



ACTION UPDATE

One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers

Tuesday, September 24, 2013

www.afscmemn.org

Legislature Approves State Contracts

The Legislature's Subcommittee on Employee Relations has approved the newest contracts for executive branch employees. The contracts run through June 30, 2015. They cover more than 18,000 AFSCME members in Units 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 25.

The contracts include a 3 percent pay raise, retroactive to July 1. The raise and back pay are expected to show up on the Oct. 18 paycheck.

It's Council 5 Convention Time

750 delegates from 125 locals will meet Oct. 3-5 for Council 5's convention in Duluth. Among highlights:

- AFSCME International president Lee Saunders will speak Oct. 4.
- Gov. Mark Dayton will speak Oct. 5.

The convention is at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center. Registration takes place Oct. 2 from 6-9 p.m. at the Holiday Inn, Oct. 3 from 7 a.m.-2 p.m. at DECC, and Oct. 4 from 7-9 a.m. at DECC.

Taking Action against Hunger

One in 10 Minnesotans does not know where his or her next meal is coming from. Forty percent of those are children. That's why AFSCME is taking part in the "Go Orange" campaign during National Hunger Action Month. Here's how you can help:

- Locals and delegates to Council 5's annual convention are encouraged to bring donations for CHUM's emergency food shelf in Duluth.
- To find out how you can take action against hunger where you live, visit Second Harvest Heartland's website at www.2harvest.org; click "How to Help."

March for Sane Immigration Policy

Members who aren't at Council 5's convention Oct. 5 can join a march to fix the nation's broken immigration system. Marches take place in 40 cities as part of a national day of action for immigration reform.

The Twin Cities march begins at 1 p.m. at the Basilica of St. Mary, 88 N. 17th St., Minneapolis.

U of M Locals Rally for Health Care

Internationally known folk singer and activist Billy Bragg will perform Sept. 26 during a rally by AFSCME locals at the University of Minnesota.

The rally continues the locals' fight for a more-principled and balanced health plan on campus. It begins at noon outside Northrup Auditorium.

The locals are proposing sliding-fee insurance premiums, linked to income. That's in stark contrast to the university plan, which would shift \$1.8 million in out-of-pocket costs onto all employees, but fall hardest on the lowest-paid workers and those with chronic conditions.

- For an editorial supporting the sliding-fee plan, go to www.mndaily.com; click "Opinion," then "Editorials," then "The U's benefits-wage gap".

Hennepin Locals Plan Rally Sept. 30

Hennepin County members are fed up with years of austerity budgets and contracts. On Sept. 30, they're sending that message loud and clear – saying it's time for a contract that restores steps and provides real wage increases that bring Hennepin's pay up to par. Their rally runs from noon to 1 p.m. on the Public Service level of the Government Center, 6th St. South and 3rd Ave. South, in downtown Minneapolis.

Talks Deliver TA on Health Insurance

Meanwhile, Hennepin County locals have reached a tentative agreement on health insurance. It creates a new option to keep premiums unchanged in 2014.

- Probation and Parole Local 552 will vote on the proposal at its regular meeting Sept. 25.
- Legal and Essential Unit 2938 will vote Oct. 1.
- Social Services Local 34 and Clerical and Related Local 2822 will vote Oct. 9.
- Librarians Local 2864 has not yet scheduled a vote.

For full details on contract talks, go to www.afscmemn.org; click "Bargaining," then "Hennepin County."

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Ruling Doesn't Slow Providers

A federal appeals court is temporarily blocking an election among Minnesota's in-home child-care providers. But that is not slowing down AFSCME's work to actually organize 12,700 providers across the state.

The one-sentence ruling does not overturn Minnesota's law or prevent providers from organizing for a unified voice. It simply blocks any vote for the time being, while the U.S. Supreme Court decides whether to hear a related case from Illinois.

The lawsuit trying to outlaw providers from working together is financed by out-of-state, anti-union groups.

Council 5 Seeks Data Specialist

Council 5 is accepting applications for a data specialist vacancy in the South St. Paul office. The deadline to apply is 4 p.m. Oct. 4.

Details: For a full job description and information on how to apply, go to: www.afscmemn.org; click "Work for Us."

E-Board Accepting Nominations

Council 5 is accepting nominations to fill a District vacancy on the Executive Board. Applicants must be a member in good standing for at least one year and live in Anoka, Carver, Hennepin, Scott, or Wright County. (Members who don't live in Minnesota can apply if they work in one of those counties.)

The term will expire at Council 5's 2014 convention.

Nominations must be received by 4 p.m. Nov. 15. Send them to: AFSCME Council 5 Elections Committee, c/o Michelle Stein, 300 Hardman Ave. S., South St. Paul, MN 55075. The board will fill the vacancy on Nov. 21.

Fight 'Fast Track' Authority

Bad trade deals never go away. This time, the White House and the U.S. trade representative are pushing Congress to once again abdicate responsibility and approve "fast track" trade authority.

Fast track would allow the controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership to leapfrog constitutional checks and balances, and instead go through the back door to a mandatory "up or down" vote in Congress – without any public hearings, floor debate, or amendments.

Sign the petition. Tell Congress to say "no" to fast track: Go to <http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/congress-dont-renew-fast>

Let's Get Transportation Plan Moving

The Minnesota Transportation Coalition is sponsoring an open discussion in St. Paul on the state's transportation future, and how to make a bold vision for better roads, transit, and infrastructure happen.

The free event takes place Sept. 27, from 10-11:30 a.m., at the Wilder Foundation, 451 N. Lexington Ave.

College Scholarship Money Available

AFSCME International is now accepting applications for its 2014 Family Scholarship.

Ten scholarships, worth \$2,000 per year, will be given for full-time college study. They are renewable for up to four years. The application deadline is Dec. 31.

Eligible applicants must be a graduating high school senior whose parent, legal guardian, or financially responsible grandparent is a full AFSCME member. For other requirements and full application details, go to www.afscme.org/family.