wage Increase in NY
- Recognition of Civil and Human Rights Heroes
- Anti-Bullying Legislation and Training
- LGBTQ Rights
- U.N. International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- Anti-Human Trafficking & Sex Trafficking Laws

The Committee supports NYSUT's actions on:

- Women's Rights
- Wage Equity
- Domestic Abuse
- Hunger and Poverty
- Justice for Farmworkers
- Immigration Issues
- DREAM Act
- Environmental Justice
- Fairness and Equity in Educational Opportunities
- Fair Trade
- Child Labor
- Retirement Security and Protection of All Safety Nets
- Human Rights and Social Justice Education
- Global Rights to Free Public Education
- Socio-Economic Equality
- Public School Services for Physically Disabled Students
- Racial Inequality
- Increased Access to an Affordable Public Higher Education
- Health Care Access
- Rights of the Innocent

The Committee aims to address the following issues in the future:

- School to Prison Pipeline, Juvenile Justice, Criminal Justice Reform
- Eliminate the Stigma of Mental Health and Promote Resources/Access to Benefits
- Real Life Skills for Students with Physical and Emotional Disabilities
- Voter Suppression: Raising Awareness and Fighting Against
- Holocaust Remembrance and Genocide Prevention
- Religious Freedom; Ability to Worship Freely
- Common Sense Economics
- Next Generation Title IX
- Human Rights Conference



List of Committee Members by Region:

Capital District:	Elizabeth McCheyne
J. Philippe Abraham *	Adam Piasecki
Mid-Hudson:	Southwestern New York:
Martha Bilsback	Michael Baronich
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Nassau:	Dennis Callahan
Celina Bialt	Nancy Close
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Martha Swan	Diane Gonzalez
Potsdam:	Jennifer Granich
Phyllis Doane	Martin Sommer
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Retiree Council:	Sandra Bliss
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Michele Farley	Joi Chimera
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Southern Tier: Elmira	Serena Kotch
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Rick Gallant *	Sally Tripi

* NYSUT Board of Directors member