



WASHINGTON State Employee

Pay raise? or Pay cut?

Members use Lobby Days to tell the compelling story: Competitive pay needed to keep good workers. We must get our contracts funded by the Legislature -- or no raises. If that happens, it's the same as another pay cut as the pay gap grows.

Special section on pages 2-6.



Sign up for a 2017 Lobby Day:
<http://wfse.org/lobby-days/>

They need to hear us

Local 304 member urges end to postage 'poll tax'

Current mail ballot postage requirement hinders voting; convention delegates advocated for change

Seattle Local 304 member **Brooks Salazar** took our efforts to protect voting rights from the convention floor to the state Capitol Jan. 11.

Delegates to the Federation's last state convention adopted a measure (R. 17) calling on the state to provide postage-paid return envelopes now that state elections are by mail-in ballot only. Unless you can find a drop box.

Salazar spoke on behalf of all our members by saying that the requirement that voters pay for postage is a barrier to voting.

Salazar testified before the Senate State Government Committee on Senate Bill



Brooks Salazar

5019. It calls on counties to include prepaid postage on return envelopes for primary

and general elections. The state would reimburse counties for the cost.

The current voter-paid postage requirement "essentially is a poll tax," said Sen. Kirk Pearson of the 39th Dist. Pearson sits on the committee.

Salazar agreed.

"Voting is the most important duty that every American and Washingtonian should take part in..." Salazar said.

"We need to remove any and all barriers that hinder our citizens from voting."

Sen. Bob Hasegawa of the 11th Dist. sponsored the bill. He said he may offer an amendment to apply the bill

to all elections.

SB 5019 would head off challenges if the current postage requirement were construed as a poll tax. The 24th Amendment to the US Constitution in 1964 prohibited poll taxes in federal elections. In 1966, the US Supreme Court outlawed poll taxes in state elections in the Harper v Virginia Board of Elections case.

RELATED INSIDE

- Preserving voting rights spotlighted at this year's Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebrations. See 8.
- Make a difference during Legislative Session 2017. See 2-6.

PAY RAISE -- OR PAY CUT?



Julian Romans, 3, son of Local 948 member **Monique Romans**, "points" to the top of the state Capitol where dozens of WFSE/AFSCME members on MLK Day Lobby Day Jan. 16 (like every Lobby Day) took their stories directly to legislators -- and the media.

Members say: Lobby Days are easy way to help fund our contracts



It's about keeping good workers.

"They need to start retaining good qualified individuals. **When you're losing your experienced workers, you're losing more than just a worker.** Everything they know goes with them."

Why coming to Lobby Days is important:

"If anybody wants to stay at least within range of the cost of living, they're going to have to fight for the raises. Everybody's going to have to fight."

-- **Kevin Hamel**, Local 341 (left) with other Fircrest School colleagues/member lobbyists **Norma Castro** and **Ada Rimbakusumo**.

Funding the contracts is about solving problems.

"We can't put a Band-Aid on some of these situations.

"It's really important for us to stand up for what we believe in and to show that we deserve the respect as state employees for the work that we do and the services that we provide.

"If I was doing this job for the money, I wouldn't be doing this job right now."

-- **Marci Douglas-Bumgarner**, Local 1060, Mount Vernon



Our voice matters.

"In numbers, we are more powerful. **We are family.**" **Why funding our contracts is important:**

"I'm a social worker. This 2% raise (6% total over two years) is not a lot, but it makes a big difference. Without it we may be looking for jobs in other fields. It's really hard to stay when you're struggling to make ends meet."

-- **Monique Romans**, Local 948, Everett



Lobby Days are easy and effective.

"This is my third year doing this. It is very easy to do this. You sign up online

"It's an easy process and probably the best way we have access to our representatives and senators."

-- **Eddie Holbrook**, Local 1253, Tri-Cities



It's about protecting vulnerable people we serve.

"Funding our contracts helps with recruitment and retention. Most social workers now have a master's degree -- and they're leaving (soon) because they're getting better paying jobs out in the private sector with half the worries that come with being a social worker.

Yet, many stay.

"For some reason, I think I can make the system work."

-- **Tracy Wilson**, Local 1060, Bellingham



Our job didn't end when we ratified our contracts.

