

AFSCME IOWA COUNCIL 61

2009
Legislative
Report



AFSCME Iowa Council 61, 4320 NW Second Avenue, Des
Moines, Iowa 50313 www.afscmeiowa.org



July 2009

Dear AFSCME member:

The 2008 and 2009 Sessions were very different in many ways. 2008 saw the State of Iowa "flush" with revenues and income levels were at an all time high. Unemployment was at its lowest level ever and the afterglow of the Vilsack administration was still intact.

The 2009 Legislative Session brought a totally different picture-unemployment rose, revenues dropped and the state faced a fiscal crisis matched only by the great depression. Many challenges faced not only Iowa but the nation.

The following pages are a summary of legislation affecting AFSCME members and their families. We have included the 2008 and 2009 Legislative Sessions Checklists so that Convention participants can see what has taken place since the last gathering of Convention delegates.

I want to thank all of the AFSCME members who participated in Lobby Days, calls to action and the many efforts made to attempt to enact landmark labor legislation – even though most of this legislation was never enacted it proved that labor has a strong voice and will mobilize when it is provoked. The failure of "labor" proposals does not mean the end to our fight for justice. We will continue to educate Legislators on why proposals such as fair share and expansion of collective bargaining are important to our Union. We will continue to support our friends and challenge those who will deny our rights. We will continue to fight each and every day of the Legislative Session for you and your family.

Thanks for your dedication to the AFSCME Iowa Council 61 political program without you it is just a program with no heart or soul.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Danny Homan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Danny Homan

AFSCME Iowa Council 61 President

July 2009

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Welcome to the 16th Biennial AFSCME Iowa Council 61 Convention! The following Legislative Report is designed to update you on important issues facing this Union. Many pieces of legislation made their way through the Iowa Legislature; we have attempted to educate you on issues that are important to AFSCME Iowa. If you would like to view legislation not included in this report you can go to www.legis.state.ia.us.

The explanation of bills is brief and more information (actual bill) can be obtained by going to the legislative website www.legis.state.ia.us and click on Track Legislation and the Bill book. This screen will also allow you to see how your Senator or Representative voted on bills by clicking on current bill history and looking for the HJ (house journal) or SJ (senate journal) entry.

Materials contained in this report are from the 2009 Session but we have included legislative checklists for both 2008 and 2009. Both of these Sessions were very different in nature and in issue content. The 2008 Session could have been deemed a “policy” session as the economic downturn had not yet surfaced and Legislators passed progressive legislation on health care and education. The onset of 2009 brought a much different scenario with budget cuts and the federal stimulus dollars (most of which were earmarked for specific areas) becoming the main focus of the Session.

While major labor priorities were shelved throughout both Sessions this Union and its membership experienced some significant victories in areas involving unemployment, workers comp and the state budget. We will continue to work with our Legislative friends and allies to advance labor proposals such as fair share, collective bargaining, doctor’s choice and prevailing wage.

Thanks to all of you who heeded the calls to action and helped during these Sessions. We needed your help and you stepped forward.

Best Wishes,



Marcia Nichols

Legislative/Political Director

SENATE FILES-2009

Senate File 137 - classifies wage discrimination as an unfair employment practice under the Iowa Civil Rights Act which provides legal remedies through the Iowa Civil Rights Commission in the private and public sector. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 supported this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-32-No-17-Absent-1

House: Yes-87, No-7, Absent -6

Senate File 197 - Unemployment Modernization allowing Iowa to tap \$71 million in federal funds, extend benefits for an additional 26 weeks for those acquiring an approved degree or certification, establish an alternative base period allowing more unemployed Iowans to claim benefits in the quarter in which they become unemployed, and waives the employer charge for claims stemming from a temporary worker who has been replaced by returning active duty military employees. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 supported this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-47, No-0, Absent-3

House: Yes-84, No-13, Absent -3

Senate File 218 - sets allowable growth at 2% for the 2010-2011 school year. Under Iowa's school finance laws, school districts receive a defined budget that is a combination of state aid and local property tax revenues. The school aid formula distributes funding on a per pupil basis. Schools receive an annual increase in that per pupil allocation, which is referred to as allowable growth. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 monitored this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-32, No-18

House: Yes-53, No-44, Absent-3

Senate File 224 - created rules for licensing plumbers in the state of Iowa and provided for a 'work' exemption for routine maintenance for all public employees at all levels of government. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 supported this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-31, No-18, Absent-1

House: Yes-71, No-19, Absent-10

Senate File 389 – allows parents to place their adult children on their health care plan up to the age of 25 even if there have been gaps in their previous coverage. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 supported this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-39, No-9, Absent-2

House: Yes-95, No-0, Absent-5

Senate File 478 - Span of Control for supervisor to front line worker ratio. This bill was an omnibus “standings” bill that contained dozens of proposals which included span of control of supervisory levels. The mandated ratio would be 14-1 and would include a reporting system to the Department of Administrative Services for enactment. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 supported this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-27, No-16, Absent-7

House: Yes-55, No-35, Absent-10

Senate File 478- Voluntary child care licensing.. This bill was an omnibus “standings” bill that contained dozens of proposals which included a voluntary child care licensing. The mandated ratio would be 14-1 and would include a reporting system to the Department of Administrative Services for enactment. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 supported this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-27, No-16, Absent-7

House: Yes-55, No-35, Absent-10

Senate File 478 – increased court filing fees to save over 200 court jobs and stave off most of the planned furlough days, fees are effective upon enactment to help in the 2009 fiscal year. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 supported this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-27, No-16, Absent-7

House: Yes-55, No-35, Absent-10

HOUSE FILES-2009

House File 420 – sets up new rules regarding civil service commission and establishes new protections for those under civil service. The employer would have the burden of proof; the employee is entitled to legal counsel and/or can be represented by the authorized collective bargaining representative. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 supported this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-49, No-1

House: Yes-90, No-0, Absent-10

House File 562 – is an expansion of the child care advisory board. It adds four legislators to the board, requires the three child care provider appointments be made by the Governor (will be AFSCME CCPT). The board will receive information about the federal child care block grant as well as making recommendations to streamline the state's child care assistance program and for eliminating duplication in the process. *AFSCME Iowa Council 61 supported this legislation.* (Signed by Governor)

Senate: Yes-49, No-0, Absent-1

House: Yes-89, No-0, Absent-11