

## New Officials Sworn In

The 116<sup>th</sup> Congress was gaveled in last Thursday, giving Democrats control of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Governor Tim Walz and Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan, alongside several other AFSCME-endorsed Constitutional Officers, were sworn in on Monday, kicking off a week of inaugural events and celebrations.

The 2019 Minnesota legislative session begins Tuesday, January 8, and we couldn't be more excited! The new slate of State Representatives, which we successfully flipped to a Democratic majority, includes Local 2938 members Kelly Moller (District 42A) Zack Stephenson (District 36A). Dozens more AFSCME-endorsed candidates who are committed to fighting for working people across the state also begin their terms Tuesday.

Congratulations to all! We can't wait to see the great things we accomplish together for working Minnesotans this session.

## Locals Get in the Spirit of Giving

Part of our union's power lies in our commitment to serving the public. This holiday season, AFSCME Locals around the state lived our union values by taking part in a variety of community giving programs. It's just one more way we're walking our talk: helping our neighbors, lifting up working families and strengthening the communities where we work and live.



Local 3800's Stephanie Taylor and Steff Yorek serve up coffee, treats and fellowship while collecting toys for the U of M's Masonic Children's Hospital at a Union Coffee Break.

- Members of Local 3558 participated in multiple holiday giving projects. At the Duluth YWCA, members collected supplies for the Young Moms Program, a transitional housing program that helps young moms and their kids build secure lives. At the Head of the Lakes United Way, members planned and hosted the AFL-CIO Community Services' annual kid's holiday party, where union families decorated cookies, met Santa, and received holiday meal baskets and gifts.
- Local 3800, University of Minnesota Clerical Workers, held a toy drive for the U of M Masonic Children's Hospital. In addition to collecting toys in the weeks leading up to the holidays, local leaders held union coffee breaks at multiple campuses to collect toys and organize members. The local also hosted a holiday cookie and craft party for union kids.
- Local 552, Hennepin County Probation and Parole, donated \$1,000 to the John Servaty Toy Drive in Hennepin County.
- Local 404, Department of Human Services, participated in a campus-wide St. Peter Regional Treatment Center Toys for Tots drive, collecting hundreds of toys for kids in need. They teamed up with their coworkers and members of other unions to collect the toys, which were given to children in Nicollet, Le Sueur, and Blue Earth Counties.
- Local 1539, Department of Corrections at Rush City, collected \$725 for St. Jude's Children's Hospital.
- Local 638, Minnesota State University – Mankato, participated in a campus-wide "Unions United" food drive for the ECHO Food Shelf.

## Legislative Session Begins

The 2019 legislative session begins Tuesday, Jan. 8 with the mission to set the state's biennial budget. With a \$1.5 billion projected surplus, expectations are high. AFSCME Council 5 enters the session with a positive outlook.

The need for 327 Corrections Officers and increased staffing levels for state, county and higher education programs and services will require all hands on deck throughout the session.

Gov. Walz and Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan have outlined a One Minnesota road map, tapping Sen. Tony Lourey, a leading supporter of maintaining the provider tax, to serve as the new Department of Health Commissioner.

Gov. Walz has also advocated for a gas tax increase and comprehensive transportation funding, both of which we will continue to support.

Council 5 continues to work with our coalition partners on enhancing and expanding paid family leave and sick and safe time, and will continue to advocate for inclusion of domestic violence in safety leave.

We will keep supporting funding for the Public Employee Relations Board (PERB), protecting the Public Employee Labor Relations Act (PELRA) and opposing attacks on our defined benefit pensions.

With a DFL-controlled House and Governor's office and a Republican-controlled Senate, it is incumbent on all of us to do our part to achieve our goals. We look forward to working with AFSCME members from across the state to assure a positive and productive 2019 legislative session.

## Special Election February 5

Our longtime champion, Sen. Tony Lourey (Senate District 11 of Carlton, Pine and Kanabec Counties), has been appointed to join the Walz Administration as the new Commissioner of the Department of Human Services. This is excellent news. The Special Election to fill the vacant Senate seat will take place on **Feb. 5**.

We'll screen candidates on Saturday, **Jan. 12** at the Cloquet Labor Temple. Anyone who is a member and a PEOPLE contributor may participate in the candidate screening. Members will have an opportunity to join PEOPLE at the screening.

Watch your email and our website for an endorsement announcement following the PEOPLE screening. Then, mark your calendar to vote in the Primary on **Tuesday, Jan. 22** and in the General Special Election on **Tuesday, Feb. 5**.

Republicans currently have a one-seat majority in the Minnesota Senate, so it's extremely important

that we elect a strong AFSCME champion to continue representing us in the district. To make that happen, we need volunteers! Email Zach.Sias@afscmemn.org to knock doors, or Abdul.Omar@afscmemn.org to phone bank.

## Take Our Post-Election Survey

As we celebrate our victories of 2018 and the swearing in of our elected candidates, we're also looking forward, and we need your input. We want to make sure that our election engagement work is effective, informative and connects with members all over the state. Please take this short survey to help us evaluate our 2018 efforts and plan for the fights ahead of us in 2019 and 2020: [www.bit.ly/2F8fZZ1](http://www.bit.ly/2F8fZZ1)

## Save the Date for Day on the Hill

Our biggest event of the year is quickly approaching! Day on the Hill will take place on **Tuesday, March 26**. Save the date and plan to join your AFSCME family at the Capitol. Attend your local union meetings and watch our website for updates!

## Get in on the Action

Action Update comes out every two weeks for locals and activists. Download a copy at [www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org). Email Trisha.Harms@afscmemn.org with news and events you'd like shared in our next update.

## Mark Your Calendars

Event	Date	Place/details
SD 11 Candidate Screening	January 12, 2019	Cloquet Labor Temple
AFSCME Council 5 Presidents Meeting	January 18, 2019	Inwood Oaks, 484 Inwood Ave., Oakdale
SD 11 Primary Election	January 22, 2019	Find your polling place at <a href="http://mnvotes.org">mnvotes.org</a>
SD 11 General Special Election	February 5, 2019	Find your polling place at <a href="http://mnvotes.org">mnvotes.org</a>
AFSCME Day on the Hill	March 26, 2019	State Capitol, St. Paul