"The contract us money. They (management) have agreed to it, but it actually has to be in the budget to actually get it."

It's about showing up.

"You have to show up. Showing up is huge. Show up, say your peace, tell them why it's important to you, why this raise will impact your life."

-- **Cindy English**, Local 53, Tacoma

Public Service Matters.

"Just to give the workers a decent level of pay would help in retaining workers....
"Without the quality workers, we can't provide quality services to the state."

-- **John Randolph**, Local 948, Everett



WASHINGTON State Employee

Washington State Employee (USPS 981-200) is published monthly, except February and July, for \$5.08 per year by the Washington Federation of State Employees/AFSCME Council 28 • AFL-CIO, 1212 Jefferson St. S.E. Suite 300, Olympia, WA 98501. Affiliated with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

Periodicals postage paid at Olympia, WA and at additional offices. Circulation: 42,000.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Washington State Employee, 1212 Jefferson St SE Suite 300 Olympia WA 98501-7501

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PAY RAISE -- OR PAY CUT?

Funding our contracts: It's about catching up

Analysis: The consequences of our state's low pay

By its own admission, the biggest employer in Washington state pays workers less than what they'd earn at 99 percent of its competitor companies—99 percent! Justifiably concerned about keeping and attracting quality employees, the CEO (our governor) agreed to 6 percent cost-of-living raises spread over the next two years.

The idea is, after years of asking employees to take pay cuts or forego raises during an economic downturn, it's time to start catching up so they can remain competitive.

But this is a publicly owned company, and some members of its Board of Directors (the Legislature) don't seem to like the idea.

The economy may have improved, but some suggest that they have other more important priorities than raises.

That's basically the situation with the State of Washington, its more than 110,000 employees (FTEs), Gov. Jay Inslee and the state Legislature.

And ironically, it's the legislators who suggest government "should be run more like a business" who appear most reluctant to pay their employees market wages.

At hearings in the first week of the 2017 legislative session, state employees urged lawmakers not to ignore their responsibilities to

the people who make state government work.

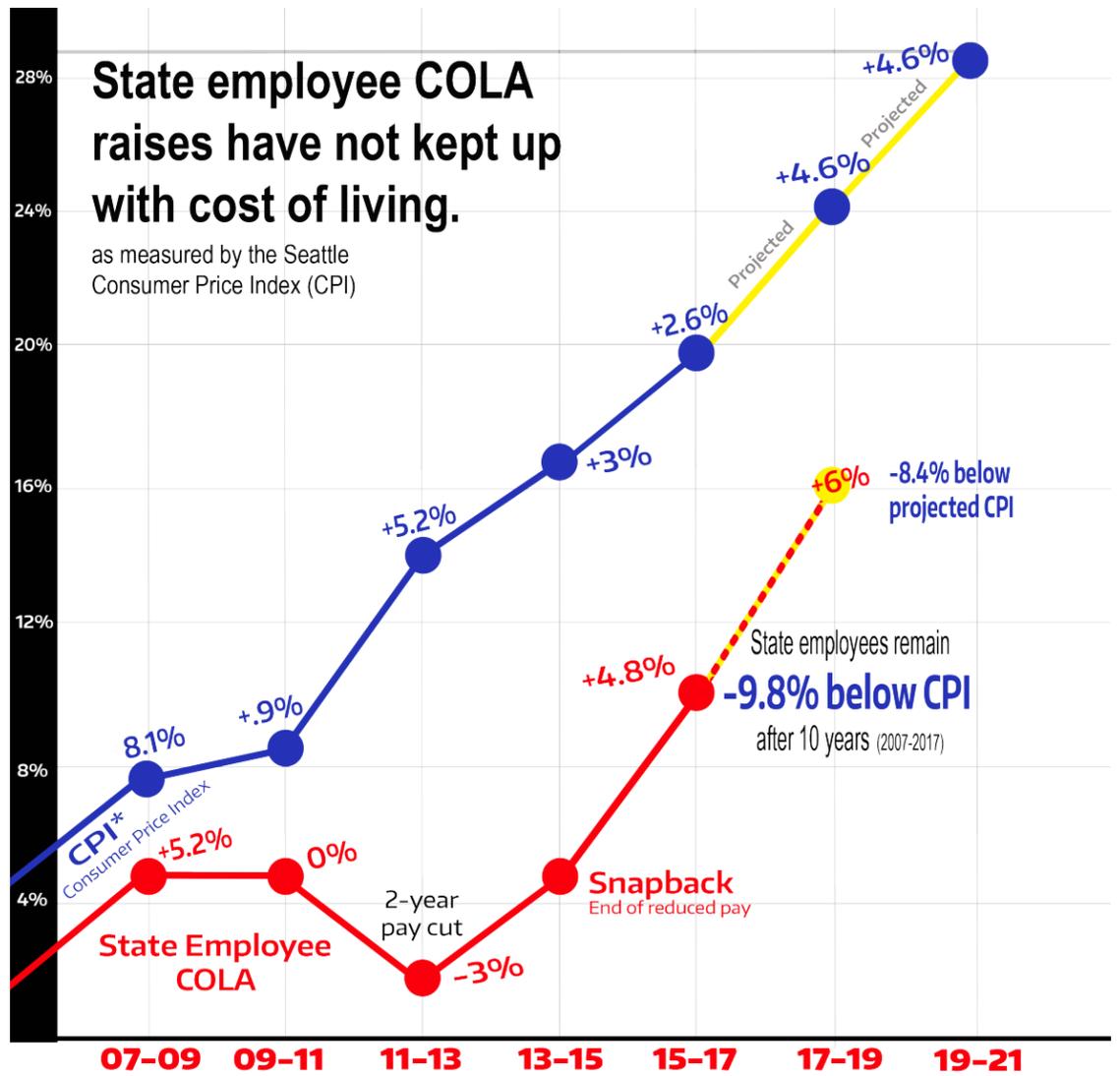
"We hope you understand that a consequence of ignoring the rising price of doing business in state government (is) we are facing recruitment and retention problems at unprecedented levels in many vital areas of state service," Brooks Salazar, an 8-year employee at the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals in Seattle, told the Senate Ways and Means Committee. Salazar is a member of Seattle Local 304.

