

# AFSCME WORKS



THE GREEN MACHINE NEWSLETTER

Included - 2024 Labor Election Guide

FALL 2024

## Voices of Solidarity: A Note from the President

Dear AFSCME 1624 Family,

As we reflect on the past several months, I want to express my deepest gratitude for the solidarity, unity, and unwavering support we've shown each other. Whether we've been standing together to advocate for better wages, pushing for stronger worker protections, or simply showing up for one another in times of need, we have proven that our collective power is unstoppable. We are not just coworkers; we are a community, and that sense of togetherness is what makes our union a force to be reckoned with. It's been inspiring to witness how we've mobilized, and I am endlessly proud to stand alongside each and every one of you as we continue to push for the dignity, respect, and fairness we all deserve.

Moving forward, we must carry this momentum with us, remembering that our strength lies in our unity. We know that when we show up for one another, we build a foundation that no challenge can shake. Whether it's fighting for fair wages, holding leadership accountable, or ensuring every voice is heard, our power is in our togetherness. Let's continue to uplift each other and show what true solidarity looks like. Together, we will keep making change, fighting for our future, and proving that when we unite, there's nothing we can't achieve. Thank you for your courage, dedication, and for being the heartbeat of this union. Let's keep going, stronger than ever.

Adelante,  
Pedro Villalobos, President AFSCME 1624



## City Celebrates Telework Victory

AFSCME 1624 is proud to announce a win for City of Austin employees! After tireless advocacy and your invaluable input, the City has approved an updated telework policy, effective November 3, 2024. The new policy allows for up to 60% telework per week, with department leaders having the flexibility to grant additional telework based on business needs.

This update reflects the voices of our membership and acknowledges the importance of flexibility, work-life balance, and modern workforce realities. Together, we proved once again that we never quit!



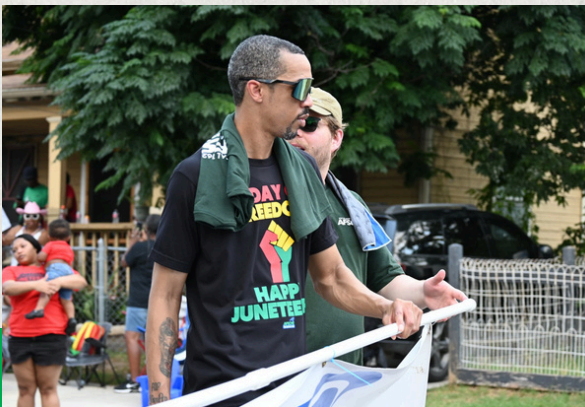
## Volunteer Member Organizer (VMO) Training: Building Power Together

AFSCME 1624 members gathered for an intensive two-day VMO Training at the Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 286 hall. Participants learned how to effectively talk union with their co-workers, gaining hands-on experience through role-playing, tackling tough workplace issues, and strategizing how to overcome pushback. On the second day, we paired up with partners and hit the streets, knocking on doors to speak directly with City and County employees at their homes. This powerful training emphasized that every member is an organizer — a motto that proved true as these dedicated members hosted worksite visits following the training, resulting in over 50 new members joining our union! Together, we are growing stronger, member by member. Solidarity forever!



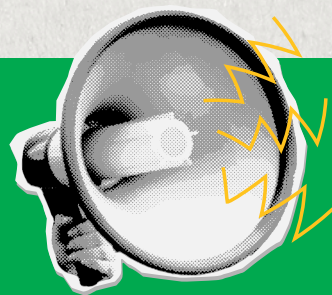
## Celebrating Freedom

AFSCME 1624 proudly marched in Austin's Juneteenth Parade! This event celebrated freedom and the end of slavery, serving as a powerful reminder of the ongoing fight for equality. Our presence emphasized our commitment to workers' rights, fair wages, and dignity. Together, we demonstrated that we are stronger when united!



## Big Wins in City of Austin 2025 Budget

AFSCME 1624 has secured significant wins in this year's City of Austin budget, including a 4% base pay increase for eligible employees, a rise in the City's living wage to \$21.63 per hour, and no premium hikes for medical and dental plans. Employees can now benefit from fertility coverage up to \$20,000, increased Health Savings Account contributions, and a boost in retirement contributions from 9% to 10%. **Additionally, the Childcare Assistance Program income limits have been raised, and non-sworn employees will now enjoy 12 weeks of paid parental leave annually.** These victories are a testament to our ongoing fight for better benefits and fair treatment for all workers.





