



**DELAWARE PUBLIC
EMPLOYEES COUNCIL 81**
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY
AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES (AFSCME) AFL-CIO

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Governor Signs Collective Bargaining Bill for State Employees

AFSCME celebrates new law providing Delaware State Employees collective bargaining rights

Wilmington, DE – Delaware State employees celebrated the signing by Governor Ruth Ann Minner of legislation giving them the right to collectively bargain for fair wages and benefits.

“This is a huge victory for state employees”, said Michael Begatto, Executive Director of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Council 81.

“This landmark legislation has been over fifteen years in the making. Now state employees have the same collective bargaining rights as municipal, county and private employees.”

“State employees across Delaware now have the right to join with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 81 and secure a fair and binding contract which guarantees participation in decision-making, fair grievance procedures, workplace safety, and fair and equitable wages,” concluded Begatto.

“This bill puts power in the hands of workers to improve our jobs, our lives, and the important public services we provide. We will take that responsibility seriously. Our thanks to Governor Minner and our legislators for answering our call for action and passing this bill, said Kathy Wooten a Social Services Specialist in Sussex County and a member of AFSCME Local 2031.

“I want to thank my fellow AFSCME members who worked so hard to ensure that we have right to work together for a better quality of life,” stated Deidre Ottley, a Tax Auditor in Wilmington and President of AFSCME Local 1385.

The bill, sponsored by Senator Robert I. Marshall and House Member William A. Oberle, passed the Senate by a majority of 14-6 and the House by a margin of 26-10. AFSCME in a coalition of other labor organizations worked for passage.

AFSCME International President Gerald W. McEntee praised the effort saying, “The right to bargain collectively is a fundamental workplace right, and Delaware is taking the right stand by recognizing that right, and making it the law.”

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AFSCME's 1.4 million members provide the vital services that make America happen. With members in hundreds of different occupations from nurses to correction officers, child care providers to highway workers, AFSCME advocates for fairness in the workplace, excellence in public services, and prosperity and opportunity for all working families.