

THE CARING **FORCE**

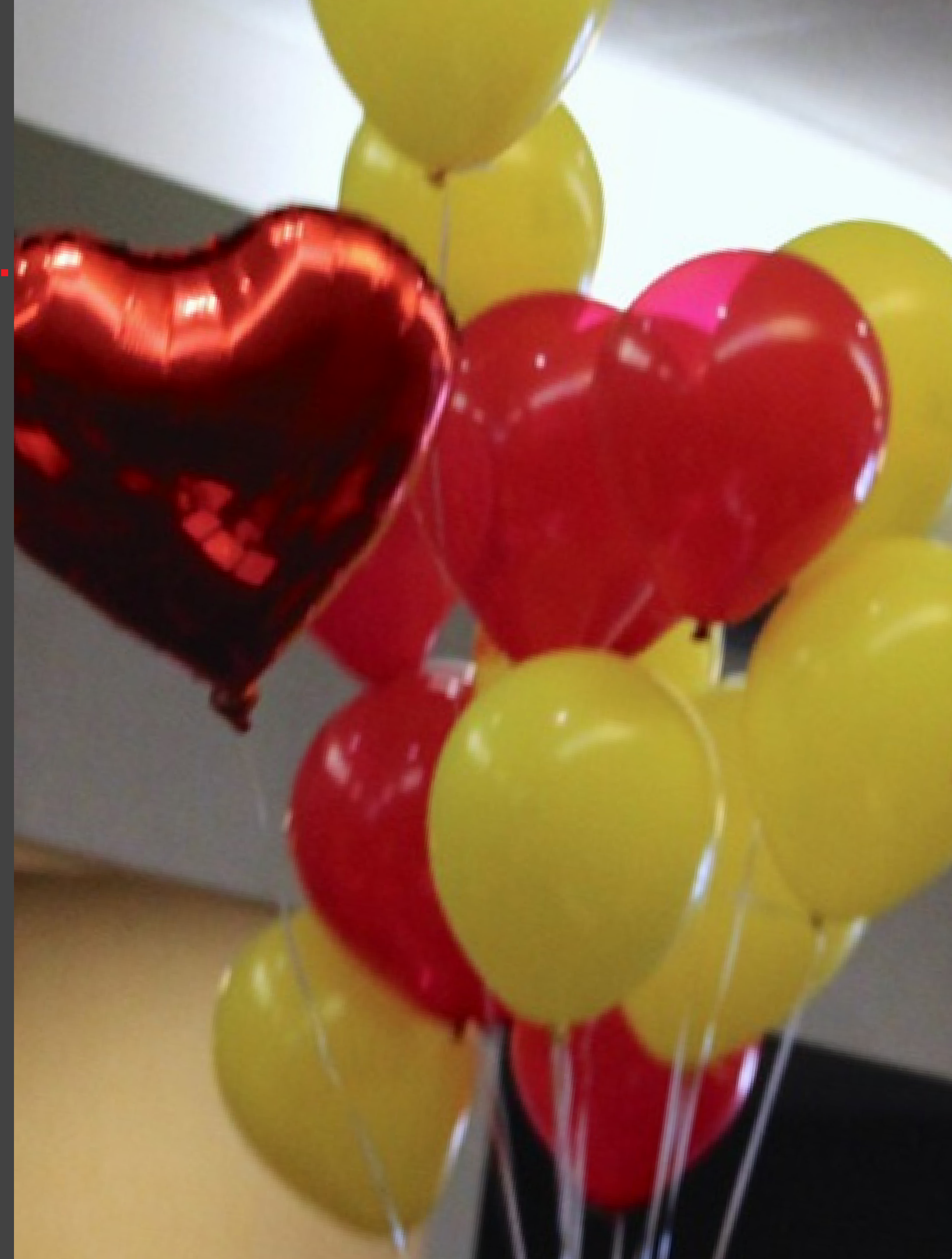
Empowering people, strengthening human services

Annual Coalition Meeting

November 2025

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
- 2025 Review
- Survey Results
- Goals for 2026 – Open Discussion
- Lunch



Stephanie Steed

President & CEO,
18 Degrees

Chair,
Caring Force Committee



THE CARING
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2025 REVIEW

- ADVOCACY WINS
- RALLIES
- OTHER INITIATIVES
- OUTREACH RECAP

Pro-Workforce Legislative Agenda

In January 2025, our legislative champions filed two bills:



**AN ACT RELATIVE TO A LOAN
REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR HUMAN
SERVICE WORKERS**

S.119 | H.283

**AN ACT RELATIVE TO A LIVABLE WAGE
FOR HUMAN SERVICES WORKERS**

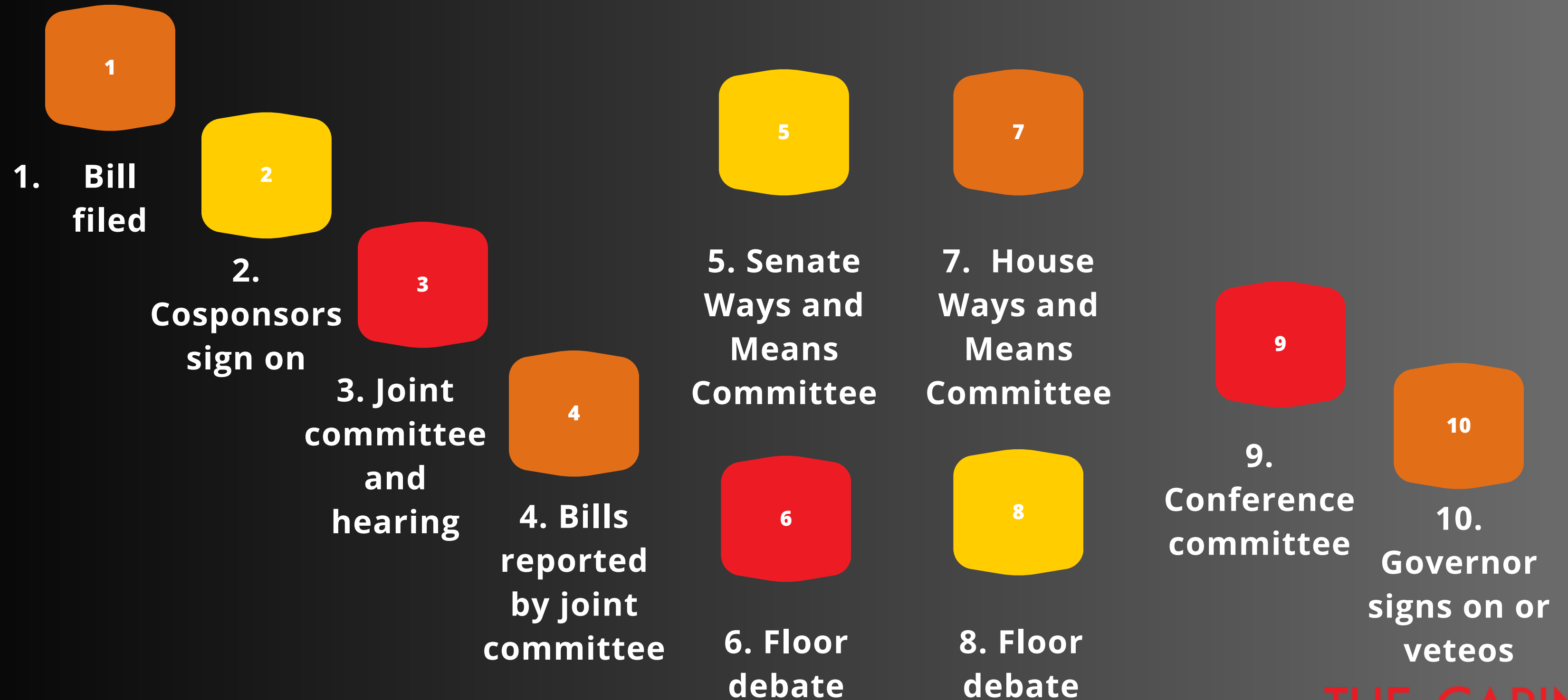
S.130 | H.223

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TCF Advocacy Wins

- **Secured \$207 Million for Ch.257 Rate Reserve Fund**
- **Pay Disparity Report Released**
- **UMass x Caring Force Research Report - Coming Next Year!**
- **Our bills have been reportedly favorably by the Committee on Children, Family & Persons w. Disabilities**
 - **AN ACT RELATIVE TO A LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR HUMAN SERVICE WORKERS** **S.119 | H.283**
 - This bill has been reported favorably to both the Senate and House Ways and Means Committee
 - **AN ACT RELATIVE TO A LIVABLE WAGE FOR HUMAN SERVICES WORKERS** **S.130 | H.223**
 - This bill has been reported favorably to both the Senate Ways and Means Committee. They have until November 21 to report to House Ways & Means

Bill Timeline



Nearly 600 at State House Rally!

