



# AFSCME Council 81 THE DELAWARE DIFFERENCE

May | 2023

## Package of pro-labor bills introduced in Senate

Earlier this spring a package of pro-organized labor bills was introduced in the Senate Labor Committee, these bills will continue to build on the successes we've achieved in the last 5 years, making organizing easier, updating the law to be consistent with the PERB's current Rules and Regulations, and allowing Delaware's dues paying members of any labor organization to receive a tax credit for paid dues.

**Senate Bill 92** ([full bill](#)) allows for small municipalities of 25 or more employees to organize. Currently a town or municipality must have 100 or more employees in order to organize under Title 19 in Delaware Code. Senate Bill 92 aims to change that and make it easier for smaller towns in Delaware to organize.

**Senate Bill 93** ([full bill](#)) requires the Public Employees Relation Board (PERB) to issue a written decision following hearings on Unfair Labor Practices (ULPs) within 30 days of the close of the record.



This makes the law consistent with the boards current Rules and Regulations. This makes everything consistent and holds the Board, no matter who is in charge, accountable for their decisions, and makes it fair for our members who may need to appear before the Board. Both SB 92 and 93 are Prime-Sponsored by Senator Jack Walsh. On April 26 both SB 92 and 93 were voted out of committee. **SB 93** will be heard on the Senate floor on **Tuesday, May 2**.

**Senate Bill 72** ([full bill](#)), Prime-Sponsored by Senator Nicole Poore, allows for any dues-paying member of organized labor to receive a Tax credit of up to \$500 for the dues that they pay in that tax year. This bill is part of a package of bills that will help members of organized labor, especially AFSCME Council 81 members and builds on the important legislative successes we've had in the last 5 years.

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L to R: Senator Jack Walsh, Former DHR Secretary Sandra Johnson, Council 81 Executive Director Michael A. Begatto



## Shop Steward Corner

In each newsletter we will provide some insight or helpful tips for shop stewards. This month know the difference between a gripe and grievance:

- A Shop Steward's most important job is to determine if a member has a grievance or a gripe.
- A grievance is a violation of:
  - The Contract
  - Work rule or regulation
  - A policy or procedure
  - A federal, state, county or municipal law
  - Any health or safety regulation
  - Past Practice
- Being a good listener is imperative to determining if a concern is a grievance or a gripe.
- A steward will complete a thorough investigation and talk to the member about the next steps of the process.

## Around Council 81

**Local 3083:** When a member was written up for violating several department policies. Not only did the member not violate those policies, but if they had, so had 3-4 other members who were not disciplined at all. The Local pursued justice through the Union's negotiated grievance procedure. They started at Step 3, and presented evidence that included proof of phone calls made and witness testimony to those phone calls, which contradicted management's investigation. A week later the hearing officer reached out to Council 81 Staff Representative letting us know that the discipline would be completely withdrawn. Management had done more research, and found that the member did not violate any department policies, nor did any other members who were involved. The discipline was withdrawn, the union withdrew the grievance and our member no longer has discipline on their record.

**Local 439:** Local 439 members voted overwhelmingly to secure AFSCME as their union in April. There were many lessons learned in this campaign, the most important take away was how important one-on-one conversations with our co-workers are. Equally important is we are only as strong as our members. If you don't show up and do the work, then the work falls to only a few people. Local 439 is stronger than it has ever been before.

*Have news or "the union difference" you want to share? Email [AFSCME@Council81.org](mailto:AFSCME@Council81.org) with your story and any pictures you want us to share as well.*





# The Delaware Difference

## MAY 2023

*May is Asian American and Pacific  
Islander Heritage Month*

- May 1:** May Day/International Workers' Day
- May 6-12:** National Nurses Week
- May 7-13:** National Correctional Officers Week
- May 7-13:** National Public Service Recognition Week
- May 9:** Election Day--School Board Elections 7a-8p
- May 13:** Stamp Out Hunger: Food Bank Food Drive
- May 14:** Mother's Day
- May 20:** Armed Services Day
- May 29:** Memorial Day (Council 81 Offices Closed)

## Legislative Update (con't)

In April, **Senate Bill 36** which expands the definition of first responder to include 9-1-1 operators, was voted out of the Senate Corrections and Public Safety Committee where members from Local 3911 and Council 81 Executive Director, Michael A. Begatto gave testimony in favor of the legislation. The bill was then heard on the Senate floor and was voted on and passed by the Senate in early April. On April 26, SB 36 was heard & voted out of the House Safety and Homeland Security Committee and is expected to be heard on the House floor in the coming weeks.

## May 13: Help Stamp Out Hunger

Food Bank of Delaware needs help! USPS will be picking up your non-perishable food donations Saturday 5/13/23. **All you have to do is place your bag of non-perishables by your mailbox!**

The food will be taken to the Food Bank of Delaware (FBD)-- (if you're not in Delaware, your donation will be donated to your local Food Bank or Food Pantry) the FBD goal is to collect 100,000 pounds!



### Saturday, May 13, 2023

**The 31st Annual Letter Carriers'  
Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS'  
**FOOD DRIVE**



**2nd Saturday in May**

Supported by the United States Postal Service

