

2016 Legislative Session

This was written on March 5, 2016 so may be outdated by publication.

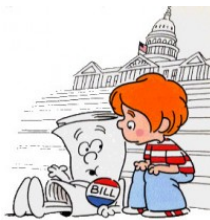
We are almost halfway through the 120 day legislative session. With split control of the chambers (Democrat majority in the House and Republican in the Senate), we anticipated nothing major would pass this year. Here is a quick rundown of our priority bills and status.

HB 1002

Employee Leave Attend Child's Academic Activities

This bill grants unpaid leave for parents to attend their children's school activities related to special education services, interventions, dropout prevention, or discipline issues. Research proves parental involvement leads to higher academic success, greater chance at enrolling in institutions of higher education, and lower truancy.

This bill passed the House on a 35-30 vote with Representative Kit Roupe (Colorado Springs) as the sole Republican supporter. We expect this bill to die Senate committee on March 7, 2016.



SB 054

Local Government Minimum Wage

This bill would have allowed municipalities to raise their local minimum wage. The bill was killed in committee by Republicans.

HB 1343

Waivers for Charter Schools

This bill repeals a list of automatic waivers from the Colorado Department of Education. The list of waivers can be found [here](#) and include requirements that are currently in state statute. The bill was introduced on March 3, 2016 and we anticipate it to be quite a contentious battle between school districts and teachers' unions vs. the education reform community and the League of Charter Schools.

SB 024, 43, and 45

To address student loan debt

These three bills would have established a cap on nongovernmental student loans, required private loan disclosure, and added financial literacy regarding student loan debt to existing high school curriculum. This package was integral to the working families of Colorado. With student loan debt topping \$1 trillion, this bill would have helped higher education become more attainable. All three bills were killed in committee by Senate Republicans.

This is why **elections matter**. It is essential that we remember to vote all the way down the ballot to ensure we have a State House and State Senate that support public education and working families in Colorado.

Membership Engagement Why?

The gap between the super-rich and everyone else has widened in the last 35 years. Today, the top 1 percent takes in almost 20 percent of the country's total income, while owning 35 percent of America's wealth. CEOs have fared even better: In 2009, CEO pay doubled what it averaged in the '90s, quadrupled what it averaged in the '80s, and was about eight times larger than it averaged around the middle of the 20th century.

It's a good time to be a CEO in our economy, but it's much harder for most of us: struggling to make ends meet, worrying about the future for our kids and families. **We know when unions were at their strongest, the middle class was at its height.** Today, even with the sharp decline in union density, union members make 28 percent more than nonunion workers.

So, who is doing this:

- State Policy Network—pushing anti union policy in all 50 states
www.spn.org/directory/
- Center for Individual Rights (CIR);
- Freedom Foundation (Evergreen);
- National Institute for Labor Relations Research;
- National Right to Work Committee (NRTWC);
- National Right to Work Legal Defense Fund;
- Koch Brothers.

What can we do?

- Help our colleagues understand what's at stake and the urgency of the situation.
- Build and strengthen leadership structures in each of our worksites enabling us to build real relationships with each of our members.
- Engage our members and mobilize around issues.

The following resolution is a compact between every AFT local. We know our collective strength is dependent on each local strengthening their ability to engage and mobilize their members.

It will take each of us being **"All In"**, to achieve our goals.

Corporate-backed politicians want to preserve the status quo and, understanding that unions give working people power, have launched an all-out assault on unions - from statehouses to courthouses. This is a national, coordinated attack. Initiatives like "Right To Work" are ways to attack our infrastructure in order to weaken our ability to even the playing field and provide economic stability for everyone.

And, they're not stopping at right to work initiatives and attacks on collective bargaining. Even non collective bargaining and "Right To Work" states are fending off attempts to gut our ability to collect dues. **The fight is both legislative and legal.** From Harris V Quinn to the Friedrichs V California Teachers Association case, our enemies are using our statehouses and courts to dismantle the labor movement.