- Caring Bear Awardees: Senator Liz Miranda & Representative Lindsay Sabadosa
- Senate President Karen Spilka joined us to thank human services workers and discuss the Senate's efforts to secure more funding.



Caring Force Members Testify at The Caring Force Rally



- Jawaan Kellam, The Home for Little Wanderers
- Rosalee Sánchez, NFI
- Jillian Delphia, Myah House and A'Sharia Supreme from 18 Degrees

Regional Rally: South of Boston



Rally held at the Clarion Hotel in Taunton

- State Rep. Michelle Badger, Sen. Michael Brady and Rep. Kathy LaNatra attended
- Mix of human services stories from direct-support professional, residential counselor, board director and sibling, program participants

Legislative Breakfast: Central MA



The Providers of Central Massachusetts' 34th Annual Legislative Breakfast

- Keynote delivered by Chair of Senate Committee on Ways and Means, Senator Michael Rodrigues
- Central Massachusetts agencies, alongside regional legislators, honored dedicated workers within their organizations with awards

Legislative Breakfast: MetroWest



The MetroWest Human Services Advocacy Coalition (MWH SAC) hosted its 21st annual legislative breakfast held at Nevins Hall in Framingham

- Panel of Sen. Jamie Eldridge, Rep. Kate Donaghue, Rep. Carmine Gentile, Rep. Danielle Gregoire, Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis, Rep. David Linsky, Rep. Brian Murray, Rep. Dan Sena, and Rep. Priscila Sousa
- Human Services Speaker, Courtney Chavez, Mobile Outreach Specialist, Advocates

Regional Rally: Merrimack Valley



Rally held at Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill

- Remarks from Haverhill Mayor Melinda E. Barrett, a welcome video from U.S. Representative Seth Moulton, State Rep. Andy X. Vargas
- Human services stories from Josh Nye, Vinfen and Darleni Vlaun, Advocates

Regional Rally: Western MA



**OVER 250
ADVOCATES!**



Rally held at Westfield State University

- Remarks from Sen. John Velis, Rep. Shirley Arriaga, Rep. Carlos González and Rep. Mindy Domb, livable wage bill sponsor
- Human Services stories from Yamila Sycz, Gándara Center and Rob Wild, Viability

The Caring Force in the News



The Caring Force rallies at WSU for Western Mass human services workers

MassLive, September 15, 2025

BFAIR, Care Agencies Celebrate Frontline Professionals

iBerkshires.com, September 11, 2025

Human Service Workers Press for Higher Wages at Haverhill Rally

WHAV, June 6, 2025

Workers highlight debt burden carried by state's "caring force." Loan repayment program eyed to retain, grow human service workforce

State House News, May 8, 2025

"One of the saddest, most common situations I've seen was when someone had built a strong connection with clients and would leave their work for better pay," said Rosalee Sanchez, a direct care assistant supervisor at NFI Massachusetts."

-Caroline Enos, The Salem News

"Sam went from being a five-year-old who was so violent that we needed to, for the safety of our family, get him out of the house because (his) sister needed protection," Neistorowich said. "But now, because of direct care workers who came into my home day after day, nights, weekends, he's now living with us."

-Geraldine Neistorowich, a senior program coordinator with Northeast Arc

First-Ever Caring Force T-Shirt Design Contest



T-Shirt Design Contest Highlights

- 41 submissions (18 organizations)
- Over 430 votes for favorite designs
- Three finalists announced on social media & Providers' Council 50th Convention & Expo
- 1st and 2nd place designs available on our storefront



TCF at Providers' Council 50th Annual Convention & Expo



CareVote Initiative

We're looking forward
to supporting CareVote
tables at your
organizations in 2026!

Email ilee@providers.org to schedule.



Voting to support caring communities

Outreach: Emails

- 37 emails so far in 2025
- Discussing internal switch to better email platform
- Currently about 11,434 contacts getting emails



Hello [CONTACT: first name],

[Take the Caring Force Survey by October 31](#)

We need your help improving The Caring Force!

Your feedback helps us make sure we're addressing the issues that matter most to you.

The deadline to complete the survey is October 31.

One lucky respondent to the survey will win a Baby QT Caring Force mascot!



[To take the survey, click here.](#)

Legislative Bills Move Forward

Both bills in our **legislative agenda** are moving forward at the State House!

An act relative to a loan repayment program for human service workers (Bill No. **S.119** | **H.283**) has been **reported favorably** from the Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities to both the Senate and House Ways and Means Committees.

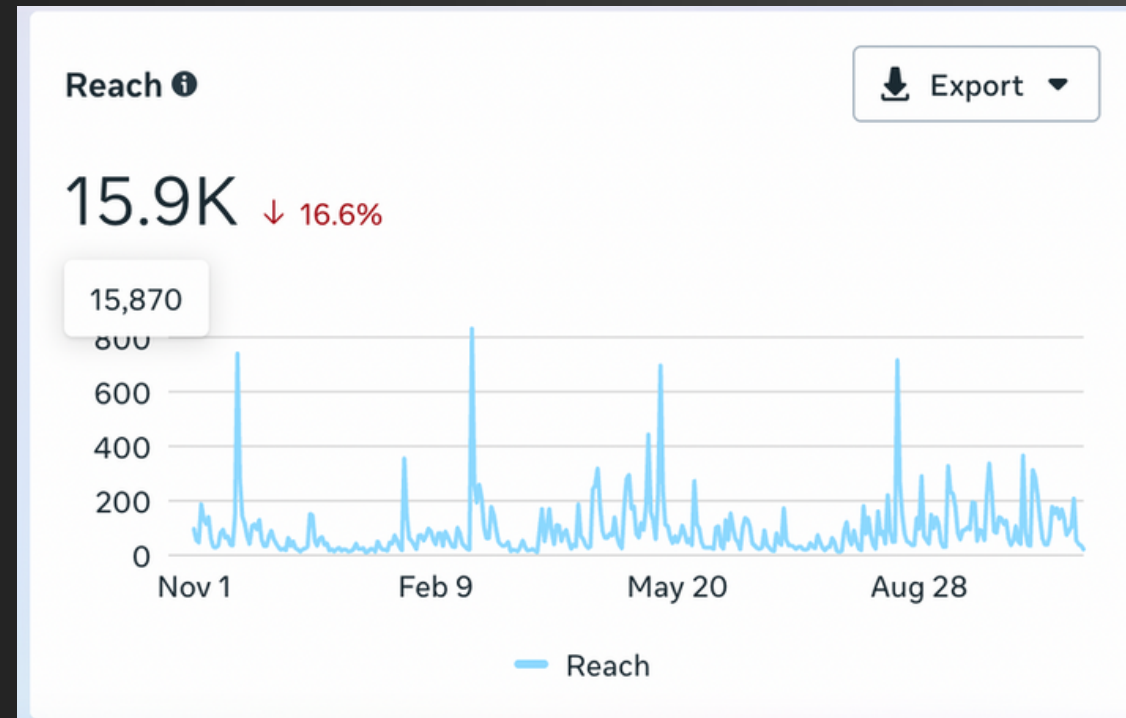
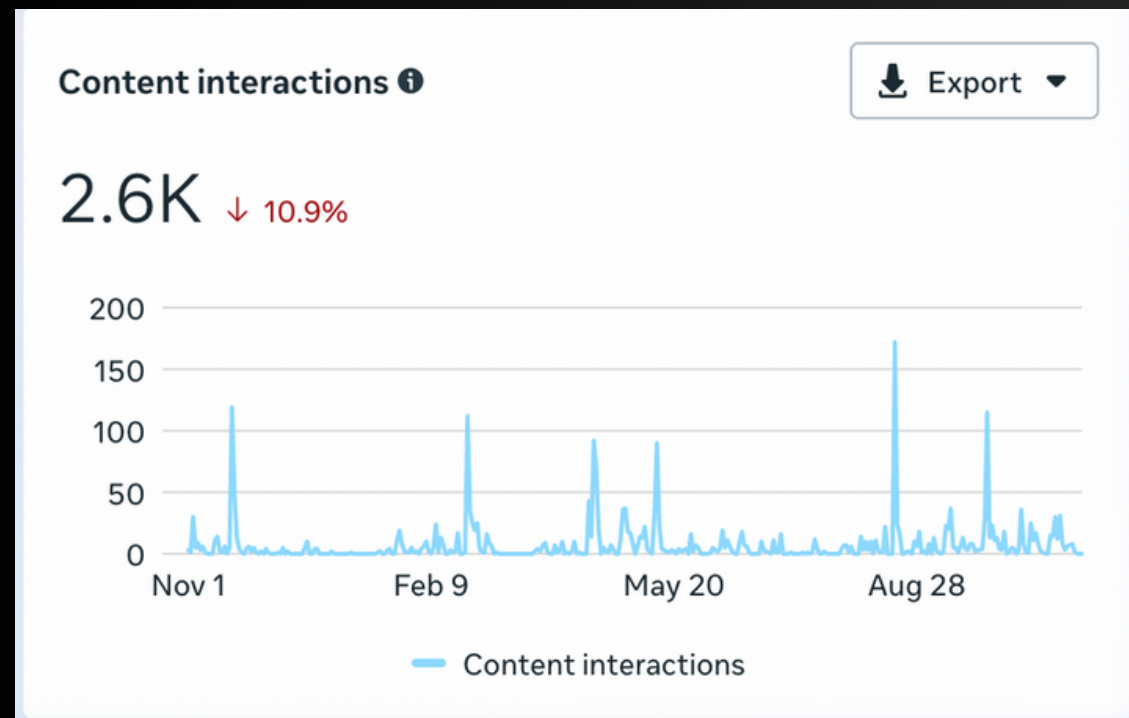


The Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities has also favorably reported ***An act relative to a livable wage for human services workers*** (Bill No. **S.130** | **H.223**) to the Senate Ways and Means Committee. The House still until Friday, November 21 to report on the bill.

