

OUT of the BLUE

Washington Public Employees Association

UFCW Local 365
May 2018



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We Are Stronger Together

Janus Vs. AFSCME

A U.S. Supreme Court case called Janus v. AFSCME Council 31 threatens our union and all working families.

This case aims to take away the freedom of working people to join together in strong unions to speak up for themselves and their communities. A decision is expected by the summer.

What is this case really about?

The case aims to erode the freedom to form unions to improve our lives and the communities we serve. Real freedom is about making a decent living from our hard work; it's also about having time to take a loved one to the doctor, attend a parent-teacher conference and retire in dignity. The corporate special interests behind this case do not believe that working people should have the freedom to negotiate a fair return on their work.

Who is behind this case?

The National Right to Work Foundation is part of a network funded by corporate billionaires to use the courts to rig the rules against working people. For decades, these wealthy elites have used their massive fortunes to gain outsized influence to chip away at the progress unions have won for all working families. Now they want the highest court in the land to take away our freedom to come together to protect what our communities need: a living wage, retirement security, health benefits, the ability to care for loved ones and more.

How do unions benefit our communities?

People in unions continue to win rights, benefits and protections for all working people and their communities. When public service workers belong to strong unions, they fight for staffing levels, equipment and training that saves lives and improves the public services our communities rely upon. And when union membership is high, entire communities enjoy higher wages.

What are fair share fees, and why are they important?

Unions work because we all pay our fair share and we all benefit from what we negotiate together. Fair share fees provide public service workers with the power in numbers they need to negotiate better wages, benefits and protections that improve working conditions and set standards for everyone.

Each public service worker chooses whether or not to join a union, but the union is still required by law to represent and negotiate on behalf of all public service workers – members and non-members alike. Unions believe all employees receive the wage increases, benefits and workplace rights negotiated through the union.

The corporate special interests behind this case want to take away our ability to build strength in numbers. That is why they want the Supreme Court to rule that workers can receive all the benefits of a union contract without contributing anything in return. All workers should chip in their fair share to cover the cost of representing them.

What is the real impact of this case?

When working people have the freedom and opportunity to speak up together through unions, we make progress together that benefits everyone. The wealthy elite behind this case are trying to use the highest court in the land to take away our freedom to create the power in numbers to secure better lives for ourselves, our families, our communities and our country by undermining our ability to form strong unions.

If fair share fees are struck down, employees who benefit from the gains that the union makes will not have to pay anything toward the cost of that representation. If the billionaires and corporate CEOs behind this case get their way, they will take away the freedom of working people to come together and build power to fight for the things our families and communities need: everything from affordable health care and retirement security to quicker medical emergency response times.

WPEA Scholarship

The WPEA executive board revised the scholarship program in 2017 by combining funds so each successful applicant would receive more. The larger awards were named in memory of two former board members who were instrumental in initiating the scholarship program. The scholarships, which will be awarded for use in Fall 2018, include:

One \$3,000 scholarship, in memory of Earl Kalles, former WPEA Secretary-Treasurer and long-time member at the Liquor Control Board;

One \$3,000 scholarship, in memory of Patti Pollardo, former WPEA Vice President and long-time member at Edmonds Community College;

Four \$1,000 scholarships.

Applications must be postmarked or emailed by July 13, 2018.

Check the WPEA website, www.wpea.org, for more information and to download the application.

UFCW Free College

With the UFCW Free College Benefit, you and your family members can earn an associate degree online from a public, accredited community college – with no out-of-pocket costs to you. This can save you thousands of dollars. The degree programs include:

Business Management Degree

Business Management allows for the following Degree Focus areas:

- Labor Studies
- Law of Labor / Industrial Relations; Labor and Management Relationship
- Entrepreneurship
- Human Resources
- Healthcare Management
- Marketing
- Finance
- General Management

Accounting Degree

Patient Home Navigator Certificate

Associate of Arts Degree

Criminal Justice Degree

Paralegal Degree

Early Childhood Education Degree

Associate of Individualized Study Degree

**For more answers to questions, please visit:
www.ufcwfrecollege.org/faqs**

UFCW Free GED Program

UFCW members can now take General Equivalency Diploma (GED) classes for free through Essential GED.

To get started, please visit www.ufcw.org/ged and complete the inquiry form.

Once you complete the online form, it may take a few days to verify your UFCW membership. However, once confirmed, you will receive an email that explains how to login to and begin taking free GED classes.

