

Legislative and Political Action



Public employees have always had a special interest in what goes on in the White House and Congress, as well as what goes on in our Governor's office and the state legislature. This is where new public service programs are started and the continuance of existing programs is debated. And, this is where the rights of public employees – rights to such things as funding for agency budgets, a safe workplace, a contract, decent retirement benefits and political freedom – get decided.

OCSEA and AFSCME believe it is important to make the views of public employees known to the politicians and elected officials who make these decisions. And, what happens to programs and issues of interest to OCSEA members in the Ohio General Assembly is a direct result of how our members vote during elections. Therefore, the union has made it a priority to develop legislative and political action activities among its members. The following outlines some of the ways the union meets these priorities.

PEOPLE

PEOPLE is AFSCME's legislative and political action committee. It stands for Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality.

Anti-union corporate political action committees contribute hundreds of millions of dollars yearly to get politicians elected who are sympathetic to their views. But AFSCME's PEOPLE is *our* voice. It allows us to be heard on issues of importance to us. We are not only the workers who perform vital public

services – we are also the advocates for quality services, safe and reasonable working conditions, justice and economic freedom for all.

AFSCME's PEOPLE raises money to carry this message to our national, state and local political leaders. PEOPLE also supports "get-out-the-vote" efforts, conducts phone banks and helps recruit campaign workers.

PEOPLE makes it possible for public workers to elect politicians regardless of political party who are sensitive to maintaining vital public services and who believe in dealing with public workers fairly.

You can join PEOPLE and get involved now by making a voluntary PEOPLE contribution in one of three ways: by making a one-time donation, by signing a payroll deduction card for PEOPLE, or by arranging for automatic electronic funds transfer from a bank account. Volunteers are also needed to help organize PEOPLE fundraising events and other political action and legislative activities (see below).

(Continued)

OCSEA District Grassroots Committees (DGC)

With over 28,000 members located in every legislative district in every corner of Ohio, OCSEA members are a tremendous reservoir of political and legislative muscle.

To make this promise of political clout a reality, OCSEA has developed a network of 9 District Grassroots Committees based on the current OCSEA district structure to combine the energy and enthusiasm of union members, in the regions where they live and work.

These Committees also screen candidates for local, state, & federal offices and make endorsement recommendations to the Statewide Endorsement Committee in every even numbered year. The DGC's consider local government races in the odd numbered years as well.

The Committees help elect OCSEA/AFSCME-endorsed candidates at the national, state, and local levels. They also help pass or defeat statewide

initiatives that affect public employee interests. In addition, the DGCs perform voter registration and education drives and help mobilize members to lobby on issues.

Legislation

One of the most important pieces of legislation to be enacted every legislative session is the state's budget. The budget process is significant to all OCSEA members because it decides the funding for agency programs and services that we deliver. The OCSEA legislative program seeks out agency assessment and recommendations of our members through our field staff. Additionally, non-budget agency-related legislation is distributed to our agency leaders for input in the same manner.

For more information about PEOPLE and the OCSEA District Grassroots Committees, contact the OCSEA Governmental Affairs Department.

Revised 10/21

