



# AFSCME Capitol Update



April 13, 2017

## Day on the Hill Yields Results

AFSCME members from all areas of the state met with their legislators during Council 5's annual Day on the Hill. Our legislative meetings and rally sent a strong message to elected officials that AFSCME will not sit quietly as bad budget bills and policy language head to conference committees. Over 1,200 members and retirees expressed the importance of protecting our future.

Governor Dayton's budget proposal includes \$100 million to provide more resources for public pensions. These funds are needed due to increased life expectancy of retirees and the state adopting more conservative expectations for investment returns. Defined benefit pensions are a major incentive to work in the public sector and provide dignity and security for retirement. Defined benefit pensions also fuel Minnesota's economy. A retirement dollar turns over seven times in a local community.

The Pension Commission will meet Tuesday, April 18 at 5:30 p.m. in room G-15 of the Capitol to hear testimony from Minnesota Management and Budget Commissioner Myron Frans regarding the Governor's proposed pension bill. At an earlier meeting, AFSCME testified in strong support of the Governor's plan. We encourage members to attend each of the Pension Commission Meetings.

## Local Government Aid and County Program Aid

State aid to cities and counties creates stronger communities with parks, libraries, police and fire protection. It also holds down property taxes and prevents local government layoffs.

Last week members made calls to their legislators urging them to support Governor Dayton's proposal to increase LGA by \$20 million and CPA by \$10 million.

Here's a comparison of Local Government Aid proposals for 2018:

- **State aid to Duluth**  
Governor Dayton's budget: \$425,522  
House GOP budget: \$0
- **State aid to Minneapolis**  
Governor Dayton's budget: \$1,581,765  
Senate GOP budget: (\$28,131,889 cut)
- **State aid to St. Paul**  
Governor Dayton's budget: \$3,084,202  
House GOP budget: \$0

House Republicans don't increase local government or county program aid.

Meanwhile, House and Senate Republicans propose massive tax breaks for profitable corporations and wealthy individuals at the expense of working people. Their tax giveaways would put Minnesota back on a budget rollercoaster with a structural deficit. The tax bills now head to conference committee.

### **Budget Bills and Bonding**

Both the House and Senate have passed their budget bills. The bills would gut public services and create thousands of layoffs. The bills also contain devastating policy language that would interfere with collective bargaining. Budgets are moral documents and the Republican budget bills show contempt for public services and disrespect for public workers.

Gov. Dayton's bonding proposal includes urgently needed safety improvements for state facilities where AFSCME members work. It includes \$70 million to expand the Security Hospital in St. Peter; \$27 million to improve Sex Offender Treatment facilities in Moose Lake and St. Peter; \$7.5 million for a new Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Services facility in Willmar; \$5 million for Direct Care and Treatment to upgrade security systems and electronic monitoring; and \$2.25 million for safety renovations at Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center.

The Governor's proposal also bonds for correctional facilities: a new intake unit at St. Cloud, 60 new medical beds at Lino Lakes, and a boot camp at Togo.

The Senate bonding bill fails to fund our safety at state-run hospitals and prisons.

The House still doesn't have a bonding bill, with only 40 days remaining in the legislative session. The Chairman of the House Bonding Committee disclosed that House Republicans have an outline of a bonding bill that he is keeping in his desk drawer, but he has not shared it with Minnesotans. He is waiting for House Speaker Kurt Daudt to tell him when to do so.

The next step in the legislative process will be conference committees. With the Governor and Legislature miles apart, a workable agreement to end session on time looks doubtful.