



ACTION UPDATE

One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

afscmemn.org



AFSCME will gather at Saint Paul's RiverCentre, just a few blocks away from the previous site, for Day on the Hill this year.

Volunteer at Day on the Hill

AFSCME's Day on the Hill on **Tuesday, April 5** is approaching quickly. Members will gather at the State Capitol and at Saint Paul's RiverCentre to stand strong for worker rights. Our theme for 2016 is "One Minnesota," reflecting the diversity of our workforce in urban, suburban and rural areas across the state, and how our work strengthens communities and makes life better for working families. [Check out the details or register online at www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org). If you register and bring a friend, you'll both get a free AFSCME water bottle. Many locals are chartering buses, and we encourage you to ride if you can.

Volunteers are still needed. Contact Deb Smith at 651-287-0543 to sign up.

Please note, we're gathering this year at the RiverCentre, which is just a few blocks away from the hotel where we've met in the past. You'll know it by the giant AFSCME logo on the marquee.

Think Tank Helps Workers Get Ahead

AFSCME is supporting a new think tank called the North Star Policy Institute, a nonpartisan group that provides original research, educational materials and expertise to develop public policies that help working families get ahead. You can sign up for occasional updates at www.northstarpolicy.org/join/.

Stop Billionaire Tax Breaks

Our state budget surplus is down to \$900 million, yet some lawmakers have already introduced bills that would give tax breaks to the wealthy and to big businesses, and put us back on the failed budget rollercoaster. One bad bill would repeal the estate tax for rich families who inherit more than \$1 million. Another bill, a Republican plan to phase out corporate property taxes, would cost a whopping \$1 billion, yet more than half that relief would leave Minnesota. **Text SURPLUS** to 237263 to be connected to your state representative, or dial 1-888-440-2111. **Ask your state representative** to stop the tax breaks for billionaires and big businesses. Helping the rich get richer at the expense of the middle class is simply wrong.

Locals Ratify Contracts

Local 66 (Proctor Basic Unit) approved a contract that includes: a 2.5 percent raise the first year and 3 percent the second year; a \$100 increase in the employer match to 403(b) accounts; pay at the top wage of a "work out of class assignment" position; and use of sick or vacation time for funeral leave.

Local 66 (Proctor School Bus Drivers) approved a contract that provides 3 percent raises in 2016 and in 2017; and increased insurance contributions.

Local 66 (Spirit Mountain) approved a contract that includes raises of 1 percent, 1 percent and 2 percent; retains layoff and recall rights; and prevents new employees from being hired at a higher rate than current employees.

Longtime Union Leader Dies

We share our condolences over the March 6 passing of Bernard Brommer, the former president of the Minnesota AFL-CIO. He was a leader in the state's labor movement for 30 years. His other roles included AFL-CIO executive vice president and secretary-treasurer; and AFSCME Council 6 executive director. He was a member of Local 695, Duluth DOT. The Star Tribune has a nice tribute at: <http://tinyurl.com/j8hpa9l>.



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Fight Trump's 'Right to Work' Stance

You've probably heard that Donald Trump's denounced just about everyone. You may not know that he's added unions to the mix. Trump supports dangerous policies such as "right to work" that would cut our pay and benefits, make our workplaces less safe and send our jobs overseas. Sign this petition to tell Trump he can't support working people if he supports "right to work:" <http://tinyurl.com/hcivvs3>

Bowling Supports Organized Labor

The Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation is hosting the Sixth Annual Labor Bowl **May 5**. It benefits the Labor Studies and Resource Center (LSRC), which assists and advocates for union members and their families. Raise money by forming a team and gathering pledges, or sponsoring a bowler. Make donations payable to: LSRC, 2016 Labor Bowl, Attn: Laura, 353 W. 7th St., Suite 201, Saint Paul, 55102. To book a time to bowl, call Laura at 651-222-3787, extension 117, by **April 28**. Donations are tax deductible.

Dinner Honors Labor Leader

Honor a nationally known labor leader and civil rights activist by attending a scholarship dinner. Nellie Stone Johnson was the first African-American elected official in Minneapolis and helped found the DFL Party. The 29th annual dinner on **March 31** helps fund scholarships in her name. It starts at 5:30 p.m. at Oakdale Prom Center. The deadline to buy tickets online at nsj29.eventbrite.com is Saturday, **March 19**.

Apply for Labor Scholarships

Applications are open for several scholarship funds. AFSCME Council 5 offers two awards for high school seniors, and one for members continuing their education. The awards range from \$250 to \$1,000. The deadline is **May 6**. Find details at afscmemn.org/afscme-council-5-scholarships.

The Minnesota AFL-CIO is giving out scholarships to graduating high school seniors who are union members or their dependents, and union members affiliated with the AFL-CIO. The deadline is **April 30**. Learn more at www.mnafcio.org or contact Lori Williams with questions at 800-652-9004.

The Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship is open to minority students from union families who are attending or will attend a Minnesota State Colleges and Universities school. Learn more at <http://www.nelliestone.org> or call 866-738-5238. The deadline is **June 1**.

Labor Movie Night

The movie *Norma Rae* tells the story of a young mother and textile worker who agrees to help unionize her mill, despite the dangers. The film screens **Friday** at 6 p.m. at the United Labor Centre, 312 Central Ave. SE, Minneapolis.

Get in on the Action

Action Update publishes twice a month for locals and activists in AFSCME Council 5. Share an event by emailing Lynette.Kalsnes@afscmemn.org or download a copy at www.afscmemn.org.

Keep Your Calendar Up to Date

Labor Movie Night: March 18, 6 p.m., United Labor Centre, 312 Central Ave. SE, Minneapolis

AFSCME Council 5 Day on the Hill: April 5, Saint Paul (RiverCentre)

Council 5 Retirees United Convention: April 19

SEPC Spring Conference: April 29

Sixth Annual Labor Bowl: May 5, Midway Pro Bowl, Saint Paul

AFSCME 42nd Annual International Convention: July 18-22, Las Vegas, Nevada. Council 5 will be staying at the Paris Hotel, 3655 Las Vegas Blvd. S.

AFSCME Family Picnic: Aug. 21, Battle Creek Regional Park, Maplewood