

APRIL 21ST, 2021

# AFSCME 3 NEWSLETTER

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## AFSCME Council 3 Higher Education Members Achieve Legislative Victory

After three years of organizing, testifying and lobbying AFSCME Council 3 members at University System of Maryland (USM) Schools will finally have the opportunity to have one master agreement covering them all. Senate Bill 9 was lightly amended in the House and passed both chambers of the General Assembly this session, awaiting to become law.

Union members within the USM have long complained about their “broken” bargaining scheme where each campus administration would bargain independently, weakening worker power, but at the same refusing to bargain about critical issues such as pay, probation, layoff procedure, or contracting out as they were governed by the System.

Now all members in the USM can bargain one contract, like our brothers and sisters in the State, with one set of rules of the road, bargaining with the Chancellor and Board of Regents, the people really in charge. This new way to bargain will ensure fairness and equity throughout the system.

It also still allows campuses with unique issues, such as the Agricultural work at UMCP and UMES, to bargain those issues locally. If you are interested in getting active in the Higher Education campaign for fairness email [highered@afscmemd.org](mailto:highered@afscmemd.org).

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## DBM Response Pay Re-Starts & Negotiations Ongoing Over Backpay

Earlier this month, Governor Hogan announced a new supplemental budget for \$100 million which will be used to fund COVID-19 Response Pay through the end of 2021 for state employees. This includes both the \$3.13 response pay and \$5.13 quarantine pay for classifications as designated by the Department of Budget and Management- [click here to review the list](#).

Since the beginning of the pandemic, AFSCME members have made it clear that DBM’s response pay was a violation of our contract language on emergency pay. In response, we filed the largest group grievance against the State of Maryland to enforce our contract and are in the final step of the grievance procedure. This announcement does not impact our case and just underscores the pressure the Governor and his administration feel to properly compensate public employees. We will continue to update as we get more information on the grievance.

It's important to note many job classifications have been unfairly and arbitrarily left out of DBM Response Pay. Despite urging from our union to expand the list of eligible classifications, DBM believes response pay should be limited to classifications 'without the opportunity to socially distance at work'.

Exposure to COVID-19 is too great a risk to be uncompensated and unrecognized by management. Take action and send a letter to decision-makers urging them to expand the COVID-19 Response Pay! Visit our website for the link! If you have any questions about Response Pay, contact our Member Resource Center at 410.547.1515 or send an email to [info@afscmemd.org](mailto:info@afscmemd.org).

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## Re-Elect Jamaal Craddock to Board of Trustees For Maryland State Retirement and Pension System

AFSCME Council 3 has endorsed Jamaal Craddock for re-election to the Board of Trustees For Maryland State Retirement and Pension System. Voting materials will be sent via the mail starting May 14th, 2021, and will be conducted via the phone or internet. Our Executive Board is proud to endorse Brother Craddock and looks forward to working together to ensure our pension fund is protected.

Jamaal is a Resident Advisor with the Department of Juvenile Services and a shop steward with AFSCME Local 3167. He has been a proud employee for over 13 years. He is an advocate for retirement equity for all State Employees and has served as the Employee Representative on the Board of Trustees for the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System for the past two years. He has testified in the Legislature to improve and expand retirement benefits and has worked hard to protect employees' benefits.

Stay tuned for updates on voting and make sure to check your mail! Download a flier about Jamaal to share with your co-workers on our website: [www.afscmemd.org](http://www.afscmemd.org)

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## Statewide Telework Policy Passed in the Last Hours of Session

With the typical AFSCME spirit of "it's not over until it's over," union-supported legislation to create a statewide Telework policy for both the public and private sectors passed the General Assembly as the clock approached midnight on Monday, April 12 - the last day of the legislative session.

While the House of Delegates had passed legislation much earlier in the session, the bill lagged in the Senate as other issues received greater prioritization from Senate Leadership. AFSCME members and staff kept pushing, repeatedly requesting a bill hearing and lobbying Senate Finance Committee members to support and pass out the bill. The Friday before session ended the bill made it to the Senate Floor Calendar, yet that was no guarantee of passage. Constant communication with Senators helped break the jam, and when it did it passed unanimously!

House Bill 73 establishes an Office of Telework Assistance to develop and post best practices for telework policies and to assist businesses with implementing telework policies; including awarding grants to businesses to help cover hardware and software purchases. In state government, the bill requires public higher education institutions and each of the three branches of government to establish telework policies. It also requires that each teleworking employee in a state unit receive cybersecurity guidelines and requires that each state unit must annually report to the Senate Budget and Tax Committee and the House Appropriations Committee the number of employees who are eligible and participating in the telework program.

These policies must be negotiated beginning July 1, 2022; however, the Department of Budget & Management has already reached out to AFSCME to begin discussions, despite the bill not yet becoming law.

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**I love my job. I'm becoming a Shop Steward to make sure things stay good on the job and protect our rights.**

**CHARLES DORSEY  
AFSCME LOCAL 1606  
NEW SHOP STEWARD**