

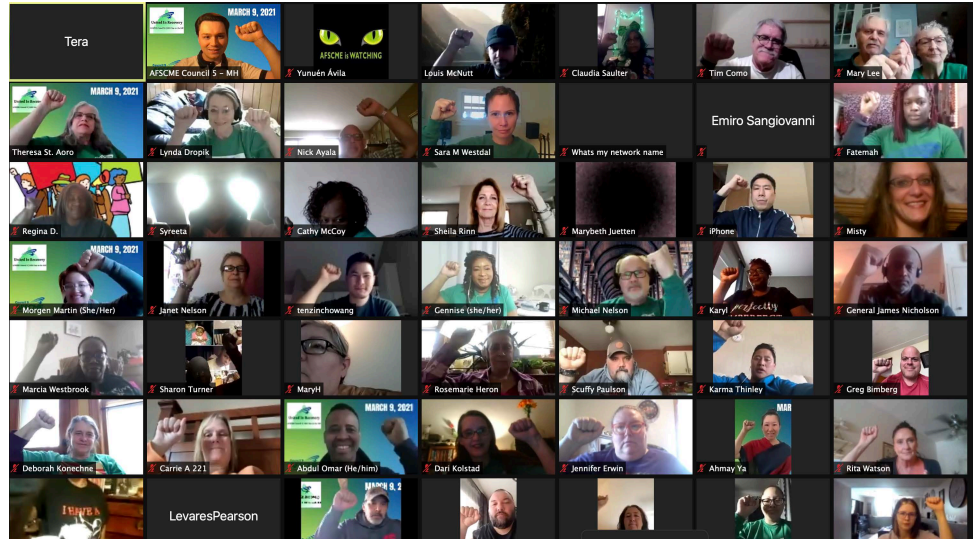
## AFSCME Council 5 Holds Successful First Ever Virtual Day on the Hill

On March 9, 2021 hundreds of AFSCME Council 5 members joined together in solidarity to fight for our shared values and legislative priorities. In our first ever virtual Day on the Hill, AFSCME Council 5 members met with more legislators than ever before (over 152!) and had very important conversations with their own legislators and elected officials from their regional area and beyond.

Executive Director Julie Bleyhl said, "On behalf of our union, we are grateful for the important work of the Day on the Hill Planning Committee and Council 5 staff for organizing and successfully launching such an incredible Day on the Hill and all of our members for meeting with over 150 elected officials and put a face to your work and continue our fight for the priorities that bring us all together as a union family: Safe staffing in every workplace, fighting against privatization and outsourcing, paid family and medical leave for all, extending unemployment insurance to more workers, investing in our state agencies, local governments, K-12 schools, universities and so much more."

She continued, "This unified work to advocate for our values and priorities is what makes AFSCME Council 5 a force to be reckoned with and a critical partner in the fight for economic, racial and social justice.

Stay tuned for additional legislative updates and calls to action as we enter into the second half of the legislative session. We need to fight for a new tax code that raises taxes on the wealthy so we can ensure more investments can be made in public services and workers who deliver them. We are #UnitedInRecovery - and we will rebuild our new future by doing it together on behalf of every member of AFSCME Council 5.



Hundreds of AFSCME Council 5 Members Joined Together for Our 2021 Day on the Hill!

### Chris Jensen Nursing Home Workers Overwhelmingly Ratify TA

Our members at one of the largest nursing homes in the Duluth area voted overwhelmingly to ratify their 2nd year of their contractually obligated wage re-opener. The bargaining team turned down the employer's initial offer of a 0.5% wage increase, but after considerable communication and organizing within the local's direct care, dietary, maintenance, and activities departments, the local secured a negotiated agreement of a 2% across the board increase for all workers.

Congratulations, siblings!

