

ACE-AFSCME

# Annapolis Update

Local 2250, AFL-CIO

March 26, 2009

## WHY POLITICS?

**By James Shearer, Legislative Representative**

We hear the comments every election year; we will probably hear them again in 2010. "Why is our union involved in politics?"

I want the union to negotiate good contracts and settle grievances – the last thing I want to hear about is politics and politicians. However, it is vitally important that AFSCME Local 2250 remains politically active, and it is equally important that our members understand our involvement.

## YOU'RE INVOLVED

Whether you like it or not, you are involved in politics. You are a public employee, and what our elected officials do can affect you directly. Every year we have very important legislation debated and voted on in Annapolis - legislation that would have a dramatic affect on you as a public employee. Legislation that could improve or reduce our pension benefits, this is the number one priority of Local 2250.

In the past, legislation was passed which altered the way the school board is elected giving back the right of citizens to elect the school board. Why is this important, because in affect they are our bosses? Decisions that the Board of Education make affect your wages, your fringe benefits and many other issues that impact your working conditions.

If job related issues are not important to you, how about legislation that would reduce or restrict the amount of interest which can be charged on credit card accounts; or how about healthcare cost containment legislation?

## ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

At the Federal government level, Congress deals with legislation that affects our daily lives such as: federal funding of education, retirement protection, healthcare, Medicare and Social Security that one day may affect each and every one of us. Closer to home, many of the decisions made by the County Executive and County Council also impact on the wages you are paid, your working conditions, and yes, maybe even your very job if funding is reduced.

These issues are only the tip of the iceberg. Hundreds of legislative issues are debated and voted on each year, whether or not they become law can be very important to us as public employees and perhaps more importantly as citizens of the United States. That is why it is important that this union and its members continue to be involved in elections to support the candidates who share our concerns and to work on the issues which are important to working men and women.

## VOTE FOR YOUR BOSS

As public employees, we are in the unique position of being able to have an impact on who our boss will be. We can work to elect political figures who affect our livelihood by virtue of the fact that they approve the budget and vote on our negotiated contracts. Their actions will determine safety on our job, our wages, the hours we work – all of the things that ultimately contribute to the way we live.

One way we can have an impact on these officials is to vote. As we have said so very often in the past, it is absolutely essential for every member to be a registered voter, and for every registered voter to vote. We hope that you agree with our stand on political involvement. It is reasonable, responsible and even essential to our continuation. We must create and maintain a high level of activity in the area of politics and at all levels of government in order to protect our own best interest and the interest of our families.

The second way we can have an impact on elected officials is to financially support the campaigns of politicians who support our issues. Our union has a Political Action Committee which raises funds to support these candidates. This is voluntary money which each member can contribute by payroll deduction; even a small amount each payday would be helpful.

If you would be willing to contribute even \$1.25 per pay period, please call the union office and a voluntary payroll application will be sent to you. You may cancel at anytime if you choose.

Please know that your donation will only be spent on elected officials who support our issues.

**Faith I. Jones, President**

**Richard L. Putney, Executive Director**