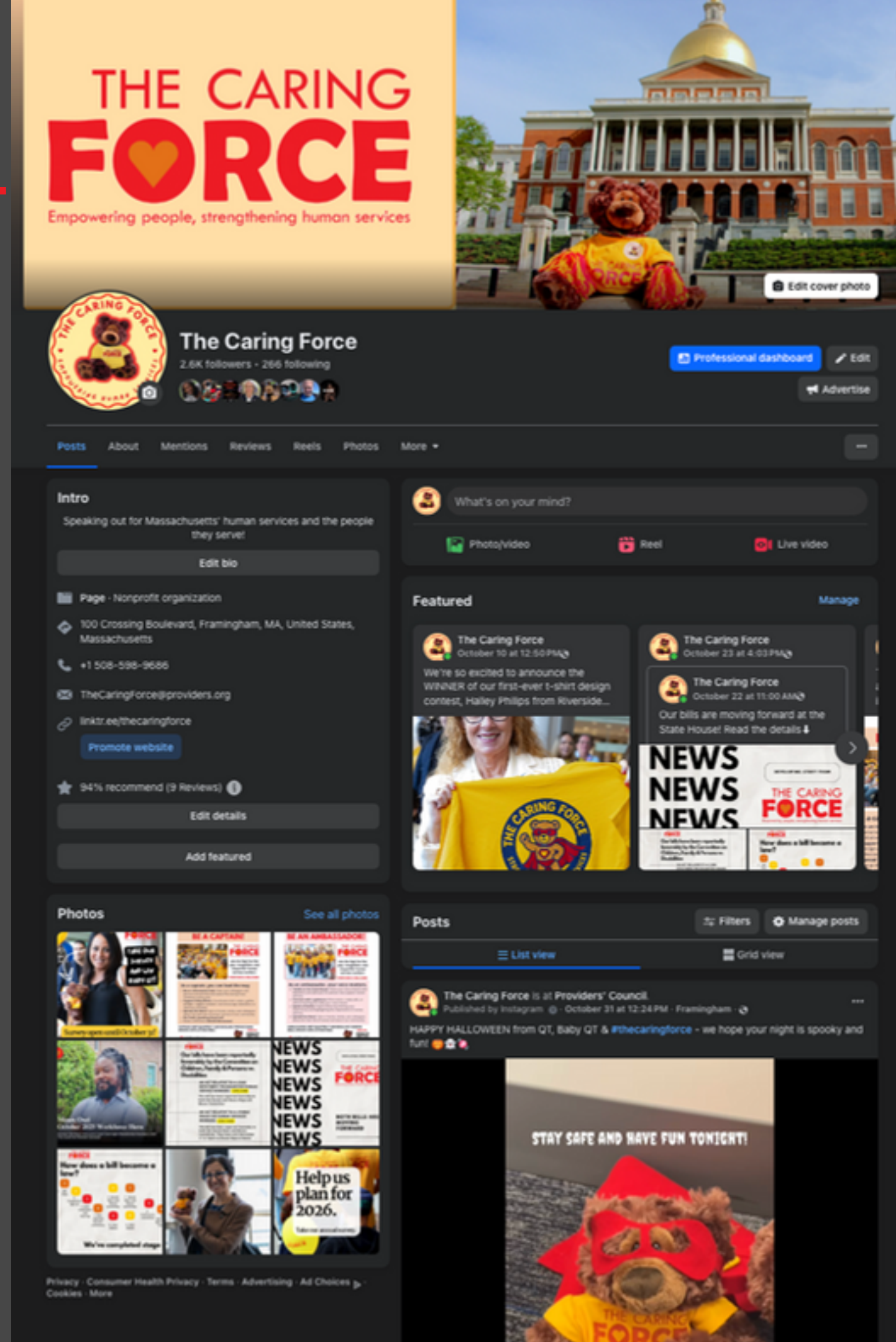
If reported favorably by the Ways and Means Committees, the bills will reach floor debate.

Outreach: Facebook

- **2,613 FOLLOWERS IN 2025**
 - 3% increase from 2024 to 2025
 - 4% increase from 2023 to 2024



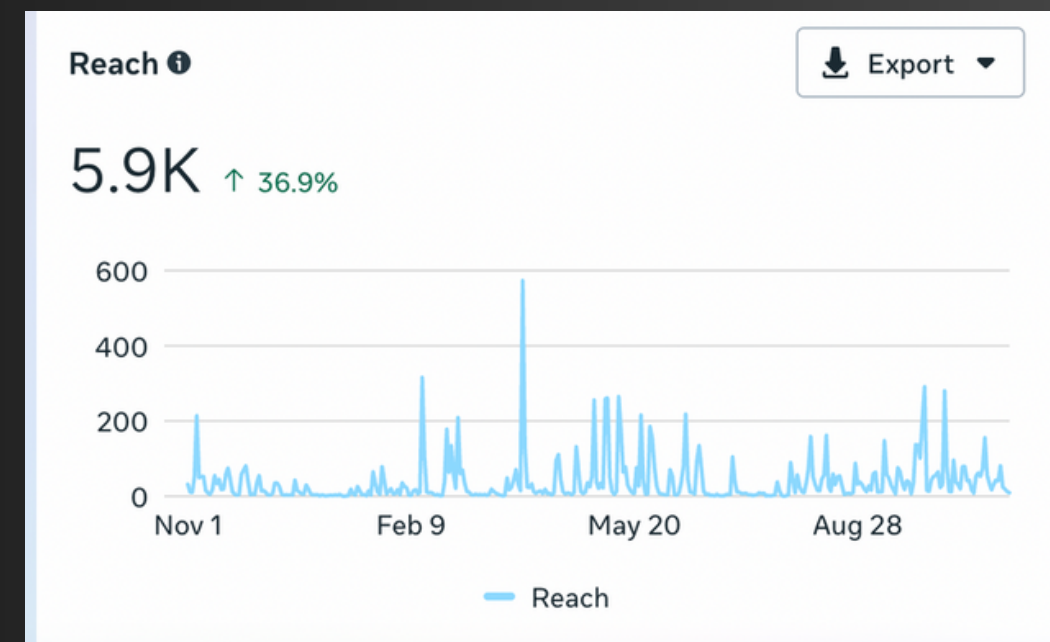
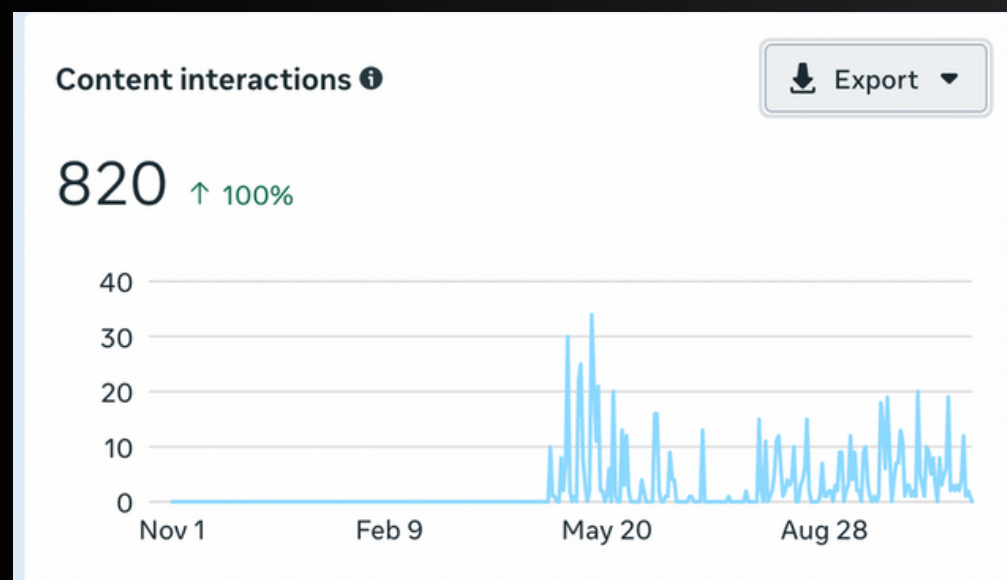
- **TYPES OF POSTS GETTING HIGH ENGAGEMENT:**
 - Workforce Hero Spotlights
 - News Updates



