

Strategic Action Committee (SAC): MCCC/MTA Legislative Priorities

(2009 – 2010 Legislative Session)

MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE BILLS:

- **HB 2487: Commonwealth Retirees Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)**
This bill increases the base retirement allowance on which COLAs are calculated from the current \$12,000 to \$25,000.
- **HB 2342: Creditable Service for Non-Public School Service**
This act permits K-12 and higher education faculty who taught in non-public schools to purchase up to 3 years of that service. The bill was filed jointly by MTA and AFT.
- **HB 2570 – Amendment of Chapter 150E**
This bill amends Chapter 150 E, the Massachusetts state law that governs our contract funding process, so that negotiated agreements would go directly to the legislature instead of being returned to the Governor for a second approval. The MCCC is working with other Higher Education Unions across the state to get support for this bill or a related/revised bill that would expedite the funding process for negotiated agreements.
- **HB 2601: Sabbatical Leave Bill**
The bill states that higher education faculty and professional employees be granted a full year's creditable service toward retirement for each full-year sabbatical leave taken.

MASSACHUSETTS SENATE BILLS:

- **SB 1082 – Adjunct Faculty Pension Bill**
This bill allows part-time faculty who teach at least four, three or more credit courses per calendar year at one or more state higher education institutions to earn a year of creditable service for this time.
- **Senate 1143: Adjunct Faculty Health Insurance Bill**
The bill requires that part-time faculty who teach at least four, three or more credit courses per calendar year at one or more state higher education institutions be eligible for state employee health insurance coverage.
- **SB 1172 : Creditable Service for Peace Corps for Higher Education Employees**
This bill enables higher education faculty and professional staff to purchase up to three years creditable service toward retirement for time served in any of the above-named organizations.
- **SB 1173: An Act Relative to Optional Retirement Plan Enrollees**
This bill, during a one-time 180 day period, permits higher education faculty and certain administrators enrolled in the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) to transfer, with creditable service, to membership in the state retirement system, conditioned upon their payment of sufficient funds, determined by the State Retirement Board. The state would be held harmless for costs accrued while they were enrolled in the ORP.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION:

- **House 235/Senate 484: Repeal of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP)**

This federal legislation would eliminate the Windfall Elimination Provision, which greatly diminishes Social Security benefits for those with public pensions from one of 15 states, including Massachusetts, Maine, and Rhode Island. This legislation would also repeal the Government Pension Offset which reduces public employees' Social Security spousal or survivor benefits by 2/3 of their public pension.

- For more information on these offsets, go to: www.socialsecurity.gov/gpo-wep/
- For information on this legislation, go to: www.nea.org/home/16491.htm

- **House 1409/Senate 560: Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA)**

This legislation would allow workers to form unions more easily through a sign-up system known as "card check." The bill includes real penalties for the firing and intimidation of workers during organizing campaigns, and allows an arbitrator to step in when workers reach an impasse in labor negotiations with their employer.

- For more information and to sign a petition in support of this legislation, go to UMass Amherst's Political Economy Research Institute website:
<http://www.peri.umass.edu:80/sefca/>

***For additional information regarding this legislation,
State House Committees, and/or state legislators:***

- Visit the state's General Court website for information on state legislators, to find out the current status of Massachusetts bills, or to see a bill in its entirety:
<http://www.mass.gov/legis/legis.htm>
- Visit the MCCC website for SAC news and legislative updates:
<http://mccc-union.org/>
- Note the Strategic Action Committee (SAC) Reports delivered at Board Meetings and the SAC updates distributed statewide by e-mail to MCCC members.