This GED program offers a customized learning plan, so that you will be able to successfully prepare yourself to pass the GED test, regardless of when you last went to school. This program also allows you to study at your own pace — classes are designed to fit your schedule and the program can be completed from your phone or tablet.

We created this benefit because our members told us they wanted us to provide more educational opportunities. We hope this program can help you build the better life you have earned and deserve.

Thank you for being a member of the UFCW
union family.

Union Plus Benefits

As a member of Washington Public Employees Association/ UFCW Local 365 you are entitled to the benefits union plus has to offer! Union plus offers discounts on AT&T services, credit cards, car & truck rentals, discounts to Disneyland, and so much more. The best part? It is free to all members in good standing! for more information please visit: www.unionplus.org or call WPEA directly for a brochure. When signing up for benefits please use UFCW Local 365 as they are our international union.

These are your benefits, get the most out of them!

Learn a New Language

WPEA/UFCW members can use this benefit to learn a foreign language for free online and at their own pace. All lessons are self-guided. This member benefit can be used to learn Spanish, French, German, English, and/or Mandarin.

If you are interested in using this benefit, please complete and submit the form at <http://www.ufcw.org/members/language>. It may take a few days to verify your WPEA/UFCW membership. However, once confirmed, you'll receive an email that explains how to login and begin taking free online foreign language lessons. At this time, this benefit is only available to WPEA/UFCW members and retirees.

Contract Languages

Looking for a different language for your contract? We have translated them on our website into Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian, Japanese, and Arabic

These contracts are electronically translated for the convenience of our members. They are not the official negotiated terms and should not be depended on to make a complaint or formal filing. If you have questions or concerns about the contracts, please contact your staff representative.

Are you bilingual? Would you like to help us make these translations more accurate? Let your staff rep know or contact aubrei@wpea.org!

Introduction to the Board of Directors

by *Fawn Hacker*

Did you know that besides shop stewards and staff representatives, you also have a board member advocate? WPEA is officially divided into 11 districts and there is a vice president from each district on the board responsible for bringing governance information to all the members in their district.

Each board member functions as the consolidation point for their district – so if you have a question about how things are done at the union, take your concerns to your vice president. Board members don't do representation work (although many of them are shop stewards), but their function is to be your connection to the union at large and to bring your concerns to the board. Please visit the WPEA website where you can figure out which district you live in and then who your board member is and how to contact them. Districts are determined by county of residence and further defined by your zip code in counties where there is high member density.

In addition to the vice presidents, there is a President, a Secretary-Treasurer, and a Recorder. Kent Stanford is our current president, Mark Baca is our Secretary-Treasurer and Fawn Hacker is the Recorder. Together they are the ones responsible for "driving the union." They do this with the assistance of the vice presidents who, through meetings, discussions, and input from the members, choose the path or direction that the union takes.

Currently, WPEA is facing great uncertainty as we await the Supreme Court decision on the Janus v. AFSCME case. Depending on which way they rule, public sector unions in the United States may be changed forever in so many different ways.

New Board Members

On January 20th, the new 2018-2020 board members were sworn in. The new vice presidents joining the ranks include Cristy Rasmussen, VP-District 2 (Yakima, Klickitat, and Kittitas counties), Karin Johnson, VP-District 4 (Spokane, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Stevens, and Ferry Counties), and Tim Shimp, VP-District 9 (Includes zip codes in King & Pierce Counties).

We look forward to a great three years!



Message From the President

Dear Members,

We as unionized public employees are about to be impacted by a decision from the US Supreme Court that will change the terms of membership for WPEA members. The Court is expected to rule to end joining a union as a condition of hire for public employment. For many years public employees in Washington State have benefited from the collective action of public sector unions. Unions have delivered on items such as holding down the cost of healthcare, increasing salaries and vacation time, representing members against unjust discipline and fighting to preserve the pension plan. Your union is your voice and your way to have a say in your workplace.

Public sector unions in Washington State have helped everyone not just through wage increases, but by advocating on a political level for paid leave laws, increase in the state minimum wage and better public services. Ultimately, the *Janus* decision, will impact how successfully public sector unions are in the future. If membership drops to very low levels it will embolden state managers to resist the union's efforts for more salary increases and benefits. The very items that attracted most of us to public employment will begin to erode in the future. This is YOUR union and the strength we have as a union comes from you. We are a team, and you each play a role in our successes.

I urge each of you to review your collective bargaining contract to better understand the benefits that your former and present co-workers have bargained on your behalf. Please remember that public sector employees have had a say when it comes to their working conditions and salaries for many years and decide if you really want a workplace without a way to have a say!