# Victory for Travis County Employees!

A major win for Travis County employees! After months of hard work, solidarity, and relentless advocacy, AFSCME 1624 successfully secured a 5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). This monumental victory is a testament to the strength of our collective action and the dedication of our union members.

On the day of the vote, the Travis County Commissioners Court unanimously approved the COLA, with Judge Brown, Commissioners Gomez, Shea, Travillion, and Howard all standing with us. Despite attempts by county administrators to push the Segal Market Study forward, our voices were heard, and fair compensation was prioritized.

This COLA ensures equitable pay raises for all employees, addresses inflation, and reinforces fair compensation. Our success here proves once again that when we stand united, we can achieve anything. Thank you to every member of "THE GREEN MACHINE" for your unwavering commitment. Together, we're stronger!

## AFSCME 1624 Shines at Austin Pride Parade!

AFSCME 1624 made history at this year's Austin Pride Parade with our first-ever float! Decked out with light-up letters, balloons, and a sea of our pride logo shirts, we marched proudly with our members, families, and allies. We showed Austin what union pride really looks like — bold, loud, and full of love!

The energy was electric, and the highlight of the night? When someone from the crowd shouted, **"That's my \*\*\*\*\* UNION!"** That's right — we brought the spirit of solidarity, showing that our fight for equality and workers' rights never stops.

Huge thanks to everyone who joined us! Together, we made a statement — this union stands with our LGBTQ+ community, and we'll keep fighting for justice on all fronts.



## Celebrating Labor Day at the Fish Fry - in Style!





## Congressional Town hall Features AFSCME Members



AFSCME 1624 played a pivotal role at the recent Congressional town hall featuring Congressman Greg Casar (TX-35) and Douglas Parker, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA. Held at the Workers Defense Project, this town hall was a crucial platform for discussing worker rights and heat protections.

Union and non-union workers from across Texas joined the conversation, voicing their concerns and experiences about working in the Texas heat. This event was a significant step in our ongoing heat safety campaign, ensuring that our voices are heard on what OSHA should prioritize next.



### AFSCME AUSTIN ENERGY LINEMEN HELP IN HOUSTON RECOVERY

Our union linemen from Austin Energy demonstrated remarkable solidarity and resilience as they traveled to Houston to help restore power after the recent hurricane. This mission was more than a job; it was a testament to our dedication to supporting our communities in times of need.

*"As an LGBTQIA+ union member, seeing the Pride flag raised at my workplace is incredibly powerful. It's a symbol of acceptance and equality, and it means the world to know that my union stands with me and all of us in the fight for our rights. It's not just about a flag—it's about knowing that we are seen, valued, and supported in our workplace and community." - Morgan Davis, Travis County*



## EQUALITY

### Travis County Pride Flag Raising

On June 1, AFSCME 1624 proudly supported Travis County's Pride flag-raising ceremony. Representing over 4,500 City and County workers, we reaffirmed our unwavering commitment to the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. Our union stands tall in advocating for equality and inclusiveness for all.

## Union Pizza Night at Aviator Pizza & Drafthouse

Our Union Pizza Night at Aviator Pizza & Drafthouse was a fantastic time filled with delicious pizza, cold drinks, and the best company. Moments like these remind us of the strength and unity in our community.

A big thank you to everyone who came out, including our wonderful friends, families, and little ones. Your presence and support make our union stronger every day.





# THE GREEN MACHINE

## Union Fights Back Privatization Attempt

When we first heard about an attempt at privatization at Austin Energy's cooling district, AFSCME 1624 sprang into action, issuing a press release that made it clear we wouldn't stand for this short-sighted maneuver. Our union recognized the serious implications this sale would have on our members and the wider Austin community.

Thanks to our swift and united response, the City Council pulled the agenda item. This victory is a powerful reminder of what we can achieve when we come together and take action. AFSCME 1624 will remain vigilant, ready to protect our public assets and fight for the well-being of our members and the community we serve. Together, we're stronger — let's keep up the fight!



## Members Represent at 46th AFSCME International Convention

AFSCME 1624 proudly represented in Los Angeles at the 46th AFSCME International Convention! We made sure our voices were heard on the issues that matter most, including our ongoing climate justice work and our advocacy for fair, sustainable practices that protect both workers and the planet.