The state's own salary survey found that 99 percent of state job classifications are below market rates. Some 66 percent of state jobs are more than 25 percent behind, and 23 percent are more than 50 percent behind market rates.

"Never before in the state's history has our salary schedule been so out of whack compared to the actual market," said WFSE/AFSCME's Dennis Eagle at a House Appropriations Committee hearing. Eagle is the union's director of legislative and political action.

Gov. Jay Inslee's budget proposal funds the collective bargaining agreements negotiated last fall.

That means modest, but important cost-of-living increases for the people who keep our communities safe, care for the elderly and disabled, protect our children, maintain our roads and transportation system, serve students at state universities and colleges, and provide other



PERS2 contribution increases 2007-2017 UP 5.58%
2007 (+1.25%); 2008 (+.65%); 2009 (+1.3%); 2010 (-1.55%); 2011 (+.69%); 2012 (+.05%); 2013 (+.28%); 2015 (+1.2%); 2017 (+1.26% approved); 2019(+.81 expected).

HEALTH CARE costs expected to rise
8.4% in CY2018; 7.4% in CY2019. HCA, PFPM 3.7 15-17 Bien

*Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton CPI-U and Forecast of US CPI-U

2007-2017 **State employee purchasing power decreased by more than 10%** OFM to SWM 11/14/16

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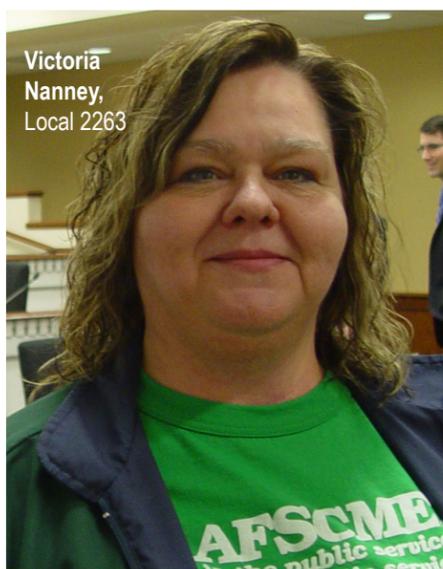
essential services.

This is important because we need to retain experienced state employees and recruit quality new ones if we want

these critical services to be efficient and effective.