Solidarity,
President Kent Stanford

Don't Forget To Schedule Your 2018 WPEA BBQ! Contact Kent Stanford at Kent@wpea.org for more information



FVRL & KRL Contracts

After a successful bargaining session at both Fort Vancouver and Kitsap Regional Libraries we now have contracts! They are located on our website at www.wpea.org/contracts or to request a hard copy please email aubrei@wpea.org.

Kitsap Regional Library Levy

Taken from www.kitsapsun.com

After levy failures in 2007 and 2010, Kitsap Regional Library finally has the backing of voters on a levy that will allow it to restore hours of service, upgrade facilities and boost popular youth programs.

The proposal to add 8 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value to KRL's regular property tax levy earned resounding support from voters, with 62.6 percent in favor of the measure. A simple majority was needed.

Library Director Jill Jean was hoping for a win somewhere in the 50 percent range. Getting emotional, Jean said she was "thrilled beyond belief" with results. "I am thrilled with the confidence the community placed in our plan." Jean attributed the success to a strong community outreach campaign before the levy proposal was drafted. "It was really developed by the community," she said.

Library officials say the tax increase will ensure sustainable funding of library services, the demand for which is increasing

Retirement of Julie Anderson

For 47 years Julie Anderson has served Pierce College well and at the end of March, finally decided to hang up her hat. We wish Julie all the best in her retirement and enjoy her years to come.



Thank you, Julie, for being such a great member of WPEA!

Fawn's Corner



Fawn Hacker has been with WPEA since 1990 and is our Membership Coordinator and Recorder on the Board. This page is for updates about membership, general questions, and WPEA knowledge.

American Income Life

Have you received a call from American Income Life and are wondering if they're trying to scam you? This call is actually real!

In mid-2017, American Income Life, with WPEA's consent, sent mailers to WPEA members telling them about a \$2,500 Accidental Death & Dismemberment policy they were offering. If members didn't respond to the first mailing, a second mailing was sent. The AD&D Policy is available to any member's estate; however, if the member wants to designate a beneficiary, that's when AIL gets involved. When a member fills out and returns a card, requesting to designate a beneficiary, an AIL representative will contact that member so they can meet to sign the beneficiary papers. The reason that there must be a personal contact is so AIL can be certain that the member is who they claim to be.

What's been happening is that since such a long time has passed between the signing of the card and getting contacted by AIL, members forget that they've signed the card and provided AIL with personal information like birthdates and names of beneficiaries and cell phone numbers. So, when a call is received, out of the blue, they're confused.

Rest assured, these calls are legitimate, sometimes though they don't sound like they are and because the AIL agents don't take the time to explain what has initiated the call, members get upset.

The AIL Agent is contacting you to set up an appointment for you to sign off on the beneficiary portion of the benefit (and they may try to sell you more insurance because after all, they are insurance agents). Please remember that if you don't want to meet with an AIL representative, you will still be eligible for the benefit, but the funds would go to your estate in the event of your accidental death. If you still want to designate a beneficiary, you will need to meet with them, but you don't have to meet at your home – feel free to pick a public spot like a library or a police station or a Starbucks, anywhere you feel safe and comfortable – and remember, you **never** have to purchase more insurance.

If you have questions please call (360) 943-1121 x100. Again, thank you for being leery of their approach, which can be a tad bit pushy. And, rest assured that WPEA has not, nor would we ever, release any personal information of yours to anyone.



Staff Rep Updates

Lane Hatfield has been with WPEA since 2012 and is our Contract Administrator. If these updates apply to you and you did not receive them by email, please contact us.

It Re-Class Update

Update as of March 13, 2018

OFM went back to the drafting board on their compensation plan for the statewide IT reclass and we were waiting for them to come back with that info. Well, the wait is over!

In March, we attended a presentation by OFM about the reclass project and the proposed compensation changes. We also got some preliminary lists of where members currently in the ITS series will likely be moving. We are now working to schedule a date for bargaining the impacts of these changes, which should happen in the next few weeks.

Not everyone's reclass information has been completed. All of the positions evaluated last summer were put into one of three categories:

1. IT Worker, Professional
2. IT Worker, Paraprofessional
3. IT User (sometimes referred to by OFM as "IT Power User")

The bulk of our members (73%) are in the first group. These are the positions that we'll be bargaining over in the next few weeks.

The second group will be largely reclassified into existing state job classes IT Tech Support or Data Consultant. Information on those moves and the proposed salaries will be part of the main table contract bargaining this summer.

