



Melvina Harrell, Tamishia Anderson, Annie Tidwell-Jordan, Mary Reed and Brian Olson of Local 34 cheer at the AFSCME Council 5 Annual Convention in Duluth. You can view speeches on our Facebook page and download photos at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/afscmemn/>.

Hundreds Pack AFSCME Convention

AFSCME leaders sounded an alarm and a call to renewed action at the Council 5 Annual Convention in Duluth Oct. 5 to 7.

The U.S. Supreme Court just agreed to hear the *Janus* case, which seeks to make the entire country “right to work” for the public sector. More anti-worker cases are in the pipeline.

What’s at stake is the freedom of working people to build power; negotiate a fair return on our work; provide for our families; have access to affordable health care; take our kids to the doctor or a parent-teacher conference without fear of losing our jobs; and to retire with dignity.

“The wealthy and well-connected – they think they should have those freedoms, but quite honestly, they

don’t believe that you should,” says AFSCME International president Lee Saunders. “They want to rig the system, rig the economy even more in their favor, having more power and wealth, at the expense of all of you.”

“If we don’t stand together as union members, we could end up like Wisconsin or Iowa, with dwindling union density and a loss of collective bargaining,” says AFSCME Council 5 president Judy Wahlberg. “If we want to make sure that we keep our eight-hour days, our safety laws, our weekends off, our contracts in the workplace, we need to stick together and fight to keep our union.”

Council 5 executive director Eliot Seide, who is retiring after 39 years, thanked members for letting him serve them. He left members with a powerful call to action: “The

Help Elect Worker-Friendly Officials in Duluth

Members can make a difference by volunteering to elect candidates endorsed by AFSCME.

Duluth City Council:

- Zack Filipovich, At-Large
- Barb Russ, At-Large
- Renee Van Nett, 4th District

Duluth Public Schools Board:

- Josh Gorham, At-Large
- Sally Trnka, At-Large
- Rosie Loeffler-Kemp, 1st District
- Jill Lofald, 4th District

We need your help door knocking and phone banking on:

- Mondays and Wednesdays from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Labor Temple, 2002 London Road.
- Tuesdays from 5 to 8 p.m., AFSCME Office, 211 W. 2nd St., Suite 205
- Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Labor Temple.

For information, contact Zach at (218) 341-9117 or email zach.sias@afscmemn.org.

working class is under attack. There is class warfare going on. We didn’t start it, but we’re not going to let them finish it. Our fight is a fight for the very essence of American democracy. We can’t have a free society without free, democratic trade unions, with the 1 percent going unchecked.”

See Convention Photos, Videos

View speeches and the governors candidate forum on our [Facebook page](#). Download photos at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/afscmemn/>. Read more at www.afscmemn.org.

Governors Forum

Six DFL candidates for governor gave powerful evidence at our Convention of why it's essential to elect a worker-friendly governor to replace the retiring Mark Dayton. During the first televised forum of the campaign season Friday, Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman, state Rep. Tina Liebling, Rep. Erin Murphy, State Auditor Rebecca Otto, Rep. Paul Thissen and Congressman Tim Walz all vowed to support union rights, public pensions and make sure everybody gets a fair shake. Watch it here: <https://www.facebook.com/afscmemn5/videos/1445534245535795/>.

Labor Fights Back

Since the GOP won the Iowa House, Senate and governorship last election, they've done their best to strip public workers of power and rights, says Council 61 president Danny Homan. He shared the painful details of what's happening to our union brothers and sisters in Iowa – and the amazing ways they are fighting back. <http://afscmemn.org/story/anti-worker-insanity-iowa-could-happen-here>.

Supply Drive is Big Success

Our drive for funds and donations for Safe Haven Shelter in Duluth was hugely successful! Members collected more than \$11,000, made dozens of warm blankets, and assembled more than 100 care packages.

The donations will help women and children dealing with domestic violence, who are served by workers represented by AFSCME Local 3558.

SER Rejects State Worker Contracts

The Legislature's Subcommittee on Employee Relations (SER) recommended 6-4 on party lines that the Minnesota Legislature reject state worker contracts.

These Republicans voted to reject the contract: Reps. Marion O'Neill, Steve Drazkowski and Jeff Howe; and Senators Michelle Benson, Mark Koran and Scott Newman. Democrats voted to approve it: Senators Chris Eaton and Erik Simonson; and Reps. Debra Hilstrom and Leon Lillie. It would have covered nearly 30,000 workers represented by AFSCME Council 5 and MAPE.

"We're tired of being pawns in a political game where Republicans think they can score points by beating up on hardworking people," Council 5 executive director Eliot Seide says. "They reject our contracts while they approve massive tax breaks for corporations and their wealthy cronies."

With the SER vote, state workers in Council 5's multi-unit will keep working under the terms of their current contract until the Legislature acts next year. SER has not acted on a separate contract for 2,000 AFSCME corrections staff in state prisons.

AFSCME Leader, 'Bookmobile Lady' Passes

Robin Madsen died Oct. 4. AFSCME members held a moment of silence in her honor at the Convention. She had retired after 36 years

at Saint Paul Public Library. The former Local 1842 president was a tireless advocate for workers' rights. She spent thousands of hours door knocking and mentored many women who she raised up as labor leaders, says Local 1842 vice president Tabitha Mitchell.

"In Robin's honor, we aren't going to mourn, we will organize," Mitchell says. A celebration of Madsen's life is planned at Jimmy's Event Center, 3565 Labore Rd., Vadnais Heights on **Friday, Oct. 20** at 6 p.m.

Resource Empowers Members

When Michelle Irwin called the Member Action Center to learn about the free college benefit, she discovered something surprising: She was a fee payer, not a member like she thought.

A new technology helped change that in just a few minutes – she joined by phone using voice authorization. "It was very simple," says Irwin of Local 1129. "I didn't even realize that was all there was to it. It worked out nifty."

Becoming an AFSCME member qualified Irwin and her family for two free years of online college; her son is already enrolled.

The MAC is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Dial (651) 450-4990, (218) 722-0577, (320) 235-2344 or (800) 652-9791.

Get in on the Action

Action Update comes out twice a month for locals and activists. Download a copy at www.afscmemn.org. Share news by emailing Lynette.Kalsnes@afscmemn.org.

Mark Your Calendars

Event	Date	Place/details
AFSCME Family Scholarship accepting applications	Dec. 31, postmark deadline	https://www.afscme.org/members/scholarships