Outreach: Instagram

- **986 FOLLOWERS IN 2025**

- 12% increase from 2024 to 2025
- 16% increase from 2023 to 2024
- 31% increase from 2022 to 2023



- **TYPES OF POSTS GETTING HIGH ENGAGEMENT:**

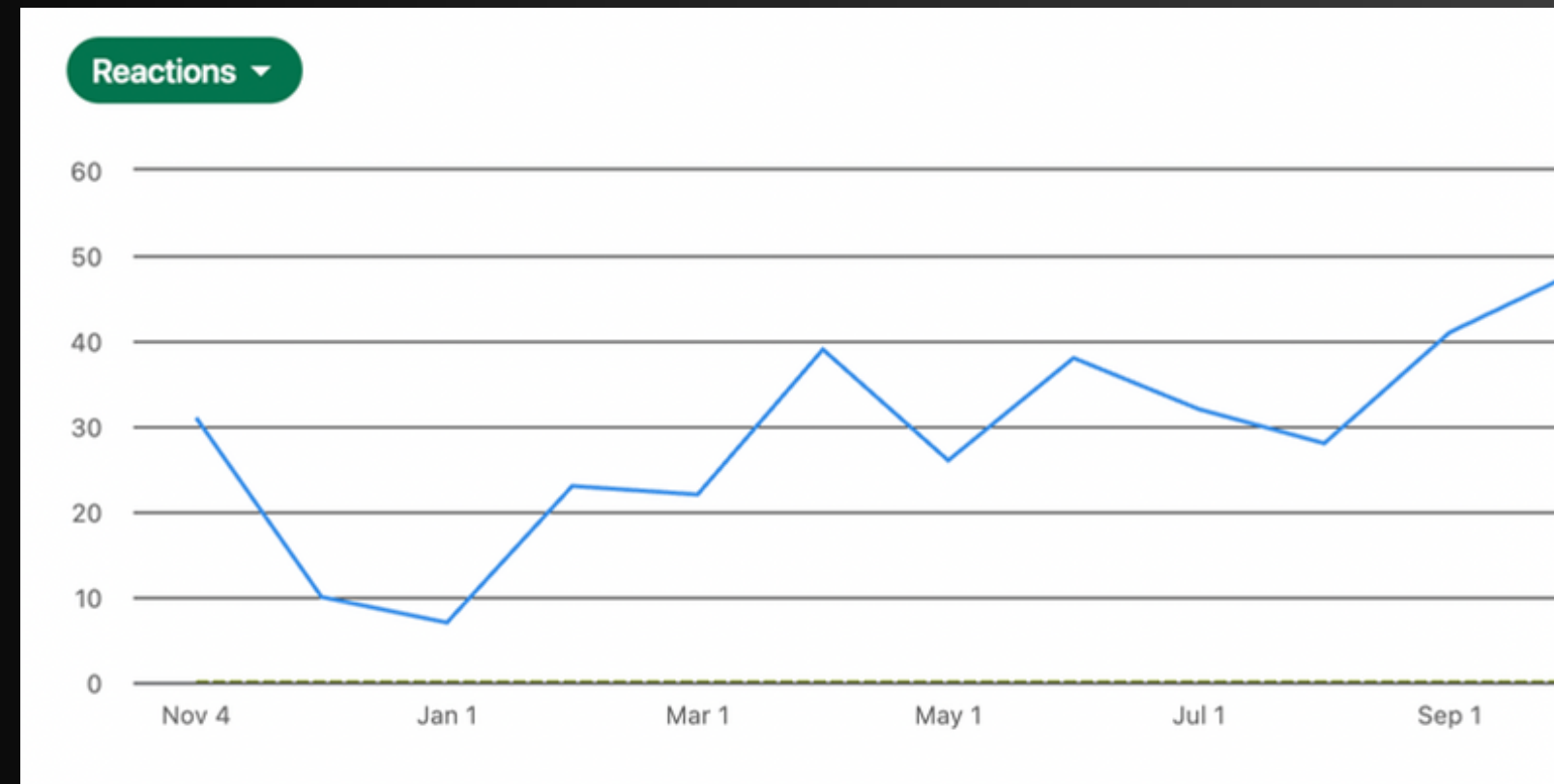
- Workforce Hero Spotlights
- Rally Photos



