



AFSCME IN ACTION

Member Newsletter | January 2024



Pictured: AFSCME Maryland President Patrick Moran along with AFSCME supervisor members and supporters after a House hearing

MESSAGE FROM AFSCME MARYLAND PRESIDENT MORAN

Why Your Participation Matters in this Legislative Session!

There are thousands of bills that are introduced each year during Maryland's legislative session. You may say, "So what, why should I care?" And the simple answer is that those bills, or potential laws, could affect your well-being, your salary, your health, your benefits, and your rights.

Every year, our union submits bills or potential laws to strengthen our rights at work, give workers without a union the right to form one, and protect our benefits. And one of the best ways to increase the chances of our bills being passed is when we visit legislators in Annapolis to speak on the bills and issues we care about. Legislators certainly take notice when our AFSCME Green Machine is in Annapolis for lobby Nights, hearings, and more!

Ultimately, your participation is crucial in Annapolis during this legislative session. If you aren't already, get involved to help win big things (and stop the bad things) for you and your coworkers. See you in Annapolis!

- AFSCME Maryland Council 3 President Patrick Moran



Pictured: AFSCME members at our first Lobby Night

AFSCME in Annapolis

We're a month into the 2024 legislative session! We have a number of bill hearings, budget hearings, lobby nights, and more to take advantage of to get important bills that we care about and a strong state budget passed.

This year, our priority bills include: HB 114/SB 218 (Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2024), HB 260/SB 192 (State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Supervisory Employees), and the HB 609/SB 591 (Library Workers Empowerment Act).

A big thank you to everyone who attended our first Lobby Night of the year! The AFSCME Green Machine came out in force with over 100 members in attendance! We had the opportunity to meet with nearly two dozen legislators in both the House and Senate to ask for their support for our priority bills.

Send a Letter to Legislators & Governor Moore!

Take 2 minutes to send a letter to legislators and Governor Moore to ask for their support on our union's priorities: binding arbitration reform, expanded collective bargaining, & a reinvestment in our public services.

A template letter is provided but feel free to edit and add your own experiences and perspectives.

Send a letter:
bit.ly/2024-leg-letter



Upcoming Events

- Mon. Feb. 5: Lobby Night
 - Mon. Feb. 12: K-12 Lobby Night
 - Mon. Feb. 19: Lobby Night
 - Mon. Mar. 11: Lobby Night
 - Mon. Mar. 18: Lobby Night
- RSVP: bit.ly/leg-interest-2024

AFSCME Members in Action

 AFSCME Local 539 president Jenny Reese went down to Washington, DC this month for a press conference that called for congressional action to pass a clean budget and to prevent another government shutdown.

 AFSCME Local 1678 member leaders and activists held a full day health and safety meeting to discuss a variety of topics to improve standards in their facilities.

 Rayneika Robinson, a Parole and Probation Agent and president of AFSCME Local 3661, talks about her journey in public service in her Public Service Spotlight video. You can watch the full video on our Facebook.

 AFSCME Local 1885 members at Morgan State University overwhelmingly voted to ratify a new contract this month!



Battle of the Locals: Ready, Set, Go!

This year, nearly 30 locals are coming together to sign up new members, build local capacity, and win in our workplaces as part of our friendly Battle of the Locals competition!

There are a number of ways to help your local, such as signing up a new member, attending a Lobby Night, and more! **Reach out to your local leadership for more information about how you can help your local and team win!**

Member Spotlight: Ikeia Cornish

Meet Ikeia Cornish, President of AFSCME Local 770 and a dedicated Direct Care Assistant at the Eastern Shore Hospital Center for the last 18 years. Her journey showcases the importance of staying engaged during negotiations and the vital role of our union in ensuring fair labor practices at work.

As a member of the most recent state bargaining team, Ikeia says "I love the learning aspect of it. I get to interact with so many different people on the bargaining team and hear other people's perspectives. **AFSCME is like a family outside of family.**" For Ikeia, this sense of unity and being a part of her union is a continuous learning opportunity that offers important tools for a lifetime. "We're all fighting for a better state," she emphasizes.

However, her passion for her work was tested when she became aware of pay discrepancies for part-time contractual employees who were already employed full-time in another role within the Maryland Department of Health (MDH); the agency was paying these employees contractual rates, markedly lower than what they were earning at their full-time positions.

Describing her shock when she found out about these illegal practices, Ikeia said, "To learn that I had been taken advantage of for 5 years and was not being paid what I was owed, I had a lot of questions. Someone had to know that this wasn't the right thing to do. **If it wasn't for our union, who knows how long they would have continued to underpay us.**" Now, Ikeia and her other coworkers and union members who are in a similar situation have won a settlement with MDH and their paychecks will be made whole in the coming months.

Ikeia's journey shows the strength of collective action and the role of our union in ensuring past mistakes are corrected and every worker is paid what they are owed. After this experience, she has a message for her coworkers who have not joined our union yet: "The union is so much more than for situations when you get in trouble. **Our union is a source of empowerment, allowing us to have a voice at work and a means to speak up for our rights and what we are rightfully owed.**"



Pictured: Ikeia Cornish