"We can't retain people because we don't pay enough," Steve Segall, a

DSHS member of Local 443 in Olympia, testified at the Senate hearing. (WSLC *The Stand* and WFSE/AFSCME Hotline contributed to this report)



Local 2263 members spring into action to save Naselle Youth Camp

One of the shocking and disappointing parts of the governor's otherwise commendable budget plan released in December was the proposed closure of the Naselle Youth Camp in Pacific County.

Naselle member Victoria Nanney voiced the concerns of the Local 2263 members. She urged the House budget writers to reject the closure.

"Taking away Naselle Youth Camp will only place more harm on our ability to provide meaningful

treatment to the kids we serve and do great harm to the small community that has been home to the employees of NYC for more than 50 years," Nanney said. "Neither our juvenile justice system nor our community will benefit from this closure."

The governor would move the 76 youthful offenders to Echo Glen Children's Center in Snoqualmie and Green Hill School in Chehalis.

Nanney said Juvenile

Rehabilitation institutions have gone through drastic negative consequences after the closure of Maple Lane School in 2011.

"Incidents of violence have been spiking at unprecedented levels, and staff turnover is unbelievably high in all of our facilities," Nanney said.

Meanwhile, Local 2263 members have wasted no time.

Right before Christmas, they began emailing and calling their three 19th District legislators to stop the closure and fund keeping it open when the Senate and House issue their budget plans starting in late February or early March.

USE YOUR VOICE TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS

Listed here are the names of the senator and two representatives from each of this state's 49 legislative districts for the 105-day 2017 regular session of the Legislature that started Jan. 9.

• Democrats control the House, 50-48.

• The Senate has 24 Republicans and 25 Democrats. However, one Democrat, Sen. Tim Sheldon, caucuses with the 24 Republicans in the "Majority Coalition Caucus" giving the Republicans a one-vote majority and control of the Senate.

Use this directory to call or e-mail your legislators directly.

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Cyrus Habib
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MORE CONTACT INFORMATION:

Legislative Message Hotline:
1-800-562-6000

By mail:

• Senate: P.O. Box 404 (insert LD#)
Olympia, WA 98504-04 (insert LD#)

• House: P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Governor's Office:
(360) 902-4111 (For relay operators
for the deaf or hearing impaired,
please dial 7-1-1)

E-mail form: www.governor.wa.gov/contact/default.asp

RPEC: Medicare attack targets current workers

The second item on U.S. Speaker of the House Paul Ryan's agenda, after repealing the Affordable Care Act, is to "overhaul Medicare."

He has been attempting to quiet the current Medicare beneficiaries, by promising that they would not be impacted immediately. Instead he plans on targeting those not yet eligible, with disastrous consequences.

While Medicare has provided multiple generations of seniors with protection from financial ruin due to the unavoidable increases in health-care costs as they age, the costs of the program have been high especially as the federal government has been paying out massive sums to private insurance companies.

The overall goal is no longer to support this successful program, which has proven itself over the past 50 years to be cornerstone for retirement security. Instead, it is to push future Medicare beneficiaries into the private market.

Ryan's plan includes eliminating Medicare's guaranteed health benefits in favor of a system of vouchers, or as he refers to them "premium supports" as outlined in his "A Better Way," a document that promises cuts to Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.



RPEC CORNER

Online: rpecwa.org

The plan would replace Medicare with vouchers or coupons for future Medicare beneficiaries to use to buy insurance on the private market and raise the eligibility age from 65 to 67.

The amount of the voucher would depend on the region where the beneficiary lives.

