



Child protection social workers Cynthia Hassan and Sara Croteau testify at the Legislative Task Force on Child Protection. They urged lawmakers to ask workers for ideas on keeping kids safe. <http://afscmemn.org/story/workers-testify-capitol-keep-kids-safe>

TA Reached with State

A tentative agreement on a new two-year contract for state employees includes a 2 percent raise effective July 1; another 2.25 percent on July 1, 2018; and steps both years. That means employees with annual step increases could see their pay go up by a total of 9.25 percent.

AFSCME's master bargaining team is unanimously recommending ratification. Their recommendation goes to the elected Delegate Assembly **July 28**. Then members will vote on the contract proposal in August. Watch www.afscmemn.org for voting dates and locations.

The proposed contract covers 15,504 AFSCME workers in Unit 2 (craft and maintenance), Unit 3 (service), Unit 4 (health care), Unit 6 (clerical) and Unit 7 (technical) of the executive branch. The health insurance covers 18,337 AFSCME workers, including Units 8

(corrections) and 25 (radio communications). Union negotiators beat back \$56 million in health insurance take-backs the state wanted, so health insurance premiums, out-of-pocket maximums and deductibles stay the same.

Highlights include:

- Six weeks of paid parental leave in the contract.
- An improved dental plan that covers fluoride sealants and 80 percent of the cost for implants and orthodontics (for adults and kids). It also increases the annual maximum from \$1,500 to \$2,000.
- A pilot diabetes management program.
- An increase in injured-on-duty pay from 240 hours to 300 hours.
- Open enrollment for short-term disability.
- Comp-time bank and deferred compensation increases.

Find details at <http://ow.ly/b3J030dcwAd>.

Help Save Health Care

U.S. Senate leaders tried to rush through a health insurance bill that would cost more and offer less, while taking insurance away from 22 million people. Grassroots pressure forced them to delay the vote, but the matter is far from over. We can't let up the pressure.

The bill would cut \$701 billion in taxes for big corporations and the wealthy, and pay for it by cutting \$772 billion from Medicaid. The GOP bill would also hurt Medicare and let insurance companies charge older adults up to five times more, according to AARP. It would increase deductibles and copays; bring back annual and lifetime limits; and make coverage cost more for people with preexisting conditions.

Minnesota's U.S. Senators Al Franken and Amy Klobuchar already oppose the bill. You can make a difference by calling these Senators who are on the fence:

- Susan Collins, Maine (207) 622-8414
- Lisa Murkowski, Alaska (202) 224-6665
- Shelley Moore Capito, W.Va. (304) 347-5372
- Dean Heller, Nevada (702) 388-6605
- Jerry Moran, Kansas (913) 393-0711
- Rob Portman, Ohio (614) 469-6774

ASK THESE SENATORS to reject this attempt to gut Medicaid and take away health care from millions.

Sign Up for the State Fair

The Great Minnesota Get-Together is coming quickly. The State Fair is **Aug. 24 to Sept. 4**, and we're looking for AFSCME members to volunteer.

This year we are honoring the multiple kinds of jobs AFSCME members do. All volunteers get a free AFSCME T-shirt and a free admission ticket to the fair. There are three volunteer shifts each day:

- 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- 12:30-4 p.m.
- 4-7:30 p.m.

Spots are first-come, first-served, and they're going quickly. If you want to be part of the fun, email lynette.kalsnes@afscmemn.org or call 651-287-0537. Please provide this information:

- Three options for your preferred volunteer shift and date
- Your T-shirt size
- Your cell phone number.

Standing Up for Children

About 30 social workers from across Minnesota appealed to legislators June 27 to listen to their ideas about how to improve the child protection system and keep kids safe.

"We're the experts so we want to be heard," said child protection worker John Sundell of Local 66 in St. Louis County. "We are really triaging the triage ... None of us signed up for that. We want to be able to do that same work for every person. That's why we're here." He testified before the

Legislative Task Force on Child Protection with fellow AFSCME members and social workers Sara Crotteau and Cynthia Hassan, and legislative representative Ethan Vogel.

They told legislators that although a previous task force was well-intentioned, some recommendations had unintended consequences like increased caseloads that could hurt kids and their families. That earlier task force didn't include a child protection worker.

Workers asked the task force for 30 minutes at the next meeting to share concerns and solutions.

150,000 Workers Earn Sick Days

Workers in Minneapolis and Saint Paul are now earning paid sick and safe time, thanks to action by faith, community and labor groups including AFSCME. They fought for three years to win the benefit. Then they fought off a 2017 GOP attempt to take away paid sick time: The GOP passed a bill to strip local control from communities, but Gov. Dayton vetoed it.

On **July 1**, about 150,000 workers in Minneapolis and Saint Paul started earning sick and safe time. Dayton's veto also cleared the way for Minneapolis City Council on Friday to approve a \$15 hourly minimum wage.

Honor Your Fellow Members

We are pleased to announce the 13th annual AFSCME Minnesota

Council 5 Achievement Awards. These awards recognize outstanding work by members in the areas of political activism, organizing, communications and local union development. The winners are recognized for their achievements at the AFSCME Council 5 Convention in October. The nomination deadline is **Friday, Aug. 4**. Find details and information about how to submit nominations at <http://afscmemn.org/awards>.

Save the Date for Picnic

The AFSCME Family Picnic is coming up, and there's still time to donate. Donations help pay for burgers and hot dogs, pavilion rental and free water park tickets for the first 100 kids. Be part of the fun by volunteering!

Picnic-goers are encouraged to bring potluck items such as desserts and side dishes including their specialties or foods that celebrate their culture.

The picnic is **Aug. 20** from 1 to 5 p.m. To contribute or volunteer, contact Duane Gatzke at kkirk77dg@comcast.net or call 651-472-2787.

Get in on the Action

Action Update publishes twice a month for locals and activists in AFSCME Council 5. Download a copy for your workplace bulletin board at www.afscmemn.org or share news by emailing Lynette.Kalsnes@afscmemn.org.

Mark Your Calendars

Event	Date	Place
State Capitol Grand Reopening Party	Aug. 11 to 13	www.mn.gov/mymncapitol
AFSCME Family Picnic	Aug. 20, 1 to 5 p.m.	Battle Creek Regional Park, Maplewood
AFSCME at the Minnesota State Fair	Aug. 24 through Sept. 4	Labor Pavilion, State Fairgrounds
AFSCME Council 5 Annual Convention	Oct. 5 to 7	Duluth Entertainment Convention Center