## HOLIDAY PARTY SAVE THE DATE

Friday, December 6th at Distribution Hall  
1500 E 4th St, Austin, TX 78702  
6pm-Midnight





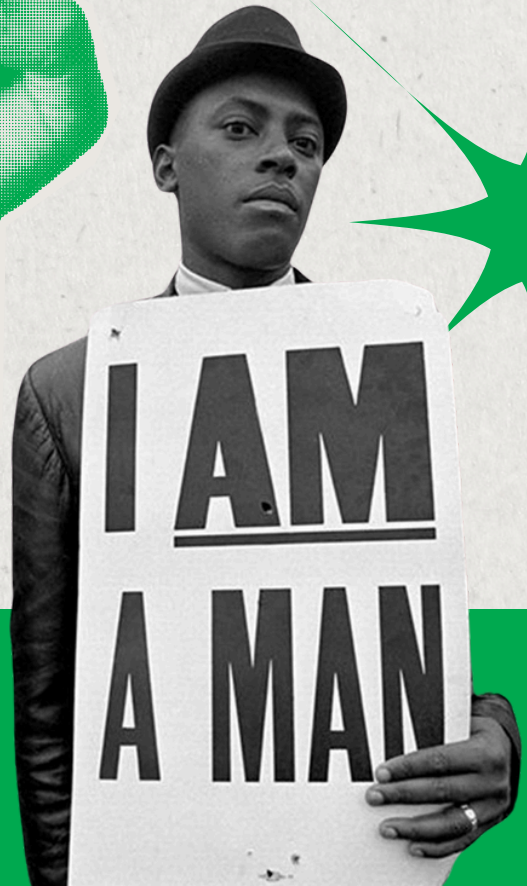
## Together, We're Growing Stronger: Help Us Hit 5,000 Members!

AFSCME 1624 is on track to hit an incredible milestone—5,000 members by the end of this year! This achievement marks not only our union's growth but also the strength of solidarity that each of us brings to our workplace. More members mean a louder voice and more power as we continue to advocate for better wages, safer working conditions, and the respect every worker deserves.

To help us cross this major milestone, we're planning a big membership blitz in mid-November. During this blitz, we'll be visiting worksites across the City and County to connect with potential members and invite them to be a part of our growing movement. It's all about having one-on-one conversations, answering questions, and sharing what being a union member truly means.

But we can't do it without you! We need members like you to help us make this blitz a success. If you'd like for your worksite to participate, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our office and send us an email at [info@afscme1624.org](mailto:info@afscme1624.org) to let us know you're interested.

Together, let's make history. Let's grow our Green Machine family and reach that 5,000-member milestone.



## FUN FACT

Did you know AFSCME played a key role in the historic 1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike? It all began when 1,300 Black sanitation workers, members of AFSCME Local 1733, went on strike after years of unsafe working conditions and racial discrimination. Their rallying cry, "I AM A Man," became a powerful symbol of dignity, respect, and labor rights.

Supported by AFSCME, these courageous workers sparked a movement for social and economic justice. Their fight showed the world that the struggle for workers' rights and civil rights is one and the same—something we carry forward every day as a union.

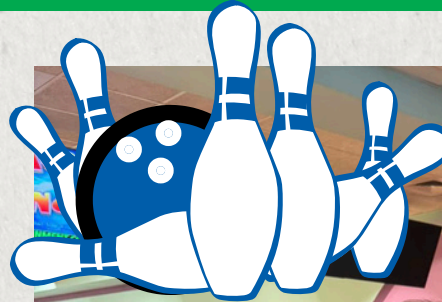


# THE GREEN MACHINE

## Happy 55th Birthday, AFSCME 1624!

What an incredible day celebrating AFSCME 1624's 55th Birthday! We came together to honor 55 years of solidarity, strength, and union pride — and it was nothing short of amazing. From the delicious food and drinks to the games and laughter shared with friends and family, it was truly a celebration to remember.

A huge thank you to all the incredible members who joined us — you are the heart of this union, and we're so proud of the community we've built together.



## Annual Union Family Night: A Night to Remember!

What an incredible time we had at the Millennium Youth Complex! AFSCME 1624 members and their families gathered for an evening filled with joy, laughter, and unity. From the fun activities to simply spending quality time together, it was a night that highlighted the true spirit of our union.

