

2010 LEGISLATION:

AMECSS has initiated the following legislative proposal this year:

HB 5058 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE FOR CERTAIN STATE EMPLOYEES. This bill provides for collective bargaining for managers. Last year our same legislative proposal, HB 6545, passed in the House (90-41) but as with most proposed legislation last year did not come up for a vote in the Senate.

AMECSS is also working very hard to prevent any changes to longevity payments for managers. Enclosed is the e-mail that went to all our members along with a copy of the e-mail that was sent by David Guay, AMECSS President, to the legislative leadership.

The best action that **YOU** can take to preserve longevity payments for state managers is to contact your own state senator and representative as well as the legislative leadership ASAP.

On two previous occasions AMECSS has been successful in preventing proposals to eliminate or diminish longevity payments for managers. In 1996 AMECSS was successful in its fight to defeat SB525 which would have eliminated longevity payments for state managers. In 2009 AMECSS was successful in its fight to defeat SB 829 that would have longevity payments for state managers. On both those occasions the proposed legislation was Governor's proposals. The current effort to diminish longevity payments is also a legislative initiative. That is why it is imperative your contact your legislators immediately.

ABOUT AMECSS: AMECSS (the Association of Managerial Employees in the Connecticut State Service) is an association for state employees not covered (for the most part state managers) by the 1975 State Employee Relations Act (SERA). AMECSS, formerly known as SMAC (the State Managers Association of Connecticut) was established in 1977 for the exclusive benefit of its members. Its primary objectives are to promote the economic welfare, protect the professional nature and ensure fairness and equity for Connecticut state managers.

AMECSS is governed by a seven member Board of Directors selected by its members. Board members are elected for a two year term. The next election will be in June 2010. All officers and board members serve on a voluntary basis. The current board members are:
David Guay, President. David is the Executive Director, State Board of Accountancy.
Ellen Blaschinski, Vice President. Ellen is a Branch Chief at the Department of Public Health.
Fred Clark, Treasurer. Fred is a Bureau Chief at the Department of Revenue Services.
Warren Wollschlager, Warren is the Chief of the Office of Research and Development at the Department of Public Health.

Secretary Jim Leary and Donald Poulin. Jim is a manager in the budget and financial analysis division at the Office of the Comptroller and Donald is a Director of Facilities Operations at the Department of Public Works.

There is one board member vacancy at present.

AMECSS is affiliated with CSEA – the Connecticut State Employees Association. CSEA receives one third of our bi-weekly dues of \$4.50 per member. In return, CSEA provides professional representation for members in disciplinary meetings including representation before the employee Review Board; representation on the State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC); eligibility for McCusker Scholarships awarded annually to children and grandchildren of AMECSS/CSEA members; and office support. Over the years, AMECSS has had some very significant victories before the Employees Review Board (ERB) and at the legislature. In 1993 we were successful in getting legislation passed that provides managers with up to eight weeks notice prior to layoff. In 1997 the ERB upheld the right of laid-off managers to file grievances. We were also successful in securing the right for managers to have institutional grievances heard by the ERB in addition to individual manager grievances.

AMECSS primarily supports state managers through its work at the legislature. The General Assembly remains the major forum for improving salaries and working conditions of managerial employees. AMECSS has a contract with Bobby Shea, Lobbyist, who diligently works to support the association's legislative agenda. Bobby attends the monthly Board meetings and works with the Board on developing legislative proposals. He also keeps board members informed about legislative and government actions that have relevance for state managers and lobbies on behalf of managers with state legislators.

MEMBERSHIP: For those of you who are not AMECSS members we encourage you to join an association that is solely devoted to your interests as state managers. The one best way that AMECSS can be strengthened and thereby provide greater support to state managers is by increasing its membership. Remember there is strength in numbers and membership is a bargain for \$4.50 per pay period. If you have a colleague interested in joining or learning more about AMECSS, please call 951-6614 or e-mail amecss1@gmail.com.

Letter sent to AMECSS members earlier this week:

March 18, 2010

Hello AMECSS members:

We need to act **immediately** as the legislative leadership is definitely poised to make **cuts to our statutory (CGS 5-213) longevity pay.**

It is absolutely crucial that we bombard the legislative leaders with phone calls and emails immediately. Also, make sure that you talk to and e-mail your own state senator and state representative. Also, please enlist the help of your non-AMECSS managerial colleagues as well as family and friends in contacting legislators on this matter.

The legislative leadership contact information is listed at the bottom of this e-mail.

TALKING POINTS:

1. The state managers have participated in the employee concessions that were negotiated between Governor Rell's Administration and the State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC). Managers have been subject to wage freezes, furlough days, increased payments for certain health care services like their coworkers in state service yet only managers are being asked to additionally give up their longevity not staff in bargaining units.
2. Many senior state employees and state managers left state service with the recent Retirement Incentive Program (RIP). Of course, the managers who are still on the job are working extra hard and extra long hours to fill the huge voids in experience and talent left in the wake of all of the retirements.
3. Longevity pay for state managers and senior state employees is a long-standing statutorily provided component of their pay under Connecticut General Statutes section 5-213. Frankly, the longevity pay is a primary factor and incentive that encourages a person to commit to long-term state service. Without longevity pay, the average person would work for the state for a short time, meet a lot of people, learn as much as possible, make as many connections as possible, and then leave when it no longer makes sense financially to continue to serve the citizens of Connecticut.
4. Currently there is a major problem with salary compression between state managers and bargaining unit employees. In most state agencies there are some managers that have a lower salary than the bargaining unit members they supervise. The changes in the longevity payment for state managers that are under discussion will further exacerbate this problem. At present, many collective bargaining members will not consider moving to the managerial ranks due to the salary compression thus limiting a significant pool of talented employees from serving in the managerial ranks.
5. Until such time as the Managers are granted collective bargaining rights, the existing Longevity pay provision is the mechanism that helps alleviate an ever increasing salary compression problem, increases the available managerial pool of talented, experienced and dedicated public servants and ensures the retention of experienced managers dedicated and committed to the provision of effective and efficient services for all the people of Connecticut.

Attached is a copy of the email that I sent to legislative leaders this morning.

Sincerely,

David Guay, President

Legislative Contact Information:

Senate President: State Senator Donald Williams: 860-240-8600; Williams@senatedems.ct.gov

Senate Majority Leader: Martin Looney: 860-240-8600; looney@senatedems.ct.gov

House Speaker: Christopher Donovan: 860-240-8500; Christopher.donovan@cga.ct.gov

House Majority Leader Denise Merrill: 860-240-8500; denise.merrill@cga.ct.gov

Senate Chair of the Appropriations Committee: Toni Harp: 860-240-8600; harp@senatedems.ct.gov

House Chair of the Appropriations Committee: John Geragosian: 860-240-8500;
john.geragosian@cga.ct.gov