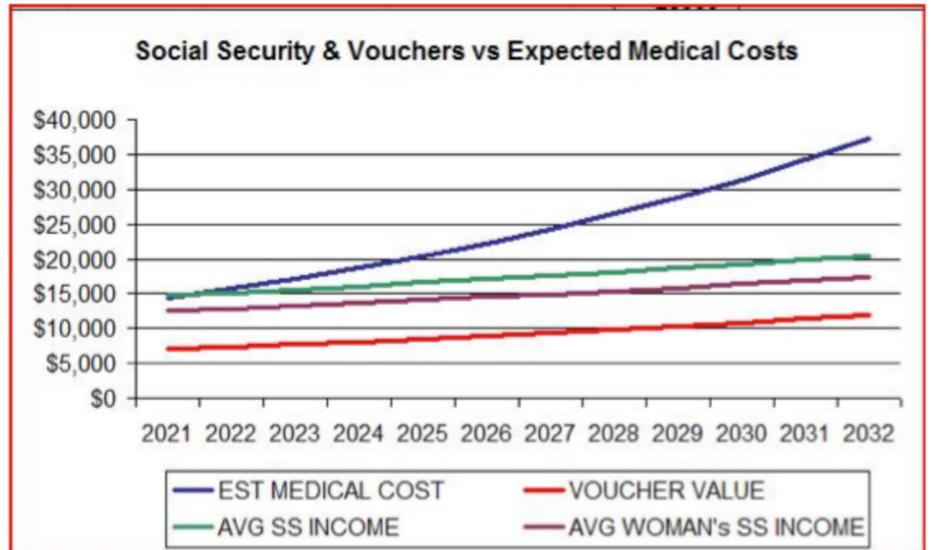
Beneficiaries who choose a more expensive plan would generally pay higher premiums, while those who choose plans costing less than the vouchers are worth, would receive rebates or extra benefits.

The traditional fee-for-service Medicare program would compete directly with plans offered by private insurers.

This would seriously undermine the retirement security of both current and future retirees.

Out-of-pocket costs in the form of deductibles and co-pays would skyrocket.

Vouchers will leave seniors with pay higher out-of-pocket costs than they would have paid under tradi-



tional Medicare, and Medicare costs would eventually be unsustainable, as most so-called "premium support" plans tie the value of the coupon to an index that has in the past grown much more slowly than the cost of health care.

Why this matters to current WFSE/AFSCME-represented state employees

Public sector-workers and retirees need to continue to put pressure on

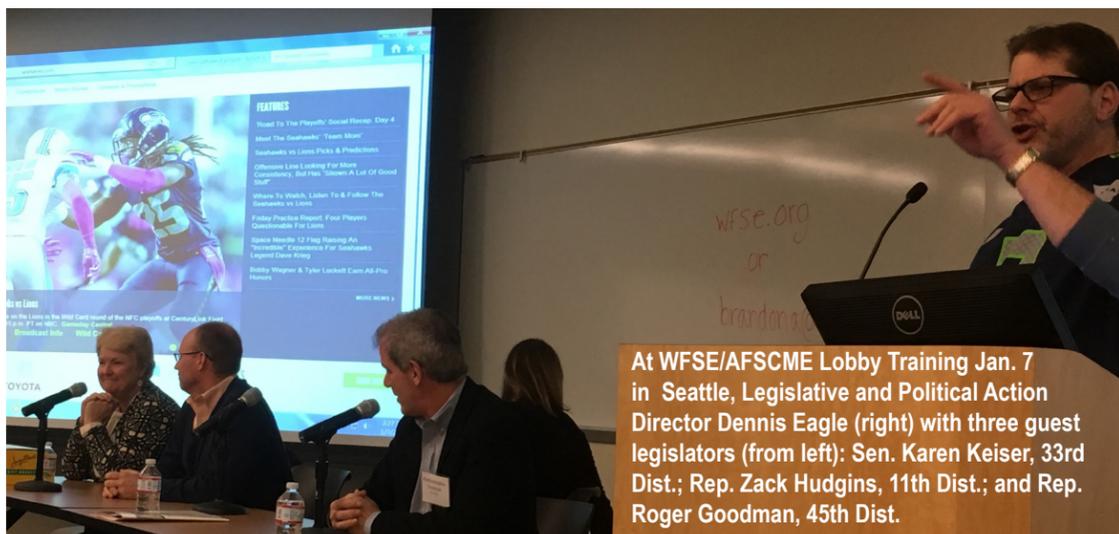
their members of Congress to not enact these harmful changes.

Leaders from all 10 congressional districts are scheduling meetings with their representatives around the upcoming February recess and they need to hear from us.

The RPEC Council Office will be providing regular updates on the status the effort to undermine Medicare.

For more information please visit our website rpecwa.org or our Facebook page facebook.com/rpecwa.

