



Workers in Local 753's St. Cloud State University unit put on bandages to support their union brothers and sisters in the local's Chartwells unit. The Chartwells food services workers are suffering poor working conditions, including being penalized for calling in sick. Learn more at <http://afscmemn.org/story/workers-protest-against-discipline-sick-time>.

## Unit 8 and 25 Contracts Submitted to SER

New contracts covering corrections and radio communication operators were submitted by the employer to the Legislative Subcommittee on Employee Relations (SER).

SER has 30 days to recommend whether the full Legislature should pass or reject these state employee contracts. If SER takes no action by **Feb. 9**, the new contracts will take effect. Both contracts include a 2 percent raise retroactive to July 1, 2017; another 2.25 percent raise July 1, 2018, plus steps both years; and improved dental care and free access to Minute Clinics.

Meanwhile, the full Legislature still needs to approve our state contracts this session – and they should. Labor and management bargained in good faith. Our cost-of-living raises are in line with the private sector. Our deals save the state money on health care and are within the budget already set by the Legislature.

We want legislators to know that maintaining high-quality state

services requires competitive compensation for state workers.

## U of M Workers Approve Contract

University of Minnesota clerical workers from AFSCME Locals 3800 and 3801 overwhelmingly ratified a new two-year contract. Voter turnout was strong at sites across the state last week.

"It was a collective effort with workers all over the University, all campuses, all of the unions involved working together and saying, we deserve more," says AFSCME Local 3800 president Cherrene Horazuk, who serves on Council 5's Executive Board. "We stood strong."

Through concerted actions with Teamsters Local 320, other unions, the P&A Senate (professionals and administrators) and students, AFSCME won:

- 1.5 percent raises each year plus steps. (During bargaining, the University had offered a one-year contract, or a two-year contract with a 1.5 percent increase the first year and no raise the second year.)

## Join Moment of Silence

The year was 1968 in Memphis, Tenn., the heart of the Jim Crow South. African American sanitation workers faced poverty wages and degrading, unsafe work conditions. The city refused to recognize their union or even their humanity.

After two sanitation workers – Echol Cole and Robert Walker – were crushed to death on the job, their AFSCME brothers stood together to demand dignity and respect. They marched in the streets carrying signs with four powerful words: "I AM A MAN."

Join us for a national moment of silence to remember the sanitation workers at the moment that marked their death 50 years ago. Just stand up, bow your head and commit to our cause. This isn't just a reflection on the past; it's a call to action for our future. An urgent call to fight poverty and prejudice, to advance the freedom of all working people.

Find an event near you at <https://iam2018.org/moment-of-silence/>. Locals are encouraged to share their plans at <https://www.iam2018.org/events/moment-of-silence-host>.

- No health insurance cost increases for workers.
- Keeping language on bullying in the contract.
- A "me too" agreement on expanded parental leave.

Learn more at <http://afscmemn.org/story/u-m-clerical-workers-voting-contract>.

## Local Ratifies Contract

Local 66 (City of Grand Marais) approved a two-year contract with 3 percent raises in both 2018 and 2019. Part-time workers will now accumulate sick leave and vacation time from day one and accumulate more of it; they'll also get paid time-and-a-half for all holidays starting their first day of employment, rather than after working 2,080 hours. The contract lets employees with at least 10 years of service cash out up to 40 hours of vacation a year; and includes language allowing new member orientation.

## Participation in special elections, caucuses is crucial

Control of the Minnesota Senate hangs in the balance with an upcoming special election – and another election being blocked by a state leader who is violating our Constitution.

State Senate president Michelle Fischbach immediately became lieutenant governor when Tina Smith took Al Franken's seat. Now she's trying to stay in the Minnesota Senate, too, to help her Republican Party maintain its narrow anti-worker majority.

But our state Constitution prohibits her from simultaneously holding both jobs: "No senator or representative shall hold any other office under the authority of the United States or the state of Minnesota, except that of postmaster or of notary public."

Constituent Destiny Dusosky of

Sauk Rapids has filed suit in Ramsey County, pointing out she's being deprived of representation. The lawsuit asks a judge to declare Fischbach's dual offices unconstitutional and to make her give up the Senate seat. That would lead to a special election, which could swing the Senate pro-worker.

A different special election that would help tip the balance toward workers is **Feb. 12**. AFSCME members have endorsed former state rep. Karla Bigham, a Washington County commissioner, for Senate District 54, the seat previously held by Dan Schoen. The district includes parts of southern Washington County and northeastern Dakota County.

If voters elect Bigham, the Senate moves one vote closer to a pro-worker majority, from 34-32 to 34-33. Fischbach following the law and vacating her Senate seat would tie the vote, and it could tip it toward workers and their families depending on who replaces her.

In the House, another key special election **Feb. 12** could elect AFSCME-endorsed Melissa Wagner to District 23B, replacing Tony Cornish.

Special elections and the Fischbach lawsuit aren't the only things that will determine whether our lawmakers are pro-worker or not. Precinct caucuses at 7 p.m. on **Tuesday, Feb. 6** will help decide our future in 2018 and beyond.

Find your caucus site at <http://sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting>.

## Winter Carnival Fun

Union members and our families can march in the King Boreas Grand Day Parade as part of the Saint Paul Winter Carnival.

Marchers should wear their local union jackets and carry their local banners.

Gather at the New Labor Center, 353 West Seventh St., at 1 p.m. in the Main Labor Hall on **Saturday, Jan. 27**. The parade starts at 2 p.m. The unit is co-sponsored by the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation's AFL-CIO Community Services program and Greater Twin Cities United Way. After the parade, join the warm-up party at the Labor Hall.

To participate, call Vicki Beebe at (651) 222-3787 ext. 120 or email [vbeebe@stpaulunions.org](mailto:vbeebe@stpaulunions.org).

## Council 5 is Hiring

AFSCME is looking for a full-time data entry/processing specialist who is passionate about databases and enjoys the logic and problem solving that comes with mapping raw data files. The application deadline is **Friday, Jan. 19**, at 4 p.m. Learn more at <http://afscmemn.org/content/data-specialist>.

## Get in on the Action

Action Update comes out twice a month for locals and activists. Download a copy to post on your workplace bulletin board at [www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org). Share news by emailing [Lynette.Kalsnes@afscmemn.org](mailto:Lynette.Kalsnes@afscmemn.org).

## Mark Your Calendars

Event	Date	Place/details
Legislative session opens	Feb. 20	State Capitol, Saint Paul