Their Vision for America



Affiliate Resolution

WHEREAS, we are proud members of the American labor movement, and we understand that collective action gives us the power to ensure justice, fairness and opportunity for all; and

WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers was founded 100 years ago to establish a voice for teachers as workers so they could combat factory-like conditions in our schools, advocate for fair pay and better working conditions, and stand up for greater autonomy as professionals and advocates for their students; and

WHEREAS, from the AFT's very beginning, our union has stood on the side of social justice, fighting racial discrimination, advocating for school desegregation, expelling our own segregated locals, advocating for equal pay and rights for women, defending the rights of those with disabilities, and securing bargaining protections for gay and transgender workers; and

WHEREAS, today, 1.6 million members strong, the AFT is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do; and

WHEREAS, we are fighting a battle of immense proportions that threatens to destroy all we and others in the labor movement have worked for. This battle is ultimately over who holds the power in our economy and our democracy. It is a battle to reclaim the promise of America; and

WHEREAS, to combat those who wish to undermine unions, we must strengthen the bond with all members. We must show them that workers are the union. We must engage in a collective conversation about the challenges we face, the aspirations we have and the strategies we must implement. We must create the collective will and shared avenues for our members, along with community partners, to fight those obstacles and reach those aspirations:

RESOLVED, that the executive board of AFT Colorado pledges full support for the AFT's national goal to double the number of member activists to 10 percent, triple the number of members who engage in any union activities to 70 percent, and—in this the AFT's 100th year—reach out and speak to 100 percent of our members. And while less than 10 percent of those the AFT represents are agency fee payers, we will reach all of them, with the goal of their choosing to have their voices heard as union members; and

RESOLVED, that we will be accountable to each other—activists and leaders on the local, state and national levels—to achieve these goals; and

RESOLVED, that the numerical goals for Colorado on each of these measures is as follows:

Member activists: _____

Members taking action: _____

Member conversations: _____

Fair share payers converted to members: _____; and

RESOLVED, to achieve these goals, we will establish a written plan that includes numerical goals for each affiliate within *Colorado*; and

RESOLVED, through our focus on member engagement, we will strengthen our union, stand united against attacks and fight ever more effectively for our members and the communities they serve.

Reclaiming the Promise #aftALLin

AFT Upcoming Conferences

AFT Joint PSRP & Higher Education Professional Issues Conference 2016

Date and Time: Wednesday, March 30, 2016 - 6:00am to Sunday, April 3, 2016 - 8:00am

Where: Bally's, Las Vegas, Nevada

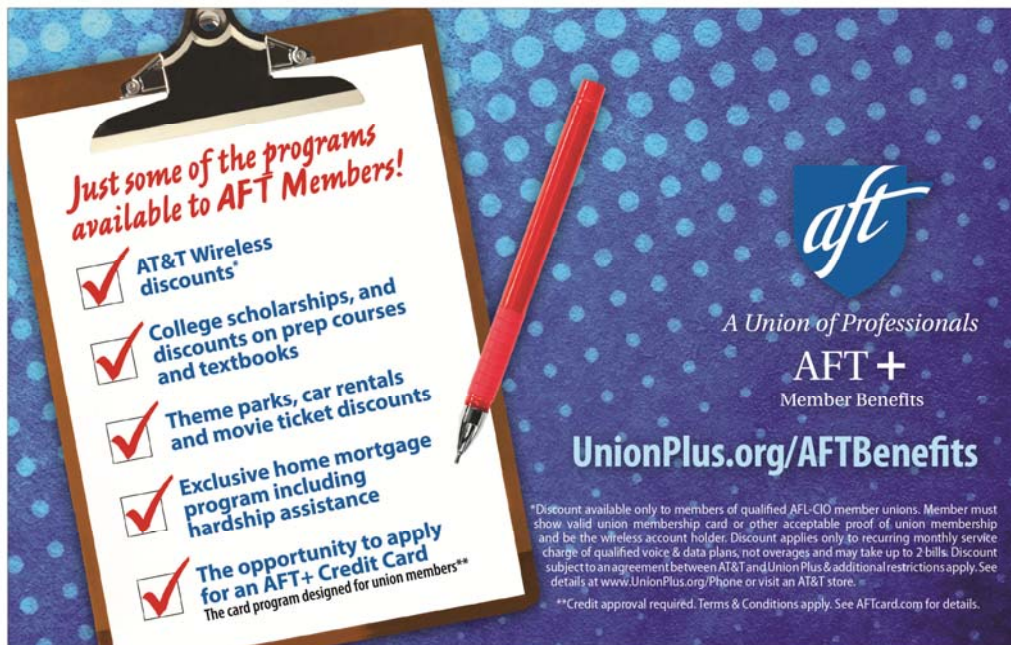
For More Information:

<http://www.aft.org/aft-joint-psrp-higher-education-professional-issues-conference-2016>

AFT Convention 2016


Date and Time: Monday, July 18, 2016 - 7:00am to Thursday, July 21, 2016 - 10:00am

Where: Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota



Just some of the programs available to AFT Members!