The third group will be reclassified outside the new proposed IT structure. That will be done at the agency level and likely won't be finished until early 2019. The majority of this group appears to be at the community colleges. WPEA will be talking with each of our agencies and colleges about timing for these reclass discussions, and then figuring out the best way to support these members to get them properly classed and compensated.

The reclasses for all three groups should be effective July 1, 2019 at the change of the fiscal year and the start of our next contract.

Because we still need to bargain, OFM has requested that we not publicly post all of the proposal documents they've shared with us. Instead, we are working on pulling out each agency and college's individual information and sharing that with you all through your staff reps and shop stewards. That's taking some time but we should have that out to staff reps by the end of the week.

Please note that the information will be more complete for the IT Worker, Professional group than for the other two.

Finally, I want to say that WPEA is very aware that this process and the outcomes may be frustrating and difficult for many of you. You've spent many years working in the ITS series, understanding how that works, and putting a lot of understandable pride in the recognition of skill that comes with moving through the series. This is a very different framework for organizing IT work than what you've been used to. The State's evaluation of the job market and what they can and will pay, along with the changes in category and job title, means that there are clear winners and losers in this process. Some members will no longer have IT in their job title, others will be Y-rated at their current salary until their new job class's pay range catches up to them (no one will be taking a pay cut!). Others who are currently in exactly the same job class will move up in salary. People who currently sit next to each other and work together on a team will see different outcomes based on the details in their job descriptions.

Please remember that these are decisions made at a statewide level; it's not a reflection of your individual worth or job competency. And don't forget the importance of solidarity with your fellow members who are all experiencing different results and feelings in this process.

As we get information out to you, please let us know if you have additional questions or concerns. We won't have all the answers, but we are committed to getting as much information for you as we can.

The State is committed to moving forward with this statewide reclass. WPEA is committed to making it as fair and clear as we possibly can.

Watch for another update by text and email once our bargaining date is set. If you have affected co-workers who didn't get this email, please ask them to update us with their current non-work email address so they can be in the loop.

It Re-Class Update 2

Update as of March 26, 2018

We've had our first day of bargaining over the IT classification restructure and I wanted to give you an update on what we know and what's still up in the air.

As a reminder, this round of bargaining isn't covering everyone. It's the folks who were evaluated at "IT Worker, Professional" and placed in job families on that basis. If you're not sure how you were evaluated, your staff reps have lists of everyone's proposed moves and we're now working on making those available to shop stewards. This is the majority of our IT members. The rest will be bargained over the summer or in the fall, depending on their new status.

In the last few weeks, we've been in discussion not only with the State but also with other unions whose members are affected. The State is trying to create a statewide

system, so we felt it was important to talk with each other about what our priorities are for making this new system work. After those talks and looking at the data the State shared with us about the market studies they used, we think we'll be agreeing broadly to the pay ranges they've proposed. Our biggest issues that are left break down into a few areas.

First, there is the question of who is being Y-rated and can we get all Y-rated members a Cost of Living Adjustment on July 1, 2019 (assuming we get one for the whole membership in this summer's contract bargaining).

Then, there's the question of what step in the pay range each member will be at in the new system. There are several possibilities:

- Moving "Step to Step": If you're at a Step J in your current range, you're a Step J in the new range. It's the option that gets the most people the most money and the one the State says they can't afford.
- Moving "Same to Same": If your current pay rate is within the new range, you move to the new step that's closest to (but not lower than) your current pay rate. If your current pay rate is below the new range, you move to Step A in your new range.
- Moving "Same to Same" plus Re-allocation Language: In this option, we would accept matching pay rates, but would then enforce our contract language that says if you are reallocated into a job class with a higher pay range, you automatically move up two steps (5%) from your current pay rate.

Based on what we heard at bargaining, we think "Step to Step" is off the table. So we're fighting for that Re-Allocation Language. The State is arguing that this isn't the same as individual re-allocations because they're changing the whole system, so the contract language doesn't apply. Either version of "Same to Same" gets most members more money over time because you have more Period Increment increases. Adding the contract language gets you more of it faster.

We're also working to guarantee that you get credit for any time you've spent at Step L in your current job class.

Our next big issue is how to handle your rights in case of layoff, bumping, and recall from layoff lists. These new job classes are, by design, more narrow with fewer people in each one, than the ITS series. We want to create a system that gives you as many options as possible if you're looking at being laid off. Right now, we're talking about a written assessment of all the skills and competencies you've gained while working in the ITS series so you can have layoff options into other job families and levels than where you're currently placed.

