



# AFSCME West Virginia Organizer

American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

Volume 7 Issue 3  
Winter 2007- 08

## What about that Highways pay grievance from the panhandle?

This question is asked by a DOH member or several every day. Here is a review and the latest information. Let's review the history of this grievance. In July 2005, AFSCME uncovered the action by the Division of Personnel at the DOH's request to give most DOH employees in three counties a significant raise and much higher starting salary. The grievance drug out so long that in late 2006, AFSCME went to Circuit Court and filed a writ of Mandamus just to force the Grievance Board to set a Level 4 hearing date. This grievance was heard on May 25, 2007 and has been awaiting a decision from the ALJ assigned (Janis Reynolds) for over six (6) months now. Unbelievable rumors have been started by some mid-level DOH management, other organizations and employees primarily. Hopefully this should clear up some of the rumors.



Dear Santa,  
All I want for Christmas is to have my Grievance answered!  
Signed,  
DOH employees

1. The grievance is still pending and has not been dropped or settled. No one has ever approached AFSCME, nor been approached by anyone with authority from AFSCME about settling or dropping this grievance.
2. AFSCME representatives have been at all recent Grievance Board meetings asking about the grievances that are "mature" for a decision as they have classified this DOH grievance.
3. We have been told unofficially by the Board that the grievance decision will be written in January. Legislation is being discussed which would give ALJ's 60 days to write a decision.
4. As this goes to print, another State Grievance Board Meeting is scheduled at the Grievance Board offices and if any news is uncovered or discussed, it will be posted on our web site. If you have any questions or comment for the Grievance Board, their phone is 1-866-747-6743.

### Partial Legislative Agenda:

1. Real Pay Raises
2. Increase Longevity Pay
3. Poll Workers allowed
4. Seniority that counts
5. Stop Privatization
6. OSHA PE Funding
7. Meet & Consult expanded to all.

## AFSCME Public Employee Lobby Day for our 24th year at the Capitol

Last year our members heard from and talked with the House of Delegates Whip and Majority Leader as well as the Senate Finance Committee Chair among others. This year at our Lobby Day on President's Day holiday, we will again talk with the most influential Legislators about issues of great importance to all public employees.

Some Locals and members are planning car pools and caravans, using vans or hitchhiking if that is what it takes to get to the State Capital complex in Charleston. Mark your calendars now. Details will be mailed and posted as we get closer to the actual event. Make your plans!

Date: Monday, February 18, 2008

Place: State Capitol, Charleston

The initial gathering will begin at 9:30 AM where we will hear from our AFSCME lobbyists and elected officials from the House and Senate. After that we go throughout the Capitol to talk with your legislators and watch them vote in the respective Chambers.



# AFSCME West Virginia Organizer

## AFSCME WV Council 77 Constitutional Convention Update

*Some of the delegates to the Council 77 Convention who have pledged to become political volunteers as we move into critically important races nationally and in West Virginia in 2008*



On Saturday, October 27, 2007, WV Council 77 held its 2007 Constitutional Convention. This year's convention included a great line-up of guest speakers. After being called to order by President Ronnie Napier, the convention was kicked off with a rousing speech by AFSCME International Vice President, Glen Middleton. Glen inspired and encouraged the crowd by highlighting the accomplishments of AFSCME as a whole, and the great strides that AFSCME has made for worker's rights here in West Virginia. The crowd also heard from Kenny Perdue, West Virginia AFL-CIO President. Kenny thanked AFSCME for its contributions in helping all union workers gain rights throughout this state and the nation. He also reminded the crowd that if they stay strong and keep working hard, they will obtain collective bargaining rights. Jim Admire, AFSCME Area Field Services Director, gave an update on the status of organizing efforts throughout his region, which includes West Virginia. He took questions from the audience and reminded the crowd to contact the Council 77 office if they become aware of employees interested in AFSCME.

All of the speakers and Council 77 Executive Director Ed Hartman discussed the Meet & Consult Pilot Project that is under way in the Department of Highways. This is a significant step toward gaining collective bargaining rights for West Virginia Public Employees. The convention was fortunate to have some of the Meet & Consult elected committee members present. Healthy discussions took place about involvement in the West Virginia political process and the recent loss of 200,000 PEIA participants personal information.

In addition to hearing from guest speakers, convention business was also conducted. Several resolutions were read and agreed to by the delegates. The resolutions included a Resolution to Continue the Fight to Bring Collective Bargaining Rights To All Public Workers, a Resolution to Use Health and Safety To Build the Union, a Resolution to Strengthen AFSCME And Its Affiliates' Organizing Efforts, among several others.