More scenes from the front lines as 2017 legislative session starts -- and WFSE/AFSCME members tell lawmakers why funding the contracts matters



At WFSE/AFSCME Lobby Training Jan. 7 in Seattle, Legislative and Political Action Director Dennis Eagle (right) with three guest legislators (from left): Sen. Karen Keiser, 33rd Dist.; Rep. Zack Hudgins, 11th Dist.; and Rep. Roger Goodman, 45th Dist.



MLK Lobby Day, Jan. 16, Olympia.



Lobby Training, Jan. 7, Seattle.



MLK Lobby Day, Jan. 16, Olympia.



MLK Lobby Day, Jan. 16, Olympia.



Bing Bristol, Local 443, Olympia, testifies in Senate for funding our contracts

SAFETY CORNER

[Huffington Post](#), there are 6 reasons why you should invest in Health and Safety Training:

- Every workplace has an element of risk.
- It increases staff productivity.
- You would be complying with the law.
- You will be avoiding a potential compensation claim or suit.
- You would be enhancing your image positively.
- You will be saving costs.

While the departments you work in have their own unique health and safety training offerings, take note of the classes being offered by the Department of Enterprise Services (DES).

For more information, go to their website at www.des.wa.gov/training



Available for your workgroup by request

- Active Threat Response Training (2 hours)

Scheduled classroom training

- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) (3 Days)
- First Aid Basic (1 Day)
- First Aid Plus (1/2 Day)
- Managing Job Stress (1 Day)
- Violence in the Workplace (1 Day)



Safety Corner is a project of the WFSE/AFSCME Health and Safety Committee.

Student testimonials

"No matter how old you are, you're never too old to return to school...because it's never too late."

Being able to receive a degree is what makes it exciting to me - it's the outcome."

—Alforniece Chambliss, Eligibility Specialist – Cuyahoga County Department of Health and Human Services



The AFSCME Free College Benefit

<http://freecollege.afscme.org/>

MEMBERS ONLY
BENEFITS
WFSE/AFSCME BENEFITS

SHARED LEAVE REQUESTS

Bobby Dean, a maintenance custodian with Eastern Washington University in Cheney and a member of Local 931, has been approved for shared leave. He is requesting shared leave to cover the time he will be out of office for knee replacement and recovery. Contact: Viralyn Conrath at (509) 359-4300 or your human resource office.

Jacqueline Walker, a WorkFirst specialist 4 with the Employment Security Department in Spokane and a member of Local 1221, has been approved for shared leave through Feb. 6, 2017 for a serious health condition. Contact: Kathleen Young at (360) 902-9538, or your human resource office.

Jennifer Berube, a custodian 1 at Fircrest School in Shoreline and a member of Local 341, is in need of shared leave to cover Feb. 1 to May 31. She is recovering from injuries suffered in a fall that resulted in a broken ankle and leg. She has exhausted all leave. Contact: your human resource office.

Jina Wilson, a financial services specialist 3 with DSHS in Tumwater and a member of Local 443, has been approved for shared leave. Contact: your human resource office.

Mari Wyatt, an office assistant lead with the Department of Corrections in Seattle and a member of Local 308, is in need of shared leave to cover the time she will miss while recovering from surgery. Mari expects to be out until the first of June. Contact: Jenny Tan (206) 516-7739 or your own human resources office.

Deborah Brookshire, a management analyst 4 with the Employment Security Department in Olympia and a member of Local 443, has been approved for shared leave. Contact: Kathleen Young, (360) 902-9538, or your human resource office.

Nicole Miles, a WorkFirst program specialist with DSHS in Puyallup and a member of Local 53, has been approved for shared leave. Contact: your human resource office.

Angela Briggs, a financial services specialist 3 with DSHS in Seattle and a member of Local 843, is in need of shared leave. Contact: your human resource office.

Crystal Wagner, a social service specialist 3 with DSHS in Bellingham and a member of Local 1060, is in need of shared leave to deal with a medical issue. Contact:

Wendy Jones Pitsch, (360) 756-5772, or your human resource office.

Terri Madison, an industrial insurance underwriter 4 with the Department of Labor and Industries in Tumwater and a member of Local 443, has been approved for shared leave. She is requesting shared leave to cover the time she will be out of office for recovery from surgery and post-surgical treatments. Contact: Cattlena Nguyen, (360) 902-5679 or your human resource office.