- AT&T Wireless discounts*
- College scholarships, and discounts on prep courses and textbooks
- Theme parks, car rentals and movie ticket discounts
- Exclusive home mortgage program including hardship assistance
- The opportunity to apply for an AFT+ Credit Card
The card program designed for union members**


A Union of Professionals
AFT+
Member Benefits

UnionPlus.org/AFTBenefits

*Discount available only to members of qualified AFL-CIO member unions. Member must show valid union membership card or other acceptable proof of union membership and be the wireless account holder. Discount applies only to recurring monthly service charge of qualified voice & data plans, not overages and may take up to 2 bills. Discount subject to an agreement between AT&T and Union Plus & additional restrictions apply. See details at www.UnionPlus.org/Phone or visit an AT&T store.

**Credit approval required. Terms & Conditions apply. See AFTcard.com for details.

Mark Your Calendar

Lobby Days 2016

Come join with other members to share information and your expertise with Colorado state legislators concerning issues surrounding our organization. **The information and education you provide could be a critical factor in the decisions affecting your profession.** Officials are eager to hear your views on legislation and want to know the consequences and benefits of any particular piece of legislation.

Colorado AFL-CIO – March 10th

Denver Federation Paras & Nutrition Service Employees – March 29th

Metro State Faculty Federation – March 29th

Douglas County Federation – March 23rd

The Douglas County Federation (DCF) and the Douglas County Federation of Retirees (DCFR) will be hosting a Lobby Day at the Colorado State Capitol on March 23rd during our Spring Break. We would like to invite any member of AFT Colorado to join us if this date works for you. Our members will be meeting with legislators and would love to have you join us!

We will start with training in the morning, followed by lobbying activities, lunch, and pre-scheduled appointments with State Representatives and State Senators.

- This is an invaluable chance for you to share your expertise with the people creating and passing laws that impact our careers and the education of our students.

When: Wednesday, March 23rd 8:15 a.m.

Where: Colorado State Capitol

- Morning training in House Committee Room 109 (ground floor)

Use [this link](#) to RSVP for this event.

In Solidarity, Courtney Smith
President, Douglas County Federation, President, AFT Colorado

For further information, please contact Kate Stigberg at kstigberg@aftcolorado.org or 303-501-7388.



AFT COLORADO
STANDING TOGETHER: MAKING A DIFFERENCE
Committee on Political Education (COPE) Deduction

www.aftcolorado.org 720-44-8032

What is COPE? COPE is how AFT Colorado raises and collects voluntary political contributions from members. COPE is a non partisan political education committee. These voluntary funds are used statewide to help back candidates and committees that support education and labor. There is one reason AFT Colorado needs to grow our COPE program, **YOU**. With the current economic environment our priorities are vulnerable and are constantly being targeted for reduction. Education budgets, programs, and services are often first on the chopping block when states face dwindling tax revenues. Along with decent working conditions, retirement, and health care. All vitally affect our lives. A strong COPE program will protect our various interests.

At the local level COPE is essential. AFT Colorado will use your voluntary funds to assist in school board races, levies, and referendums in your district. Reductions in state education aid and inflation have made local budgets even more of a challenge. We use COPE dollars to work with labor and education friendly supporters on both sides of the aisle.

FIRST NAME _____ LAST NAME _____

BILLING ADDRESS _____

BILLING CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

MOBILE PHONE _____ wish to receive periodic text messages and accept the associated charges.

HOME EMAIL _____ LOCAL _____

WORK LOCATION _____

PAYMENT

*Due to the associated fees, we prefer that you sign up for **bank draft** payment.*

MONTHLY COPE AMOUNT \$5 \$10 \$15 \$OTHER _____

BANK DRAFT ***PREFERRED METHOD*******

Fill out below or simply attach a voided check.

BANK NAME _____

ROUTING NUMBER _____ ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

CREDIT/DEBIT CARD: If you choose this method, we will follow up with you to change to bank draft at a later date.

CARD TYPE: VISA MC

NAME ON CARD _____

CARD NUMBER _____ EXP DATE _____

I hereby authorize a monthly contribution to the AFT CO COPE (AFT CO COPE) in the amount indicated above. This authorization is signed freely and voluntarily and not out of any fear of reprisal, and I will not be favored nor disadvantaged because I exercise this right. I understand this money will be used to make political contributions by AFT CO COPE. AFT CO COPE may engage in joint fundraising efforts with AFT COPE and/or the AFL-CIO. This voluntary authorization may be revoked at any time by notifying AFT CO COPE in writing of the desire to do so. Contribution or gifts to AFT CO COPE are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Contributions cannot be reimbursed or otherwise paid by any other person or entity.