Outreach: LinkedIn

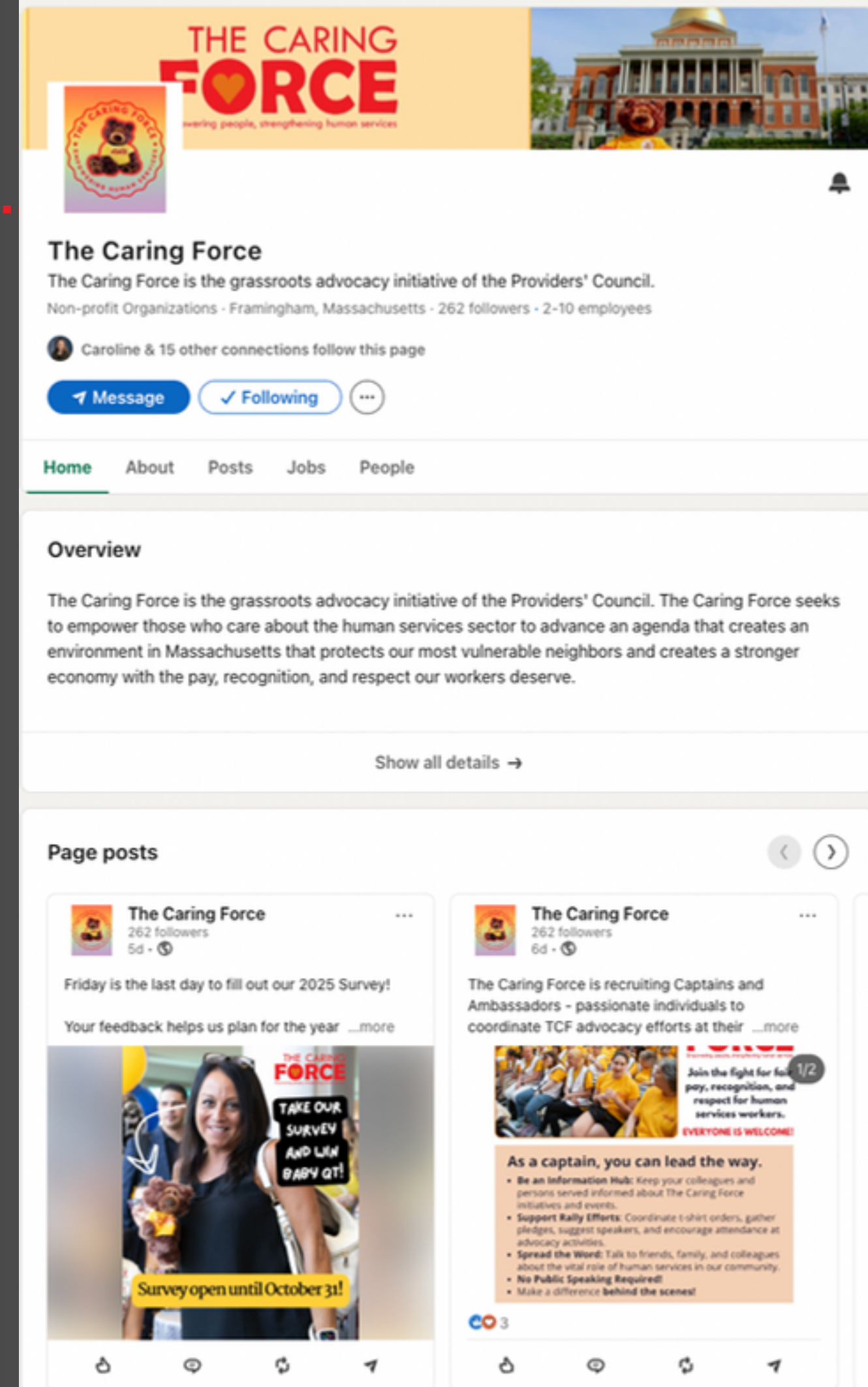
- **262 FOLLOWERS IN 2025**

- 56% increase from 2024 to 2025
- 250% increase from 2023 to 2024



- **TYPES OF POSTS GETTING HIGH ENGAGEMENT:**

- Workforce Hero Spotlights
- Legislative updates



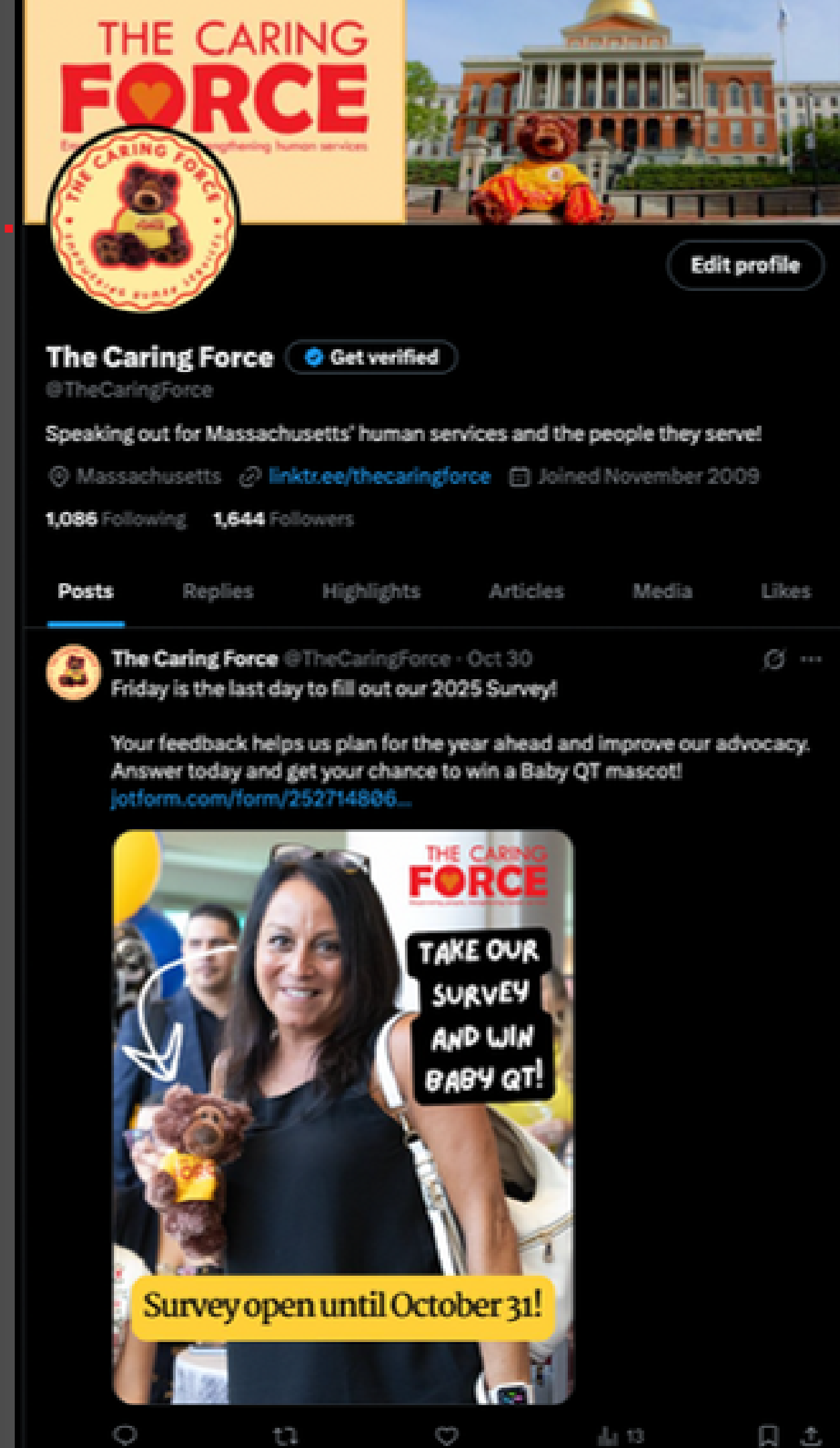
Outreach: X (Twitter)

- **1644 FOLLOWERS IN 2025**

- 7% decrease from 2024 to 2025
- 4% increase from 2023 to 2024

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- **LOW ENGAGEMENT ON PLATFORM.**



Outreach: Captains & Ambassadors

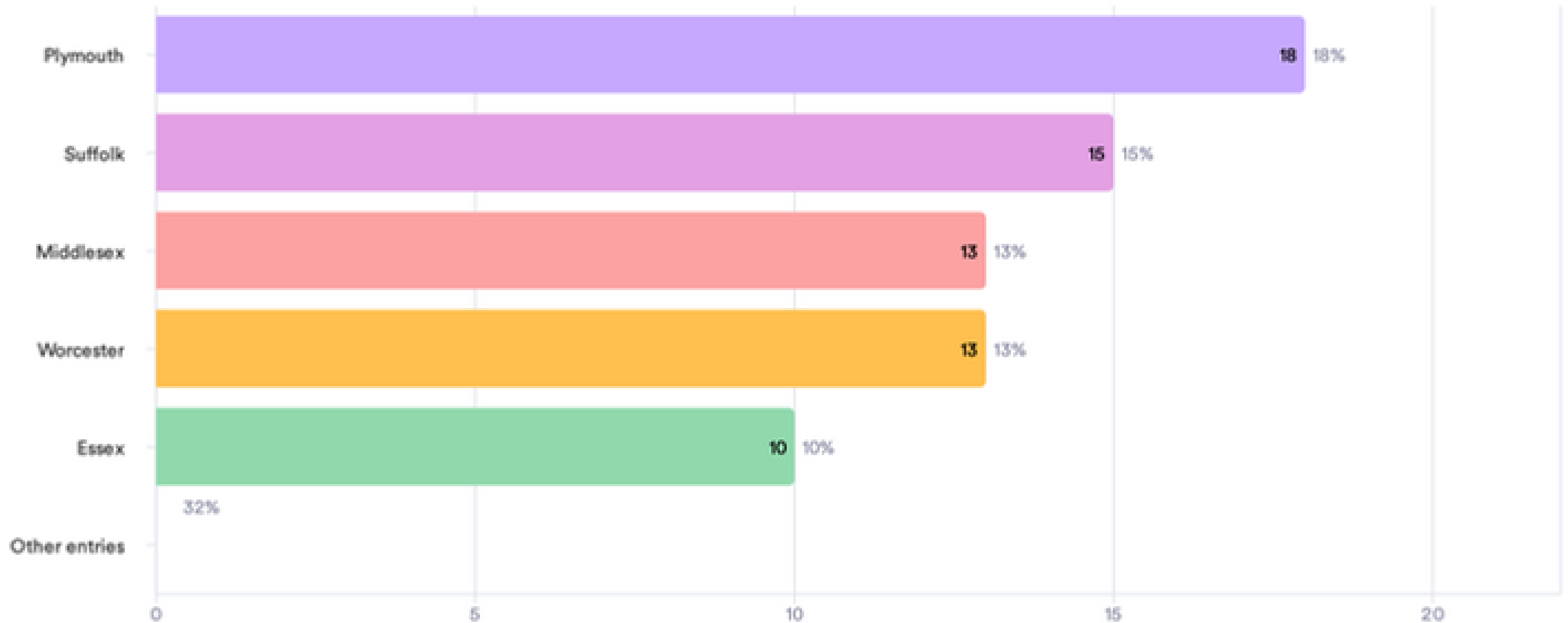
- We're getting increased sign-ups for Captains & Ambassadors, but not from new organizations
- High priority for 2026!



