

## WASHINGTON

# Washington AFL-CIO rates state lawmakers for key 2017 votes

Paid family leave was a landmark win, but legislators tested anti-union bills in the GOP-held Senate.

Washington State Labor Council (WSLC), AFL-CIO, has released its 2017 ratings for Washington legislators, and as usual, lawmakers from Southwest Washington are some of the best and the worst in the state on issues identified by the state's labor federation.

## What lawmakers accomplished

This year it took the Washington Legislature one regular session and two-and-a-half special sessions called by the governor before they were able to agree on a package providing **school funding** as well as funding to make good on the **collective bargaining agreements** the Gov. Jay Inslee negotiated last fall with state workers. [After years of wage freezes, the new contract gives workers 6 percent raises over the next two years.]

The gridlock resulted once again from the fact that Democrats control the state house while Republicans control the state senate.

But thanks to support of one Republican — Sen. Joe Fain (R-Auburn) — Democrats in the legislature were able to pass a **paid family and medical leave** law. The law sets up a public insurance program funded by employers and employees. Beginning in 2020, it will guarantee workers up to 12 weeks paid time off for the birth or adop-



tion of a child, to take care of an ill family member, when a family member is deployed or wounded in the military, or for the worker's own serious health condition. The program will replace up to 90 percent of wages.

Building trades unions also celebrated the passage of a **"responsible bidder"** law that bars businesses from competing for state and local public works contracts if they have willfully violated wage statutes in the past three years.

But lawmakers failed to pass other bills that organized labor pushed hard for, including a bill to add a jobs requirement to a massive tax break lawmakers gave Boeing.

Remarkably, every single Democrat in the House got a 100 percent rating this year, including Sharon Wylie and Monica Stonier of Vancouver and Brian Blake of Longview.

WSLC's ratings tell how legislators voted, but in some cases, other actions were more revealing than votes to show whose side they

were on.

Vancouver House Democrat **Monica Stonier** co-sponsored bills to tie the state's multi-billion aerospace tax incentives to job creation and maintenance, to protect workers from retaliation for reporting wage violations, and to allow workers to file liens against employers for unpaid wages. None of them became law.

On other side, Chehalis-Centralia Senate Republican **John Braun** was once again unrelentingly hostile to unions and working people. He co-sponsored a bill to make Washington a so-called "right-to-work" state (unions mobilized to defeat it, with more than 1,100 people signing in to testify in opposition.) He also co-sponsored bills to tax union dues; to allow state and local governments to charge a 5 percent "administration fee" for union dues deduction; to authorize state agencies and colleges to contract out for services; and to exempt Uber drivers from unemployment insurance. And he voted for bills to allow employers to pay an 85 percent sub-minimum wage to minors; and to allow individuals to sue unions for "unfair or deceptive acts." None of those bills became law.

### MORE DETAIL ON HOW THEY VOTED

See the Washington State Labor Council's complete legislative report — and a detailed breakdown of how each lawmaker voted — at [bit.ly/2wX8Wy7](http://bit.ly/2wX8Wy7)

## WASHINGTON LEGISLATIVE VOTING RECORDS — AS RATED BY WSLC, AFL-CIO

	2017	Lifetime
LD 49 (Vancouver)		
Sen. Annette Cleveland (D)	92	96
Rep. Sharon Wylie (D)	100	92
Rep. Monica Stonier (D)	100	91
LD 17 (East Vancouver)		
Sen. Lynda Wilson (R)	25	18
Rep. Vicki Kraft (R)	31	31
Rep. Paul Harris (R)	31	28
LD 18 (Camas, La Center)		
Sen. Ann Rivers (R)	33	18
Rep. Brandon Vick (R)	15	11
Rep. Liz Pike (R)	15	11
LD 19 (Longview)		
Sen. Dean Takko (D)	67	79
Rep. Jim Walsh (R)	31	29
Rep. Brian Blake (D)	100	91
LD 20 (Centralia)		
Sen. John Braun (R)	33	12
Rep. Richard DeBolt (R)	15	15
Rep. Ed Orcutt (R)	15	13

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

### At City of Portland, Laborers and COPPEA ratify new contracts, but DCTU still waiting

Bargaining appears to have curdled into a standoff for the biggest group of City of Portland employees, those in the multi-union District Council of Trade Unions (DCTU), but several other large City bargaining units have ratified new union contracts.

Members of Laborers Local 483 ratified two new contracts by strong majorities in votes counted Aug. 7. One covers about 600 laborers at City bureaus that maintain roads and sewers. It provides annual cost-of-living increases based on the consumer price index, plus extra longevity pay and selective raises of 1.5 to 10 percent for some classifications. However, members also gave up a re-

quirement that the City hire first from among existing employees when hiring for new positions, and agreed to a penalty for employees who fail to schedule one medical checkup every two years. Under the second Local 483 contract, starting wages will rise to \$15 and more for the seasonally fluctuating workforce of 400 to 700 workers at City recreation centers, and those who are permanent full-time workers will get health insurance, "just cause" discipline and grievance rights.

Professional & Technical Employees Local 17 (the union formerly known as COPPEA) also ratified a new contract, in votes counted Aug. 25. It covers about 700 city planners and

other professional, technical and engineering employees. Like the Local 483 laborers' deal, it includes cost-of-living increases based on the consumer price index, plus selective increases for some classifications, and a requirement to get a preventative medical exam every two years.

For the DCTU, meanwhile, the last hope to stave off a labor dispute is mediation, which is scheduled to begin Sept. 6. There's no sign of a deal yet, but DCTU union negotiators say the City finally provided a bona fide counter proposal at their last negotiation session on Aug. 17.

—Don McIntosh

## TriMet declares impasse in contract negotiations

After an unsuccessful 14-hour mediator-led bargaining session on Aug. 16, TriMet has once again declared impasse in bargaining with Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757.

Public transit workers aren't allowed to strike under Oregon law. Instead, if the union and management can't reach agreement, they present their final offers to a neutral arbitrator, who picks one side's offer in its entirety.

This is the third time in a row that bargaining between TriMet and Local 757 has reached impasse. In 2010, the impasse led to arbitration, which the union lost. In 2014, the two sides kept meeting after the impasse decla-

ration, and reached a deal. That contract expired Nov. 30, 2016.

"We are able to get collective bargaining agreements with 23 other employers," says Jon Hunt, Local 757 vice president. "I know how to close a deal, and I know how to compromise. But I can also recognize when I've got somebody across the table that's just playing games."

Among the many points of disagreement: TriMet wants to cut contract language preventing the contracting out of union members' work, curtail paid union orientation during employee training, and end a policy of giving cleaners and helpers first dibs when mechanic apprentice positions open up.