Pierre Humphrey II, a social service specialist 3 with DSHS in Seattle and a member of Local 843, has been approved for shared leave for up to four months to care for his seriously ill father, Pierre Humphrey Sr., a former custodian and Local 1488 member at the University of Washington in Seattle. Contact: your human resource office.

Debbie Wolfe, a financial services specialist 3 with DSHS in Tacoma and a member of Local 53, is in need of shared leave. Contact: your human resource office.

Judith McMahon, a WorkFirst program specialist with DSHS in Bremerton and a member of Local 1181, has been approved for shared leave. Contact: your human resource office.

To place approved shared leave requests: tim@wfse.org, or Tavie Smith at 1-800-562-6002, or e-mail them at tim@wfse.org or tavies@wfse.org.

• Donations of unused annual leave, sick leave or all or part of personal holidays can be made.

• In all cases, agencies or institutions must approve requests to donate and receive shared leave.

IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM: Kathryn Lowell, a retired and longtime member and activist of Tri-Cities Local 1253 when she worked for DSHS there, died Dec. 17 with her family by her side in El-lensburg.

She was 73.
She retired in April 2009.



Kathryn Lowell

Services were held Dec. 28, in Bancroft, Idaho.

Those who knew her remember her for her patience, never aspiring to be a lead or supervisor but who helped many colleagues along the way to success and promotion.

"She mentored many financial services specialists and was a longtime and respected shop steward," said colleague and Local 1253 member Scott Mueggler.

"Kathryn was thought of very highly by her clients for her patience, understanding and efforts in helping those in need.

"A fine lady and a role model." According to her official obituary:

"She was a devoted wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, grandmother and great-grandmother.

"She loved many, and she was loved by many.

"Her home was always open to anyone in need.

"Kathryn loved to sew, play the piano, and she was an active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints."

Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2017



WFSE/AFSCME members join celebration of Dr. King's economic-justice legacy

(WFSE staff, Locals 843, 304 and 1488 and Washington News Service contributed to this report)

Scores of members from several WFSE/AFSCME locals celebrated the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Jan. 16 by joining the 10,000-strong MLK Day March in Seattle.

Organized and funded in large part by WFSE/AFSCME members, the march went from Garfield High School to downtown Seattle, ending at the Federal Building.

A hero of the civil-rights movement, King is also remembered for his work on the cause of economic justice. His commitment to economic rights was no less important.

Dr. King has a special place in the hearts of AFSCME members in this state and across the country.

He was assassinated in April 1968 in Memphis where he'd gone to support striking sanitation workers as they struggled with the resistant city leaders for fair treatment.

They found a home with AFSCME and an ally in Dr. King. After King's death, the city agreed to the first contract.

His presence at labor marches often is overshadowed by his role in marches in Selma and Washington D.C.

But, Kevin Allen, a member of King County Human Services Local 843 who works at DSHS, said that unions gave African-Americans some of their first opportunities as free laborers in this country.

King understood this and the power of organized labor and collective action.



Kevin Allen, Local 843, prepares for the MLK Day event.



"Dr. King recognized that economic rights and workers' rights were connected," Allen



WFSE/AFSCME members with U.S. Rep. Pramila Jayapal, 7th Congressional District (second from left).

said. "They were all part of the rights of humans to live in dignity, to be able to have a living wage."

King frequently was involved with AFSCME strikes and rallies, including the fateful events of April 1968.

The 35th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration in Seattle began when members of the community wanted to change the name of Empire Way to Martin Luther King Jr. Way. They succeeded and, eventually, King County was named in his honor as well.

Now the annual march and rally features speeches and workshops on everything from bullying to immigrant rights to human trafficking.

Allen said it's one of the biggest and longest-running MLK Day marches in the country.

"We want to celebrate the life of Dr. King and also expound on and remind people of the values of what he lived for and ultimately died for," he said.

Allen also noted the importance of the rally in highlighting the collective action King espoused.

He said he reminds young people that if they want to change the world, they can't do it alone.

"If there's something that you feel is unjust or unfair and you want to make change, you have to get people to come together," Allen said.

Photos from: Kevin Allen, Anne-Marie Caravanaugh, Michael Abate, Sarah Bright, Tim Welch