



President's Message

Greetings Retirees!

SAVE THE DATE!

The Retiree Chapter Executive Board will be holding their Biennial Membership meeting May 19! It will be held at Renton Technical College from 2:00 to 5:00 PM. It will be held both in person and via zoom. Refreshments provided!

**SAVE THE
DATE**

**MAY 19,
2023**

Join us for chapter elections and a review of the last two years!

We will hold elections for all Board positions. Board members hold their positions for two years. Information on nominations can be found in our Bylaws on <https://aftwa.org/retirees>. If you are interested or know of someone who would be a great Board member, put your name or theirs forward!

We are planning on having a panel of retirees to share their stories on what life has been like after retirement. We

want to hear about retiree interests, actions, roadblocks and successes. This is the kind of thing that guides the chapter's work as we learn what interests our members and what members want the chapter to take action on. If you would like to join the panel, please contact me at Merrilee.miron@gmail.com or Cortney Marabetta at cmarabetta@aftwa.org for more information.

The AFT Washington Convention dinner will follow our meeting and for those wanting to stay, we will arrange that for you. This year, there will be a "keynote conversation" between April Sims, president of the Washington State Labor Council, and Fed Ingram, Secretary-Treasurer of AFT! Just let us know in advance.

We want to hear from you as to what the next two years should bring so PLEASE plan on attending!

More information will be coming your way.

In solidarity

Merrilee Miron

Social Security and Medicare Are Still Vulnerable

By Susan Levy, Director (Social Security and Medicare)

We now have a split legislative branch in the federal government; Democrats control the Senate and Republicans control the House. For both, Social Security and Medicare will be front and center. First, the Republicans originally said they would not support raising the debt ceiling unless there were cuts to both Social Security and Medicare. They backed off that position after the uproar from Democrats, seniors, independents, and some Republicans. But the battle is not over.

It will not be an upfront battle but there are still threats to both programs in subtle ways. There are fears that Social Security and Medicare will both go broke. Solutions that are being discussed often include positions like raising the retirement age or creating more private Medicare options. These are cuts in disguise. We need to be vigilant in watching these two basic senior life support programs. And we must watch for and support programs that actually enhance Social Security and provide more Medicare benefits. Watch closely and let us know what you hear.

The Status of the Legislative Session and Ongoing Work

By Jim Howe, Director (Legislative)

As part of the PEBB Stakeholders Medicare Coalition, AFT Washington Retirees have helped the HealthCare Authority plan the pilot Listening Session on Retiree HealthCare plans for Feb. 28th, with regular sessions running at least twice a week in March through May. SB 5169 to codify the HCA agreement to do this and save Classic UMP was heard in Senate Ways & Means, but failed to pass out of the committee; that bill has died.

HB 1057/SB 5350 (on a permanent COLA for the PERS/TRS Plan 1) has a lot of co-sponsors. It is still alive and making its way through the process.

Many of HCHR's Policy bills are moving along, including Safe
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Pacific Northwest Labor History Association

Conference: Labor Resurgent

LABOR RESURGENCE: LEARNING FROM RECURRING CONFLICT WITH CAPITAL is the theme of this year's annual Pacific Northwest Labor History Association Conference. The dates are May 5 and 6 and it will be held in Tacoma at the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma.

Since the AFT Washington Retiree Chapter is a member of PNLHA, we may be entitled to some scholarships or partial scholarships to the conference. If you are interested in attending the conference or want more information please contact Susan Levy (sjlevy.01@gmail.com) or Cortney Marabetta (cmarabetta@aftwa.org).

Sessions will include a keynote address by the Chair of the Harry Bridges Labor Center, UW Professor Moon Ho Jung, on empires and the origins of the US Security State. The workshop topics include:

- Cannery Unionism, Migrant Labor and Property Law in the 1930's Washington State
- A Strike Against Empire: Port of Seattle, the ILWU and the Politics of International Trade in the Early 1970s
- Race, Homeownership and Racial Restrictive covenants
- The IWW (Wobblies) and the labor-left in Washington State
- Organizing for Freedom
- Our Rebel Girls: A talk with Jess Walters (author of The Cold Millions) and Karl Marlantes (author of Deep River).
- Labor Wars of the Northwest
- And more!

The conference is always an enjoyable and informative interchange among participants. It features Academics, workers, unionists, students and the public, and is well worth your time.

2 | Insert | Union Spotlight

SAVE THE DATE

Pacific Northwest Labor History Association Conference

May 5th and 6th, 2023

We're fortunate to be able to hold the conference at this magnificent museum. Located in downtown Tacoma, surrounded by great hotels and restaurants, and offering free parking, this location is ideal for our members and guests.



Photo from <https://www.washingtonhistory.org/visit/history-museum-hours-and-admission>

The Status of the Legislative

(from pg. 4)

Staffing. Keep Our Care died under corporate pressure in the Rules committee.

We had a quick response to a Senate Joint Memorial 8006 hearing to support asking the Administration and US Congress to act on 3 options on Universal HealthCare, including the federal waivers for states that Washington's Universal HealthCare Commission needs.

We met with newly elected WSLC officers April Sims and Cherika Carter. They plan to get a Labor dialogue going on Universal HealthCare after the session ends.

The Retirees Chapter were represented at the AFT Lobby Day in Olympia on Feb. 20th.