### AFSCME Council 5 Fights to Protect Collective Bargaining Rights

Two Republican lawmakers (Rep. Marion O'Neill and Sen. Mark Koran) filed a lawsuit in court to invalidate the contracts of nearly 18,000 of our state executive branch members. AFSCME Council 5 has formally joined with Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) to protect our right to

collectively bargain and our contracts that were negotiated in good faith and ratified by the Legislature. This lawsuit is a blatant attack on our rights as workers. We are taking action.

Executive Director Julie Bleyhl said, "By AFSCME Council 5 joining together with MMB in protecting the contracts that feed workers and their families, keep a roof over their head, and allow workers to pay for their prescriptions, we are showing that the AFSCME Green Machine mobilizes in full force when our rights are under attack. An injury to one is an injury to all and we will always fight to protect our right to collectively bargain and for a ratification process that treats workers with dignity and respect.

### Call Your Legislator: Tell Them to Support Governor Walz's Tax Plan

Governor Walz has proposed a tax plan that would raise taxes on individuals making more than \$500,000 per year or more than \$1 million as a married couple. We need the wealthy to pay their fair share for the public services that keep our state working. Tell them to support HF 991/SF 961.

## AFSCME Council 5 Members Secure Economic Relief for Workers

Our Council has waged a campaign to #FundTheFrontLines for months as Congress was debating a COVID-19 relief package that would provide critical funding to state and local governments, direct economic relief to Americans, and a COVID-19 response plan that will aid in increasing vaccine creation and distribution. After thousands of members signed petitions, wrote and called their Members of Congress, sharing their stories, arranging letters to Congress from state and local elected officials, and more, we won! President Joe Biden signed the American Rescue Plan on March 12, 2021. Thank you for your continued advocacy! Stay alert for additional calls to action.

## St. Luke's Home Care Members Ratify TA

Members of Local 3558 have ratified a three-year tentative agreement that includes an increase to PTO of 2 to 8 day annual accrued increases depending on years of service and an increase to their PTO bank with cash-out options. Starting wages over \$15.00 per hour for all workers and a 2-9% wage increase for workers, depending on year of service in year one, 1% increase in year two and 1% in year three.

Congratulations, siblings!



## AFSCME Members Receive COVID-19 Vaccine

Many of our AFSCME siblings continue to receive their COVID-19 vaccine! When you are offered a vaccine, please schedule your appointment to receive it. With all Minnesotans being vaccinated, we will be able to build our new future and our new normal. More than 1.45 million front line workers and high-risk Minnesotans have now received their first dose of the vaccine and more than 836,047 have completed their vaccine series. Health officials continue to monitor new strains of the COVID-19 virus. Stay vigilant, siblings.

## AFSCME Council 5 Denounces racism and hate crimes against Asian-American community

Our Asian-American members and neighbors in Minnesota and across the country have experienced heightened hate crimes and harassment. We vehemently denounce racism, division, hate and violence.

Our thoughts go out to the family members and the community members of those lost in the tragic racially-motivated shooting in Atlanta, Georgia on March 16.

To our Asian-American members and all of those who have experienced hate, racism, and discrimination: We stand with you and your union family has your back as we build a more inclusive and diverse world that will uplift all of our communities and bring us together.

Our union is built on the power and strength that comes from our diverse membership.



We honor all public employees' contributions to our state!

## Protecting Pensions Campaign

Politicians often politicize our pensions by trying to divert and micromanage our pension funds or take away our defined-benefit pension and move to a 401(k) plan. AFSCME Council 5's position is clear: Do not touch our pensions and we will not tolerate any micromanagement of our pension funds.

If you are interested in participating in this campaign, please email Council 5 Public Affairs and Political Action Director Max Hall at [Max.Hall@afscmemn.org](mailto:Max.Hall@afscmemn.org), who will work with you to record a short video and put a face to our pensions.

## Resources for Members

Stay up-to-date on all the latest news by following @afscmemn5 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Get guidance and resources at [afscmemn.org](http://afscmemn.org).

Look for action alerts via email and texts so you know when to take action to protect working families. We are all in this together, siblings.

Be well and stay safe.