2025 CARING FORCE SURVEY RESULTS

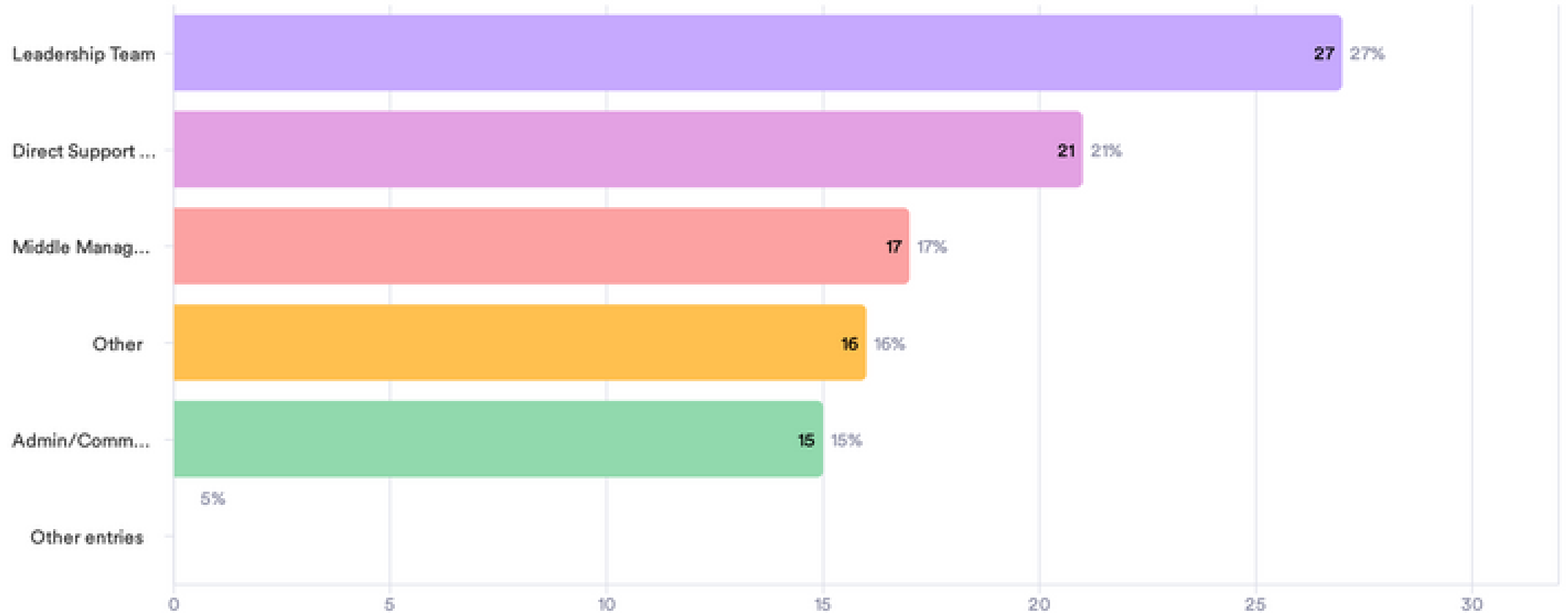
Please select your county.

69 Responses



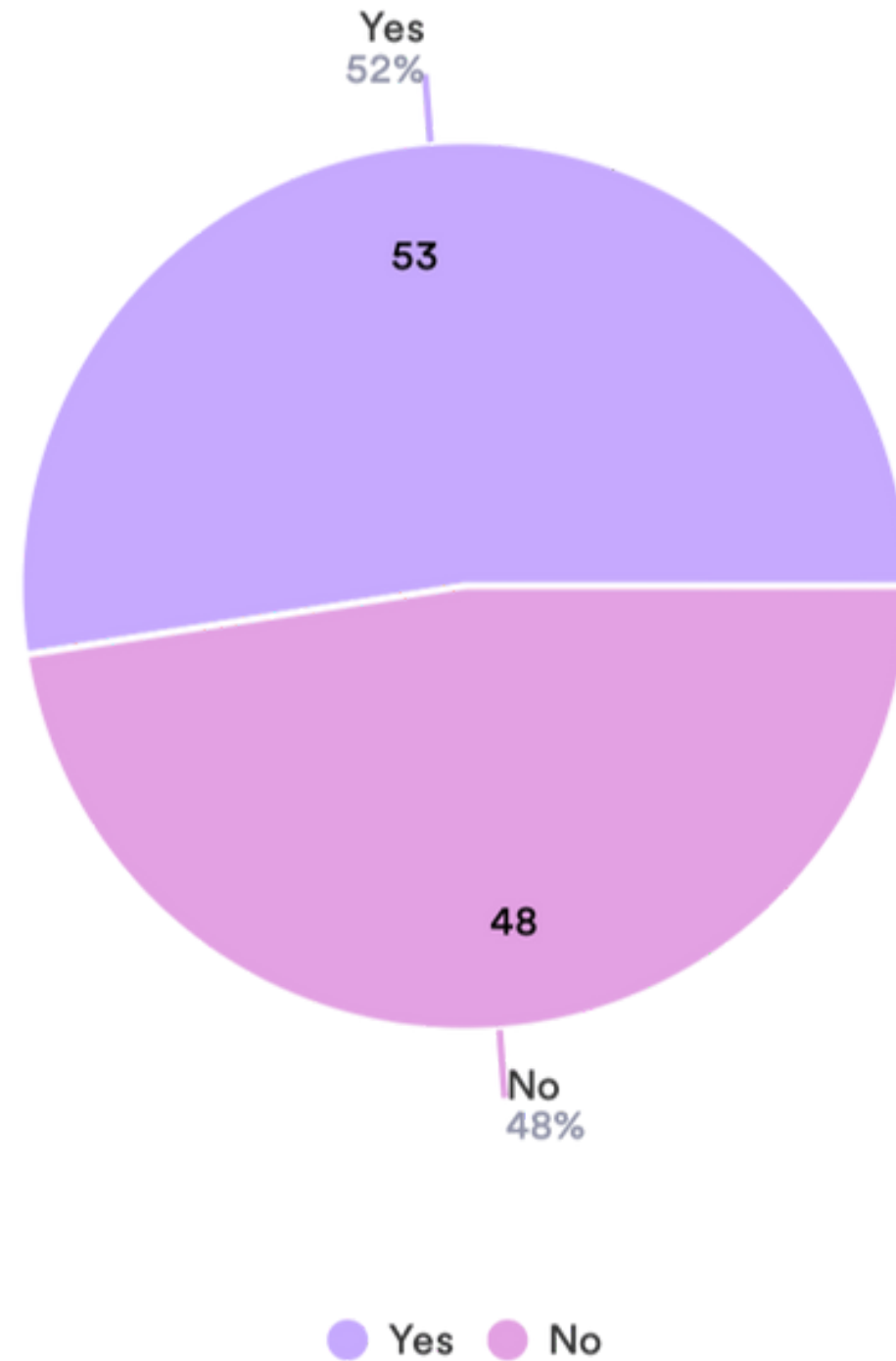
What is your role at your organization?

96 Responses



Did you attend any events organized by The Caring Force this year?

101 Responses



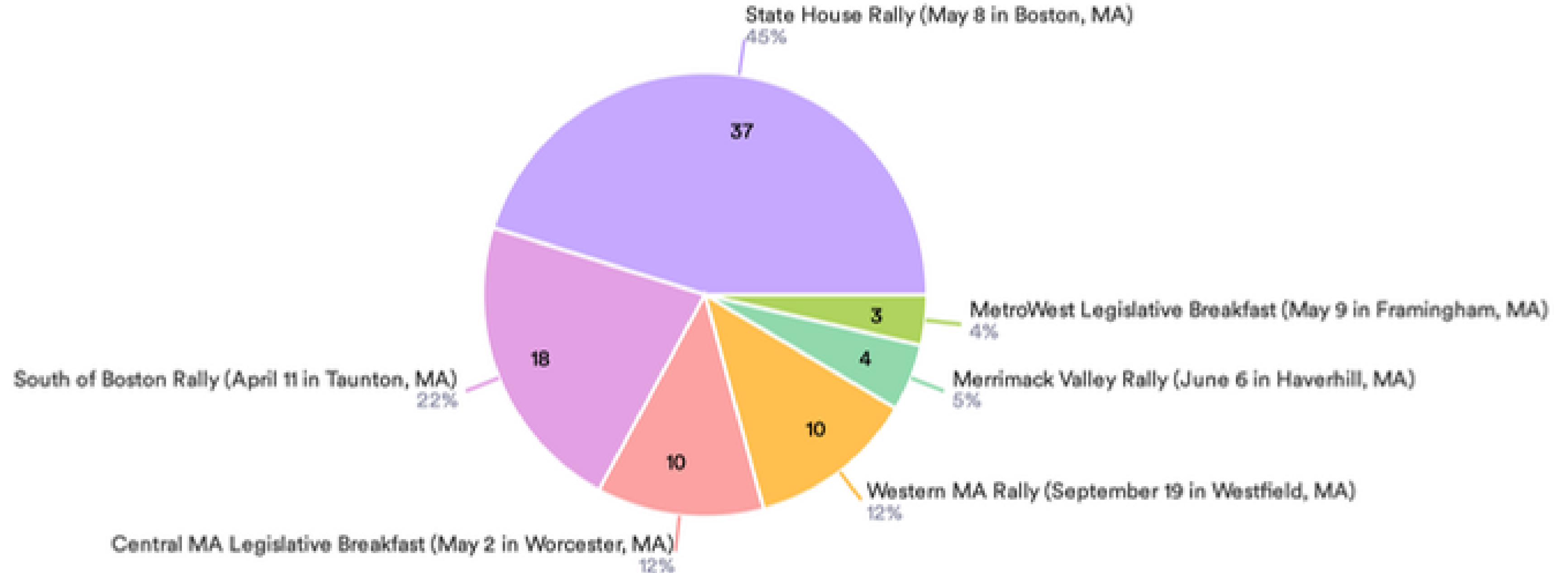
If no, why not?

