

RETIREE NOTES



The new AFSCME Chapter 31 Executive Board was sworn in at the biennial Retirees Convention in October.

AFSCME Retirees ready for fights ahead

THE BIENNIAL AFSCME Chapter 31 Retirees Convention was held in Springfield on October 18-19. Discussions ranged from current and future battles to how to be an effective advocate.

Members set the chapter's agenda for the next two years, vowing that AFSCME Retirees Chapter 31 will act relentlessly to meet the demands of protecting retirement security:

Work against the reelection of Bruce Rauner

BRUCE RAUNER HAS MADE IT clear that his top priority is to demolish the only movement that gives workers and retirees a strong unified voice—the labor movement. The labor movement is responsible for tirelessly protecting retiree pensions, retiree health insurance, and programs dedicated to grant seniors dignity and respect in their retirement years. AFSCME Chapter 31 will work with Council 31 to develop a massive volunteer force that will act to prevent Bruce Rauner from being reelected.

Protect pensions

PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PENSIONS in Illinois represent a key element of employee compensation for thousands of workers. Those who have worked hard and played by the rules should be able to retire and live out their years with dignity and security. AFSCME Chapter 31 will contin-

ue to oppose and educate members of pension threats.

Protect Social Security and Medicare

CHAPTER 31 REJECTS ALL efforts to balance the federal budget on the backs of seniors and people with disabilities by cutting benefits in Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid for either current or future beneficiaries. These programs provide dignity and security to senior citizens. Chapter 31 will work in coalition with all other concerned organizations to build the strongest possible bulwark against all those who seek to shred the retirement safety net that Social Security and Medicare provide.

New members voted into Hall of Fame

FIVE NEW MEMBERS WERE voted into the AFSCME Retiree Hall of Fame at this year's retiree convention. Hall of Fame nominations are reserved for members who have exhibited stellar advocacy and dedication to AFSCME and the labor movement. Congratulations to the new inductees.

ALMA WINGARD worked at the Chicago Public Library for 35 years and was a dedicated union member. Alma held various positions in her union until retirement in 2003. Upon retirement, she joined Sub-chapter 60 and was elected Chapter 31's

secretary-treasurer at the 2017 AFSCME Retirees Convention.

DON TODD was a longtime activist at the Lincoln Developmental Center where he helped to build a strong local union. He went on to work for AFSCME Council 31 to help organize new members. Upon leaving Council 31, he became president of Retiree Sub-chapter 86. Don is also a Chapter 31 executive board member.

JAY FERRARO started as a member of AFSCME Local 1058 in September 1974. He worked for the city of Rockford and served as the union steward for the Water Department. In 1976 he became president of Local 1058 and subsequently joined the staff of Council 31, where he was a staff representative for more than two decades. After retiring, he joined Retirees Sub-chapter 69 and in 2013 was elected president. He also serves on AFSCME Chapter 31's retiree executive board.

KIM JOHNSON retired in 2007. While working, she was a union activist in Locals 1866 and 416. Kim became a member of AFSCME Retirees in late 2007 and was AFSCME Sub-chapter 73 recording secretary. In 2009, she began organizing Sub-chapter 68, which was chartered in 2010. Soon after, Kim was elected president of Sub-chapter 68 and then elected to the Chapter's executive board in 2011.

LARRY BROWN was active in Local 1275 at Menard Correctional since 1984. He was elected

trustee, executive board member, and vice president as a working member. Larry was chief steward for many years before he retired in 2002. After joining the retirees, he became Sub-chapter 56 president, an executive board member and then president of Chapter 31 Retirees.

GOP tax plan dangerous for retirees

THE REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN—which takes its cues from President Trump's budget—will strip retirees of tax deductions while giving out massive tax breaks to corporations and the wealthy.

The plans would eliminate deductions for medical expenses,

which help older Americans with chronic conditions afford care. In fact, three-quarters of Americans who claim the medical expense deduction are 50 years or older. Older Americans who are saddled with large out-of-pocket medical expenses can currently report the figure as a deduction on their taxes, but if the tax plan passes, that option will no longer exist and fixed-income seniors will suffer dramatic losses.

Retirees will also be unable to deduct property taxes under the GOP tax plan, which eliminates deductions for state and local taxes. This tax break currently helps retirees afford to stay in their home longer. Without it, seniors will sustain a heavy financial blow.

Read more about the tax scam on page 13. 

AFSCME RETIREES

Fighting for Dignity and Security

You worked hard to earn a decent retirement—but the fight for retirement security isn't over. Pensions, Medicare, Social Security—they're all under attack by the wealthy and powerful.

Retirees Chapter 31 is helping to lead the battle to protect retirement security. Be part of that fight! Dues are just \$3 per month and will be deducted directly from your pension check.



JOIN US!
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