

JUNE 4TH, 2021

AFSCME 3 NEWSLETTER

AFSCME Continues to Fight for Expanded Retro Pay

Some state employees received a limited amount of response pay for working and reporting during the pandemic. Throughout this crisis, AFSCME Council 3 members have never hesitated to report to work despite the many unclear and unknown risks of exposure. Our union has been fighting for any workers required to report to their physical workplace receive hazard pay!

We urge the Governor to include both state and higher education employees who have been left out of hazard pay as all public employees required to report to a physical workplace risked exposure to COVID-19. Exposure to COVID-19 is too great a risk to be uncompensated and unrecognized by management.

Join our fight if you work in higher education or for DBM and the state government! Our greatest strength is our numbers, and we need all public employees to stand together as union members.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO TAKE ACTION: AFSCMEMD.ORG

Hogan Vetoes Show Governor's Anti-Worker Bias

Friday, May 28 was not a very good day for workers, mass transit, health, and safety nor government transparency and accountability. Governor Larry Hogan ensured this by vetoing some of the most important legislation to come out of the 2021 General Assembly session, including bills that were AFSCME-supported.

To start, Hogan vetoed two AFSCME collective bargaining measures - SB 9, from Sen. Benjamin F. Kramer (D-Montgomery), which would have expanded and consolidated collective bargaining rights on University System of Maryland campuses, and SB 717/HB 904, from Sen. Craig J. Zucker (D-Montgomery) and Del. Tony Bridges (D-Baltimore City), another collective bargaining measure that would have enhanced the union's ability to engage with newly hired state employees. He also vetoed legislation supported by our sisters and brothers in Council 67, which would have created collective bargaining rights for community college employees.

JUNE 4TH, 2021

AFSCME 3 NEWSLETTER

Hogan Vetoes Show Governor's Anti-Worker Bias Continued

Hogan also vetoed the COVID-19 Testing, Contact Tracing and Vaccination Act of 2021, stating “these misguided bills would revert the State back to the early planning phases of Maryland’s COVID-19 pandemic response efforts by requiring the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to re-develop its testing, contact tracing, and vaccination plans that have already been serving Marylanders effectively and saving lives for over a year.”

As AFSCME members know all too well, there were no plans for how to handle the pandemic, and it took AFSCME members constantly protesting and demanding plans and PPE to get anything done. This legislation would detail what should be done going forward and is still sorely needed.

Finally, Hogan vetoed legislation requiring prevailing wage be paid on utility projects; enhanced funding to address MTA backlogged work as well as a comprehensive study of Western Maryland MARC rail expansion; and two different procurement rules (remember those failed Korean COVID test kits?) that he says aren’t needed.

Friday wasn’t all negative, as Hogan did “allow” legislation to become law without his signature (a unique Maryland option for governors). Included in that was legislation to mandate telework rules for state and higher education employees be collectively negotiated; the Maryland Health Equity Resource Act to target communities with health disparities; medical debt protection legislation; enhanced funding for county health departments; “line-of-duty” death benefits for qualified state employees stricken down by COVID-19; and the Maryland Essential Workers Protection Act, which includes requirements for employer-provided safety equipment during an emergency at no cost to the employee, development of an emergency temporary standard for COVID-19, and the development of a template health emergency preparedness plan for responding to catastrophic health emergencies.

JUNE 4TH, 2021

AFSCME 3 NEWSLETTER

AFSCME Meeting with USM Despite Hogan Veto & Prepared to Fight

During this year's legislative session we beat the entire University System of Maryland (USM). We won, with veto-proof majorities, the right to bargain one master contract for all our members in the USM, just like we do for the state employees. On Friday, the USM delayed the inevitable. They relied on lame-duck Larry Hogan to delay bargaining by vetoing our legislation, SB9.

THIS WILL NOT STOP US. When the legislature reconvenes, we will override the veto, as every Hogan veto has been overridden. Then we will be at the bargaining table for everything. Throughout this summer, fall, and winter we will hold them accountable to ensure our campuses are safe for reopening and our members rightly compensated.

We will be meeting with other stakeholders in our campus communities such as students, parents, and alumni to work together so we can avoid the chaos of 2020 at our schools.

To get more involved in this fight to hold the USM accountable and make our campuses better email highered@afscmemd.org.



It's important that new officers know not only the benefits of being in the union – like access to free college and union representation – but also that we are the only organization that has been fighting and winning pay increases and keeping us and our families safe during this pandemic. I tell them we are there for them, as union stewards if you need us we are there – no matter what shift, or what their question is we are there to listen and help. But our job is also to get them involved in the union! We will be retiring soon and we need to pass on what we know to the next generation.

**OFFICERS LINDA TILGHMAN
& YVETTE SIMPSON
LOCAL 1319 SHOP STEWARD**