The Council 77 Executive Board made a motion to the delegates stating that Council 77 would agree with the National Executive Board's endorsement for the 2008 United States Presidential Election. The motion was agreed to by the delegates in attendance without objection. Another unanimous motion was to endorse and support the re-election of President Gerald McEntee, Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy and Vice President Glen Middleton at next year's AFSCME International Convention.

The delegates and guests also watched two videos during the convention. The videos reminded them of the progress AFSCME has made in the past, and inspired them to continue the fight for better working conditions, collective bargaining rights, and fairer treatment by their employers.

The 2007 WV Council 77 Constitutional Convention was productive and encouraging. It is always a privilege to meet with our brothers and sisters and discuss the past, while planning for a better future for all Public Employees.

**Notes:**

All three DHHR Pay grievances have been appealed to Circuit Court. To read the Level 4 answers, go to our web site at: [www.afscmewv.org](http://www.afscmewv.org)

West Virginians for Affordable Health Care has an excellent web site where you can read what 'Consumer Reports' says about your prescription drugs and many other health care resources. Go to [www.wvahc.org](http://www.wvahc.org) and click on 'Rx Help Page' on the left side of the front page.

# Congratulations to First Ever elected Meet & Consult DOH Committee!



**Donna Palmer**  
Statewide Office Asst .  
AFSCME Local 3359



**Glenn O'Dell**  
Statewide Storekeepers  
AFSCME Local 3221



**Joe Vance**  
District 1 & 2 (Region 1)  
AFSCME Local 3243



**Wade Roy**  
District 5 & 8 (Region 4)  
AFSCME Local 3257



**Jim Phares**  
District 9 & 10 (Region 5)  
AFSCME Local 3224



**Delbert Bunner**  
District 3 & 5 (Region 2)



**Connie Johnson**  
District 4 & 6 (Region 3)

These committed DOH employees have made history by becoming the state's first ever "elected" **Meet and Consult Committee**. The year 2008 will be the trial project for Meet and Consult in DOH and other selected state agencies. Highways employees will have a rare opportunity to meet with the DOH Commissioner and discuss the issues that they care about and affect them in all 55 counties.

An initial meeting is scheduled for this month and regular meeting will be held in 2008. More details will be forwarded after the Meet & Consult Committee works out the ground rules.

Despite some negative reactions from folks that remember prior DOH programs over the years, the members of this committee generally believe this program can be beneficial to all Highway's employees and will eventually be expanded to all other state agencies.

## GAO Finds State and City Pension Systems Are Well Funded

The General Accounting Office has just released a study called "State and Local Government Retirement Benefits—Current Status of Benefit Structures, Protections & Fiscal Outlook for Funding Future Costs."

Download the report here: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d071156.pdf>

State and local government employees represent 12% of the nation's workforce. Nearly 7 million retirees or their fami-

lies receive post-employment benefits.

The GAO found that most state and local pension funds are well funded. The GAO calculates that ongoing contributions to pensions should increase to (on aggregate) 9.3% of payroll from the existing average of 9%.

For retiree health care, if funding continues to be on a "pay as you go" basis, the cost, as a percentage of aggregate pay-

roll, will rise from the current 2% of payroll to 5% of payroll in year 2050. The GAO estimates for retiree health care are hardly alarming. Governmental employers, on average, should have little difficulty absorbing a 3% (real) growth in payroll costs over the next 42 years.

The report also has an abundance of data about pension governance and the legal protections of health care benefits.

**AFSCME-**  
**a real union**  
**for real**  
**members.**

'Labor Donated'



# SEASONS GREETINGS

From Officers and Staff of AFSCME West  
Virginia Council 77, AFL-CIO

AFSCME WV Union Information is  
always available 24 / 7 at our web site:

[www.afscmewv.org](http://www.afscmewv.org)

- ~News, Newsletters and Updates
- ~Legislative Reports and Results
- ~Join AFSCME with online application
- ~Labor & State Links for all
- ~AFL-CIO News and Politics
- ~Events and Meetings
- ~Contact Information & e-mail
- ~Great Event and Membership Photos
- ~Soon to come - member profiles

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**WV Council 77 Officers:**

Ronnie 'Bear' Napier, President  
Pat Jack, Vice President  
Charla Wallace, Secretary-Treasurer  
Patricia Ramey, Recording Sec.  
Barbara Spradling, All Other Agencies  
Randy Spurlock, Cities & Counties  
Hiram Justice, DHHR  
Jeff Atkins, DOH  
Scott Cundiff, 1st District  
Bridget Davis, 2nd District  
Jim Prater, 3rd District  
Glenn O'Dell, Trustee  
Sandra Coleman, Trustee

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Carolyn , Administrative Assistant  
Matt Oliver, Representative / PR  
Steve Rutledge, Local Advocate  
Pat Ramey, Local Advocate

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