

February Newsletter

AFSCME LOCAL 448

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February, 2020

President: Kathy Lane, 1-815-677-3699
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Treasurer: Gail Greenblatt-987-7721

Chapter Chairs

Dave Beccue-DNR, 885-3311
 Laurie Scudder-Revenue, 987-7509
 Diane Ritter-Lottery, 987-7018
 Meliza Lester-DCFS 987-7920
 Melissa Dix-DHS-987-7308

Members at Large

Aaron Sockwell-DHS, 232-6121
 Kassandra Lumsden-DCFS-987-3266
 Tom Soresie-DCFS-625-7594

Trustees

Tiffany Moore-DHS-987-7620
 Jeff Bergstrom-DHS-987-7308
 Robin Aebly-DCFS, 235-7878

People Chair

Laurie Scudder-Revenue, 987-7509

Chris Hooser-Staff Representative, 815-968-0447

Meeting Dates

*Sterling DCFS Office
 Suite 300
 2607 Woodlawn Ave.
 Sterling, IL*

March 5, 2020

All Membership meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. Food and drink will be provided at 6:00 p.m. for all meetings.

NEW POST-JANUS LAW IN EFFECT

On December 20, 2019 Governor Pritzker signed SB 1784 into law-with an immediate effective date. This legislation, now known as Public Act 101-0620, places significant new responsibilities on employers and offers important new opportunities to strengthen our union.

There are provisions within this law that address employee information, union contact with employees, employer neutrality/unfair labor practices and restrictions on disclosure of employee personal information to outside parties.

Regarding employee information-the employer must provide bargaining unit lists and employee contact information to Council 31 at least once per month. Within the information provided the employer must include all information regarding the employees. The information on new hires must be provided to Council 31 within 10 days of the date of hire.

The union will be provided with the opportunity to conduct new employee orientations—one hour on paid time within the first two weeks of employment. Union are now given access to employee mailboxes and bulletin boards. Employees will be allowed to participate in meetings at the workplace during non-work times to discuss collective bargaining negotiations, administration of collective bargaining agreements, other matters related to the duties of the exclusive representative, and internal matters involving the governance or business of the union.

The employer shall not interfere with the relationship between bargaining unit employees and the union. An employer shall not discourage employees or applicants from becoming or remaining union members or from authorizing dues deductions. All inquiries about union membership shall be referred to the union, except an employer may communicate with employees regarding payroll procedures. The employer must establish and make a good faith effort to implement a policy to prohibit and block the use of its email system by outside third parties to engage in the above conduct.

Lastly, the new law expands the exemptions from the Freedom of Information Act and prohibits employers from disclosing most employee personal information including home address (this includes the disclosure of county or zip code), date of birth, home and personal phone number, personal email address, information identifying an individual's union membership or membership status, dues authorization or non-authorization, and emails

or other communications between a labor organization and its members. The law also requires employers to provide the union with copies of any FOIA requests for such prohibited information as well as the employers' responses.

A FAIR TAX FOR ILLINOIS

The proposed Fair Tax constitutional amendment would change the state constitution to eliminate the requirement that Illinois tax all income at a single rate, allowing instead for higher rates on wealthy people and lower rates for working people. More than 30 other states have such a fair, progressive tax system.

Why do we need Fair Tax reform? The old way of taxing income in Illinois is unfair and inadequate. It's unfair because it taxes working people too heavily while letting wealthy people off easy. Working people in Illinois now pay almost double what wealthy people pay in taxes as a share of their income.

The old way is inadequate because it doesn't raise enough revenue. That causes recurring budget deficits at every level of government (state, counties, cities, universities, school districts), underfunds pensions, pushes up property taxes and forces harmful cuts to public services and jobs.

What will the Fair Tax amendment mean for Illinois? Lift the unfair burden on lower and middle-income Illinoisans; require only those making more than \$250,000 a year to pay more; cut or maintain taxes for 97% of Illinoisans; address Illinois' structural budget deficit; generate additional revenue to fund our schools and public services; and make the wealthy pay their fair share.