11 Responses- 61 Empty

Data	Responses
Transportation issues	3
Schedule conflicts	2
Not able	1
unable	1
Didn't know about them / lack of time	1
Sadly because of the overwhelming demands of my job. I'm always trying to keep my head above water.	1
Was not part of my role yet.	1
ILLNESS	1

If yes, which event(s) did you attend? (Select all that apply)

82 Responses- 48 Empty



State House Rally (May 8 in Boston, MA) South of Boston Rally (April 11 in Taunton, MA) Central MA Legislative Breakfast (May 2 in Worcester, MA)

Western MA Rally (September 19 in Westfield, MA) Merrimack Valley Rally (June 6 in Haverhill, MA) MetroWest Legislative Breakfast (May 9 in Framingham, MA)

How would you rate your overall experience at the rallies you attended?

101 Responses



4.51

Avg. Response

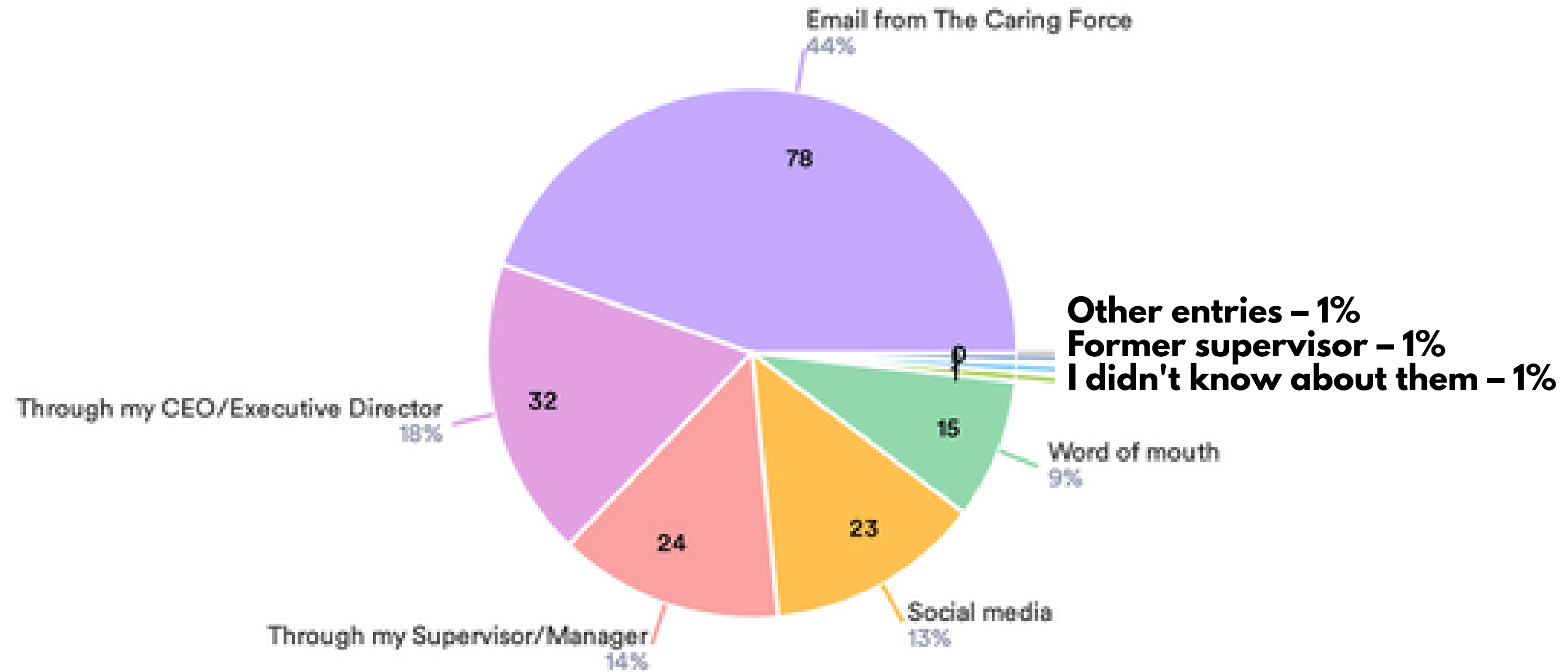
101

Responses

Data	Response	%
★★★★★	67	66%
★★★★☆	22	22%
★★★☆☆	10	10%
★★★☆☆	1	1%
★☆☆☆☆	1	1%

How did you hear about The Caring Force rallies or events this year? (Select all that apply)

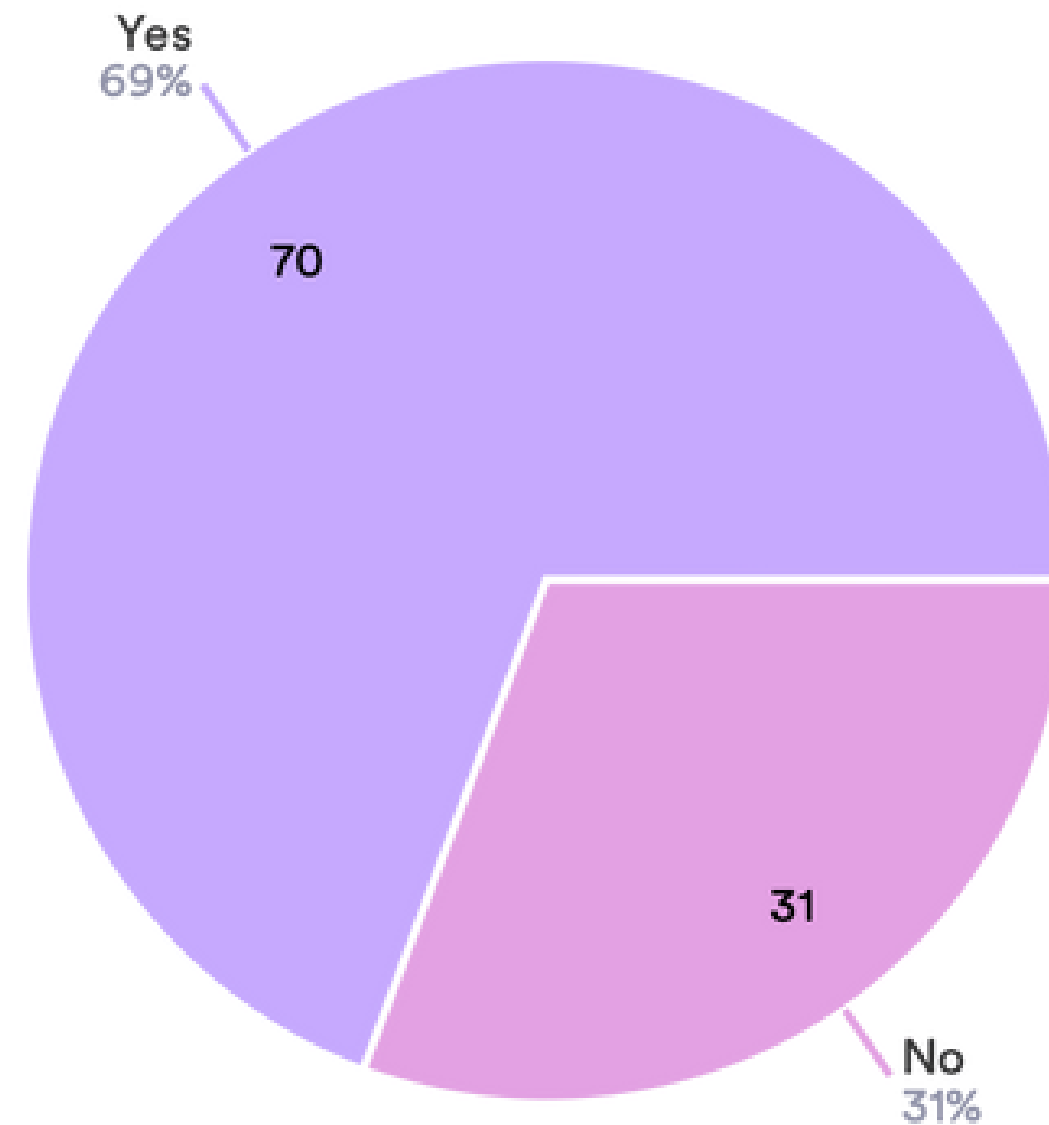
175 Responses



● Email from The Caring Force
 ● Through my CEO/Executive Director
 ● Through my Supervisor/Manager
 ● Social media
 ● Word of mouth
 ● I didn't know about them
 ● I am a member
 ● former supervisor was featured
 ● Other entries

Did you reach out to your legislator this year through a Caring Force campaign?