Finally, there's the question of an appeals process in case you think your placement into the new family/level system is wrong. We think a lot of nagging questions about this whole change can be helped if there's a strong, robust appeals process. It looks like everyone will have access to the State's Director's Review process for an appeal. We're still

working on the details for how it will work.

Our next bargaining date is May 11th. Our goal is to be done with bargaining for this group before master agreement bargaining starts in June. We'll let you know how the next meeting goes!

TRO Unfair Labor Practice

By now you may have heard that we've settled the Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) that WPEA filed against the Department of Revenue over additions to the Tax Review Officer's (TRO's) PDP's. We want to share more of the details of that settlement with you and explain why we were willing to settle without a hearing.

The central charge of the ULP complaint was a failure to bargain in good faith. In September 2016, we met with the department and the state's Labor Relations Office (LRO) to bargain about additional goals language Revenue was proposing to add to your PDP's. There were two parts of that language and we had some disagreement at the table about what was new and what already existed.

This language was clearly new: "All other performance measures are division level. Each division member contributes to attainment of these performance measures. Each individual's performance will be compared to the division measure so they are aware of how their performance influenced the division's performance." WPEA staff rep Anna Vosk and members Ethan Sattelberg and Beth Anne Kreger expressed concerns in the bargaining meeting that this "comparison" could lead to individuals being held accountable for the division falling short of its goals, or that in the future the division goals could be more specifically divided up amongst TRO's and added to individual goals.

Other language had existed in other Revenue policies but had not been explicitly included in PDP's before: "Clear 90% of all mainstream cases never placed on hold within 12 months, clear 95% of all small claims never placed on hold within 90 days, and clear 95% of all APA BAP appeals within 30 days. Each TRO is expected to clear its individual case-load consistent with these standards." Revenue insisted it was not new, but WPEA argued it was.

WPEA believed that we left the meeting with an understanding that there would be further discussion about the proposed language, including clarification on where the individual language had come from and the history of its use. Revenue and LRO thought they were free to implement these changes to your PDP's. When they sent us a bargaining "close-out" letter saying that's what they were doing, we filed the ULP complaint.

Several events followed that WPEA considered retaliatory, and so we added retaliation charges to the

complaint. Members of your division who stepped up to be part of bargaining or were later involved with working on the complaint received negative evaluations, had flex days denied, and in one case received a written reprimand. Your co-workers Ethan Sattelberg and Gabi Herkert willingly stood up for your rights. They risked their own working conditions and relationships with management and took a great deal of their own time and energy to make sure your rights were honored.

Last fall we attempted mediation of the complaint, which failed. Early in the new year, as we were prepping for the ULP hearing, Revenue and LRO reached out to try again to reach a settlement. After about two weeks of discussion and negotiation, we reached our current settlement. While we didn't get everything we wanted, we believe that the terms are very good for your group as a whole.

Here's what we got:

1. Both pieces of proposed PDP language are out. They will not appear in your future PDPs and instead Revenue will return to the language and approach they were using prior to bargaining (future PDPs should look like those from two years ago).
2. If you received a PDP that included that language, an addendum will be attached to that PDP noting that the language is not applicable and is not to be used in future evaluations.
3. Ethan will get the flex day that was denied to him last year.
4. Gabi will get the move to the Seattle office that has been denied to her for over a year.
5. WPEA will withdraw the ULP and two related grievances. One grievance, related to Gabi's telework request and the standards Revenue uses to approve or deny your flex requests, had already gone to arbitration and we're expecting a ruling by March 20. That grievance was not withdrawn.

Clearly, there are potential retaliation issues we didn't get fixed in the settlement. Nonetheless, we got changes in the PDP language that made this a very attractive settlement. At hearing, if we had won on that original claim we would have been sent back to the bargaining table again to bargain over the language. It's also possible that the ruling would have included language that limited bargaining to the impacts of the change in language and not allowed us to bargain about the decision to add the language itself. This way, the question is settled and the language is out of your evaluations altogether. Ethan and Gabi gave up quite a bit individually to ensure that we got things in the settlement that benefit the entire division.

If you have additional questions about the complaint and settlement, please feel free to reach out to me, or to Ethan or Gabi. If you continue to have issues about potential contract violations or retaliation, please contact Anna Vosk as soon as possible.

Retirement of Kathleen Oest

We will surely miss the bright and smiling face of Kathleen Oest. Kathleen was a WPEA organizer in the 1990's and later returned to WPEA as a staff representative.



