



AFSCME IN ACTION

Member Newsletter | February 2026



Pictured: AFSCME Maryland President Patrick Moran and members on the steps of the Maryland State House

MESSAGE FROM AFSCME MARYLAND PRES. PATRICK MORAN

Fighting For A Better Maryland

As we end Black History Month, let us take a moment to honor the many leaders who showed us that the fight for racial justice and workers' rights have always been connected.

Black labor leaders and activists who shaped the labor movement taught us a lesson that still holds true today: change does not come from waiting, it comes from organizing.

Right now, working people are under attack. Chronic understaffing, budget cuts, and political assaults on public institutions threaten not just our jobs, but the communities we serve across Maryland. Important decisions are being decided in Annapolis, and they will shape our future.

We know what it takes to get important bills across the finish line because we've done it time and time again. It takes testifying in budget hearings where key economic decisions are being made, it takes packing up the room with AFSCME green, joining lobby nights, and making our voices impossible to ignore.

Now is the time to fight for a better Maryland together. Let's end the 2026 legislative session strong.

- AFSCME Maryland Council 3 President Patrick Moran

NEWS: AFSCME President Lee Saunders and Secretary-Treasurer Elissa McBride to step down in August 2026



This month, AFSCME President Lee Saunders and Secretary-Treasurer Elissa McBride announced they will be stepping down from their leadership roles at this year's International Union convention in August.



On behalf of our 55,000 members at AFSCME Council 3, we extend our deepest gratitude and congratulations on this incredible milestone. Their leadership has made a lasting impact on working families across America, strengthening our union and advancing labor power nationwide.

AFSCME Maryland
www.afscmemd.org



ACTION: Stand in solidarity with HCLWU

On Monday, February 23, the Howard County Library System announced layoffs of 55 on-call staff (who are mostly shelvers). HCLS leadership blamed HCLWU, AFSCME Local 6359 for this decision, citing raises negotiated by our bargaining team as the reason these layoffs were necessary.

On Saturday, February 28, HCLWU, and community members successfully got 55 on-call staff reinstated through rallying and sending letters —but the fight isn't over!



Scan the QR code to send a letter to HCLS calling for permanent funding for on-call staff and budget transparency

#AFSCME IN ANNAPOLIS

Join us for our Lobby Nights on Monday at 5:30PM in Annapolis

Monday, March 9

Local Government Night & AFL-CIO Union Night - All AFSCME Locals

Monday, March 16

All AFSCME Locals

Monday, March 23

Crossover Lobby Night

Monday, March 30

TBD Lobby Night

RSVP today at bit.ly/2026-Lobby-nights or scan the QR code!



AFSCME Members in Action

-  Members from Local 6359 who work at the Howard County Library System, Anne Arundel County Public Library and the Enoch Pratt Free Library attended a steward training.
-  Local 44 and Local 2898 members lobbied legislators to keep Maryland's public services public and the fight for fairness and equity.
-  Local 3644 President Jamesa Williams urged delegates to safeguard funding for the Maryland State Department of Education's operations and the many employees who keep higher education institutions running smoothly.
-  Local 1072 President Todd Holden, testifying before the Education, Business and Administration Subcommittee calling attention to budget cuts within the University System of Maryland.
-  Local 423 executive board member Carly Towne spoke at the Office of Public Defender Budget Hearing calling for increased compensation and resources to better support public defenders serving Maryland's most vulnerable residents.
-  AFSCME higher education members and local presidents came together to urge delegates to advocate for binding arbitration to ensure fair contract negotiations for workers across Maryland. They also urged lawmakers to fully fund the negotiated raises for USM employees.
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-  Members packed the house for our Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act bill hearing, which would level the playing field in contract negotiations.

Member Spotlight: Dionne Williams

Local 1072 trustee Dionne Williams is a Contract Administrator at the University of Maryland College Park. She has worked for the university for over 20 years. Through her work, she contributes to securing financial support for research that expands knowledge and innovation.

What first drew Dionne to becoming an active union member was attending her first negotiating session as an alternate bargaining team member.

“Watching and learning more about our MOU, understanding the thought process behind decisions, and having a say in the conversation made me want to become more involved,” she says.

Today, Dionne serves on Local 1072's telework bargaining team, where she is helping negotiate a fair and equitable telework policy for College Park members. Through her work, she ensures members' voices are represented in decisions that directly impact their daily lives.

She has also taken that advocacy beyond campus. Dionne recently testified in front of the Education, Business and Administration Subcommittee in Annapolis, advocating for legislators to work with AFSCME when it comes to the budget process across the University System of Maryland.

“This was my second time speaking in front of the legislature. It's always meaningful to be in Annapolis and express what the workers behind the scenes are doing. No one knows our experience but us,” she says. **“Speaking up in Annapolis is one of the main ways we can make sure legislators aren't just thinking about numbers, but about the people behind them. When higher education experiences budget cuts, it's frontline staff who feel the impact most.”**

Whether advocating in Annapolis or bargaining at the local level, Dionne is taking action to ensure workers are heard fighting for fair policies on campus and funding for higher education across the state.



Pictured: AFSCME Local 1072 executive board member Dionne Williams