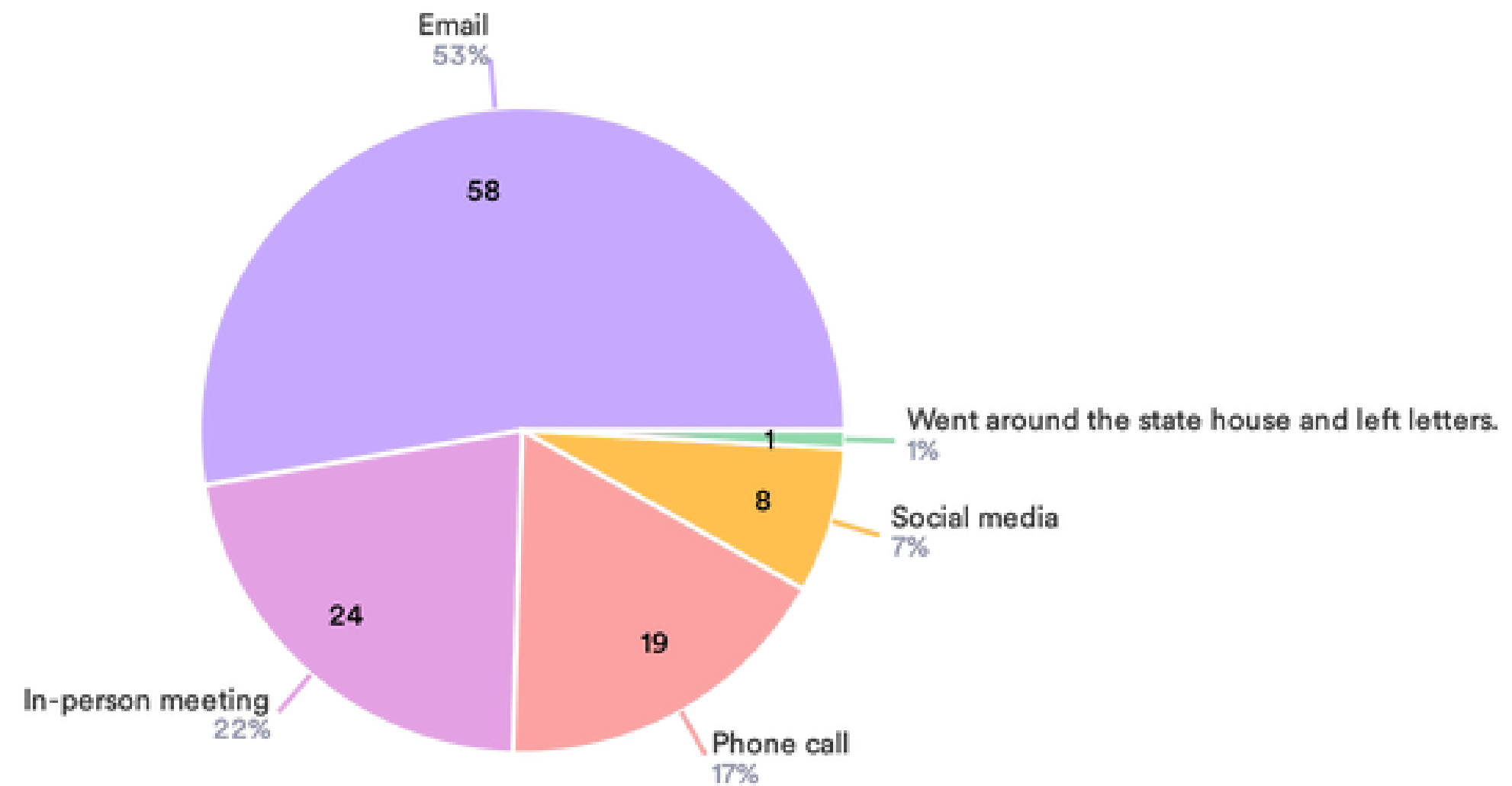
101 Responses



● Yes ● No

If yes, how did you connect with your legislator? (Select all that apply)

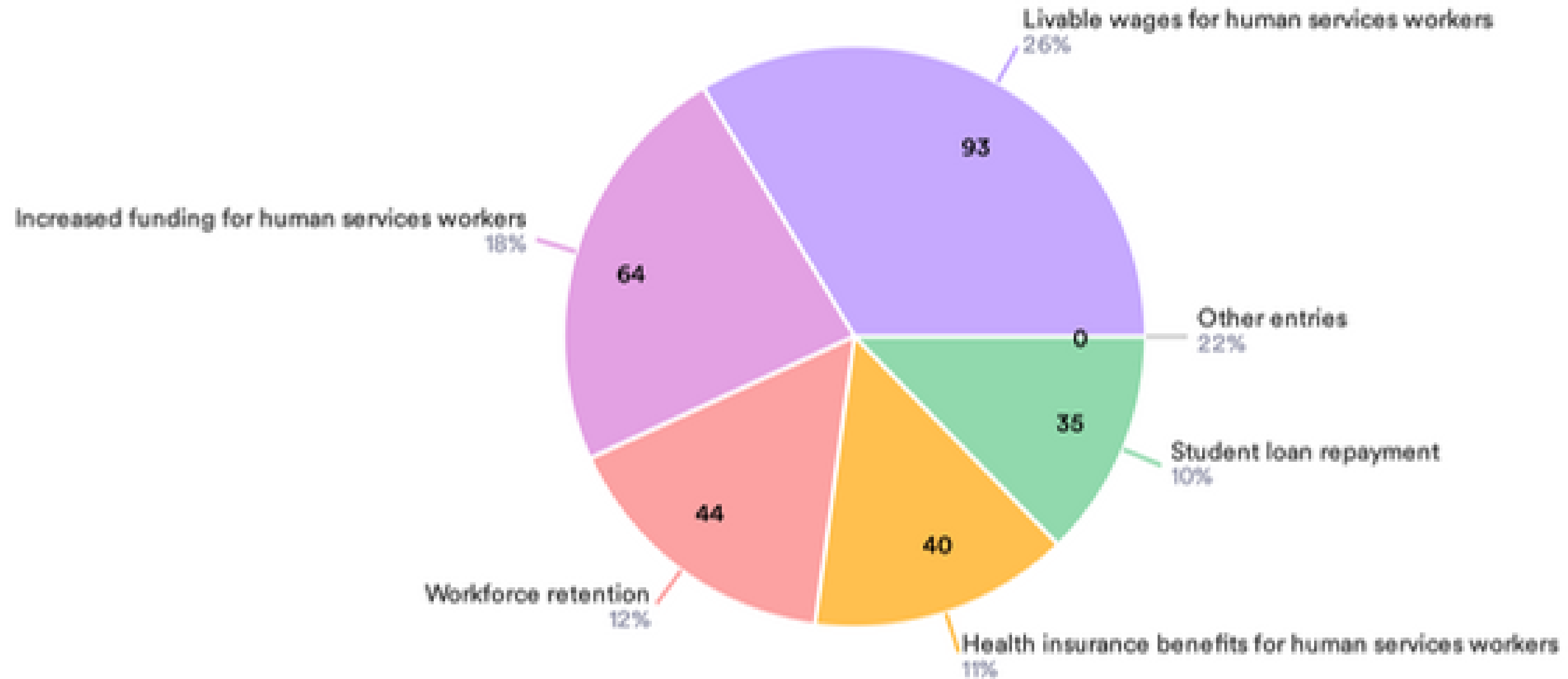
110 Responses- 32 Empty



● Email ● In-person meeting ● Phone call ● Social media ● Went around the state house and left letters.

What do you think should be The Caring Force's top policy priorities next year? (Select up to 4)

276 Responses



The Caring Force 2025 Survey Results

MOST IMPACT AT RALLIES:

- Human services stories
- Meeting with legislators

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Better sound at the State House Rally
- Music at events
- Meet & greets at member events, in person & virtually
- Toolkits to share
- More video content

TOP WORKFORCE CHALLENGES:

- Staffing shortages and retention
- Program funding
- Burnout



2026 GOALS

- Engage a wider audience.
- Improve our community.
- Re-record and re-distribute Caring Force Orientation Video.
- Institute virtual quarterly meetings.
- Pass legislation!

Questions for open discussion:

- How do we elevate our advocacy?
- Suggestions for rally structure?
- Suggestions for the T-Shirt Design Contest?
- How do we reach a larger audience at your organizations?
- Streamline Captain & Ambassador role?
- Other?



Thank you for attending!

THE CARING FORCE

Empowering people, strengthening human services



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