



Session 2021 – AFSCME Maryland Council 3 Legislative Agenda

A Fair and Equitable Contract for Council 3 Bargaining Unit Members

AFSCME Council 3's contract with the State expires at the end of this year. Given the existing differences of opinion between the State and Council 3 on a host of issues, it is possible we will once again have to go to the General Assembly to assert our right to a contract that treats state employees with fairness, dignity and respect.

We also belong to the Fair Funding Coalition, a group of organizations banded together to close corporate loopholes, remove special interest tax breaks, and bring more progressivity to our income tax structure. Enhancing state revenues in a fair equitable manner will enable the state to address sorely needed problems such as public sector staffing shortages, state government program resourcing, and education quality enhancement.

Health & Safety for Essential Frontline Workers

Lack of protections for both public and private sector workers have been exposed. We will be working in coalition with others to enact:

- Safe & Hygienic Working Conditions
- Hazard Pay & Healthcare Assistance
- Emergency Action Plans
- Universal Health & Bereavement Leave
- Right to Refuse Dangerous Work
- Free Testing and Reporting of Positive Test Results
- Injury & Illness Prevention Programs

Telework Policy Reform

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the positives, and negatives, of telework. Many AFSCME members have thrived with the ability to telework, while others have been challenged by equipment needs, broadband access, childcare access and work schedule restrictions. AFSCME looks to enshrine the right to telework into state law, and add requirements on management of telework, training, equipment access, and performance measurement.

University System of Maryland Consolidated Bargaining

This legislation would require the Chancellor of the University System of Maryland (USM) to act on behalf of USM and its constituent institutions, rather than the institutions' presidents under current law, for the purposes of collective bargaining.

Place Office of Public Defender Employees in the Merit System

Under present law, Maryland Office of Public Defender core support staff and social workers are considered "merit" employees, but frontline attorneys are considered "special appointment" employees, making their employment "at will" and denying them many of the basic rights and opportunities provided to merit-based state employees. This legislation would remove the special appointments status of OPD attorneys and place them within the state's merit-based system.