Will you pay more? NO. With a Fair Tax 97.3% of taxpayers will get a tax cut or pay the same and 2.7% of taxpayers will pay more on income over \$250,000 per year. Former Illinois AFL-CIO-President Michael Carrigan stated "it is absolutely vital that we go to the polls next November and vote yes for a Fair Tax. We need to replace our unfair tax systems with a system where the wealthy pay their fair share."

Why do we need it? Illinois is in a deep fiscal hole. Illinois owes \$8 billion in back due bills and had a \$2.3 billion budget shortfall in FY 2019. Bond ratings remain in record lows despite the 2017 tax increase. Illinois' tax system is upside down. The wealthy pay a smaller proportion of their income than working people. Working people in Illinois pay 14.4% of their income into taxes while the wealthy pay 7.4% of their income. The Illinois Federation of Teachers stated "We have a 3.2 billion deficit and \$15 billion in unpaid bills. A Fair Tax is the only way to fix the state's finances without drastically cutting funding for schools and services."

We must work together to inform and educate those in the State of Illinois on why the Fair Tax needs to be passed. In the next few months the local will ask members to help communicate the need for the Fair Tax by calling members and walking precincts to educate our communities. Be a part of this historical quest in making the Fair Tax system in Illinois happen.

The local has a website that provides information that is contained also in the AFSCME Council 31 and AFSCME International websites. Anything a member needs is at your fingertips. Look at your website at www.afscme448.org. Provide information to your local steward on any information that you believe should be on the website.

INFORMATION CAN NOW BE TEXTED LOCAL WIDE

There are many times the local needs to contact members local wide on urgent information but were unable to reach everyone. Our local now has a local wide texting program that will be used to provide information on legislative bills that our members need to contact their legislators immediately. It can be used to remind those to vote or cancel a meeting because of weather. This is an important device for our local to use to provide information to our members in a short time. Please provide your stewards with your cell number to receive such texts.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN LOS ANGELES

The International Convention will be held from August 9-14. Nominations and elections will be held on June 4, 2020 at 6:30 in Freeport, Illinois. Place where meeting will be held will be determined at a later date. At the January 9, 2020 union meeting it was voted by the membership to send 5 delegates, 5 alternates and 5 guests to the convention. Only members in good standing can be elected to attend the international convention.

WIN FOR DCFS BEFORE THIRD LEVEL GRIEVANCE HEARING

After 25 years of the Union President receiving pre-disciplinary hearing notices and documentation, management made a unilateral change to no longer send the documentation to the Union President sending the information to stewards who may or may not have been chosen by the member to represent them. A grievance was filed directly to 3rd level by Kathy Lane. Lane gathered documentation including emails from nearly 20 years ago to show past practice of the Union President receiving pre-disciplinary documentation for employees in Local 448. Before the third level hearing was to occur, management conceded and signed a grievance resolution that the Union President will receive investigatory, pre-disciplinary notices and pre-disciplinary documentation. Further, the Union President will receive all information relating to union matters.

RECIPES OF THE MONTH

Hershey's Puddle Cookies

2 cups flour	1/3 cup cocoa powder
3/4 teaspoon baking powder	pinch salt
1 tablespoon heavy cream	1/2 cup softened butter
1/2 cup brown sugar	1/2 cup sugar
2 eggs	1 teaspoon of mint or vanilla extract
Hershey kisses	

Line baking sheet with parchment paper. In a small mixing bowl, combine butter, brown sugar and sugar and mix well. Add extract and eggs.

Mix in flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt and mix into butter mixture with a tablespoon of cream.

Use a tablespoon to form dough into small balls, roll into a small bowl of powdered sugar and place onto lined baking sheet.

Bake 10-12 minutes and transfer to a cooling rack. Unwrap Hershey's kisses and place on onto the center of each cookie immediately after they come out of the oven. When they're soft pull the tip of the Hershey's kiss and discard.