Originally from Illinois, Kathleen earned her bachelor's degree in the 1960's at Northwestern University, studying political science and art.

Kathleen retired in February but I'm sure we will see that smile around the WPEA Headquarters every now and again.

Departure of Steve Sloniker

We will all miss staff rep Steve Sloniker. Steve had been with WPEA since 2007 and was instrumental in providing great member care. If you were previously represented by Steve your new Staff Reps are:



Pierce College - Anna Vosk
425.772-2830
anna@wpea.org

WA State Patrol - Casey King
360.810.1627
casey@wpea.org

Highline College - Heather Kafton
360.972.0149
heather@wpea.org

Department of Agriculture - Frank Prochaska
509.220.6950
frank@wpea.org

Fort Vancouver Regional Library - Amanda Hacker
360.556-0149
amanda@wpea.org

We wish him all the best in his new endeavors!

Looking to Get in Touch
With a Staff Rep?

Visit: www.wpea.org/staff-representatives
To Find Your Staff Rep



Legislative Updates

Seamus Petrie is WPEA's Lobbyist and has been with us since 2014. This section is for legislative updates.

2018 Legislative Session

After a breakneck 60-day legislative session, the legislature has adjourned sine die – finishing on time, without a special session, for the first time in four years. Here are just some of the bills the legislature passed this year that will benefit public employees and working people across the state.

A bill ensuring that new public employees have a chance to meet with union stewards to learn about their contract and their rights.

- The Washington Voting Rights Act
- The Equal Pay Opportunity Act
- Same day voter registration
- A bill granting state employees access to shared leave for pregnancy disability or bonding with a newborn or newly adopted or fostered child.
- A bill establishing PTSD as an occupational disease.
- A bill expanding access to pension credits for public employee veterans.
- A bill granting collective bargaining rights for state employees who work fewer than 350 hours per year.
- A capital budget that saves state employee jobs and invests in forest health and new schools.
- A budget that invests in K-12 education, including pay raises for teachers at the Washington State School for the Blind and the Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss.
- A 1.5% COLA for PERS 1 retirees.

Unfortunately, some of the bills we worked for this year did not pass successfully. Here are some of the bills we'll keep working on next year:

- A bill protecting the birthdates of state employees from public disclosure.
- A bill protecting the identities of state employees who file sexual harassment complaints.
- A bill increasing accountability and transparency if the state contracts out public services.

To learn more about the bills that passed please visit our website at www.wpea.org/legislative-updates.

Interested in learning more about the political side of the union please contact our lobbyist, Seamus Petrie at seamus@wpea.org.

WPEA Protects Your Information

On October 31, 2017, The Washington Court of Appeals upheld state employees' right to privacy and upheld public employee unions' appeal against the Freedom Foundation. In a unanimous decision, the court blocked the Freedom Foundation's attempt to get state employees' dates of birth — which in this day and age opens the door to all kinds of privacy, safety and security breaches.

WPEA and PTE 17 first filed for an injunction against the release of employees' information in April 2016. They were joined by half a dozen other unions as they appealed through the court system over the last 18 months. Finally, the court agreed with the unions' arguments, ruling they had proven that the state constitution's right to privacy provision "protects state employees' full names associated with the corresponding birthdates from public disclosure."

The court said the dates of birth "of individually identified state employees are not in the public interest because they do not inform the public of facts related to a government function."

The Freedom Foundation has now appealed to the State Supreme Court and they will hear the case. More updates to follow.

New WPEA Members at Grays Harbor Transit

In 2017, the Public Employment Relations Commission certified a new WPEA bargaining unit at Grays Harbor Transit (GHT) in Aberdeen. The new unit consists of administrative and accounting employees of GHT.

The new members at GHT become the first WPEA bargaining unit at a transit agency and are the third local government bargaining unit, along with our members at the Vancouver and Kitsap library systems. The Grays Harbor Transit office staff, seeking to improve their wages and working conditions, realized that the best way to try to accomplish those goals was through a union contract and chose to join WPEA. We are now in negotiations for a first collective bargaining agreement for the new members at Grays Harbor Transit.

If you use the bus system in Grays Harbor County and find yourself at the GHT offices be sure to say hi to our newest members.

General Government Contract Bargaining Dates

June - 12, 19, 20
July - 16, 17
August - 2, 14, 15

Higher Education Contract Bargaining Dates

June - 7
July - 11, 12, 25, 26, 31
August - 21, 22, 23