Our community thrives because of the dedication and solidarity of our union family, and it's moments like these that remind us of the power we hold together. Thank you to everyone who came out and made this night unforgettable. Let's continue to build a stronger, more hopeful future for all. Together, we are unstoppable!

## New Swag ALERT



We've got some awesome new swag that's as top-notch as our members! All in our signature AFSCME green — because we're the Green Machine! Remember, being part of this union means being part of a community that always looks out for one another. Stay strong, stay united!



# 2024 LABOR VOTING GUIDE

## WORKING FAMILY *Champions*



**PRESIDENT** - Kamala Harris/Tim Walz

**U.S. SENATE** - Colin Allred

### FEDERAL DISTRICTS

Theresa Boisseau - US Representative, District 10

Dr. Kristin Hook - US Representative, District 21

Stuart Whitlow, US Representative, District 31

Greg Casar - US Representative, District 35

Lloyd Doggett - US Representative, District 37

### STATEWIDE + STATEWIDE COURTS

Katherine Culbert - Texas Railroad Commissioner

Christine Vinh Weems - TX Supreme Court, Place 4

Holly Taylor - Presiding Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals

Chika Anyiam - Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 8

DaSean Jones - TX Supreme Court, Place 2

Bonnie Lee Goldstein - TX Supreme Court, Place 6

### STATE DISTRICTS

Sarah Eckhardt - State Senator, District 14

Merrie Fox - State Senator, District 25

Dwain Handley - State Representative, District 19

Erin Zwiener - State Representative, District 45

Sheryl Cole - State Representative, District 46

Vikki Goodwin - State Representative, District 47

Donna Howard - State Representative, District 48

Gina Hinojosa - State Representative, District 49

James Talarico - State Representative, District 50

Maria Luisa "Lulu" Flores - State Representative, District 51

John Bucy III - State Representative, District 136



**Early Vote: Oct 21 - Nov 1**  
**Election Day: Tues., Nov 5**



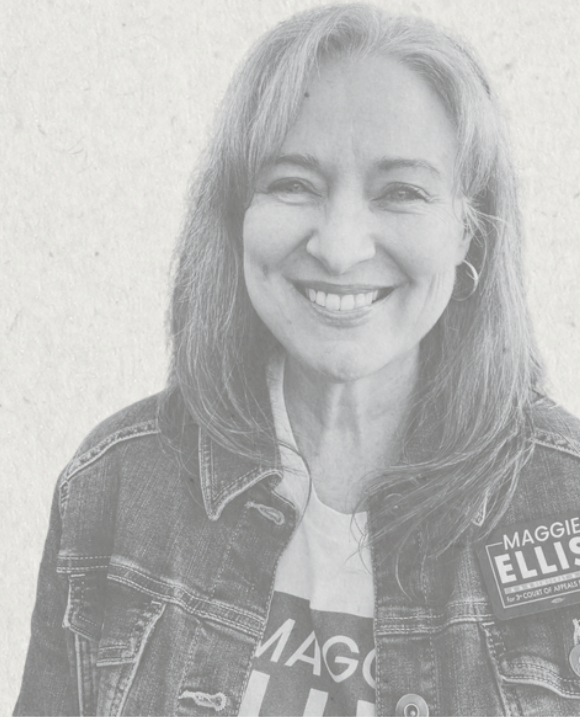
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## WORKING FAMILY *Champions*



### JUDICIAL DISTRICTS

Maggie Ellis - 3rd Court of Appeals, Place 2  
Karin Crump - 3rd Court of Appeals, Place 5  
Maria Cantú Hexsel - 53rd District Court  
Tamara B. Needles - 427th District Court Judge  
Brad Urrutia - 450th District Court Judge  
Aurora Martinez Jones - 126th District Court Judge  
Selena Alvarenga - 460th District Court Judge  
Julie H. Kocurek - 390th District Court Judge  
Chari Kelly - 3rd Court of Appeals, Place 3  
Gisela D. Triana - 3rd Court of Appeals, Place 6  
Jessica Mangrum - 200th District Court Judge  
Sandra Avila Ramirez - 98th District Court Judge  
Jan Soifer - 345th District Court Judge  
Sherine Thomas - 353rd District Court Judge  
Dayna Blazey - 167th District Court Judge



### COUNTYWIDE

José Garza - Travis County District Attorney  
Kim Williams - Judge, County Court at Law no. 9  
Delia Garza - County Attorney  
Sally Hernandez - Sheriff  
Carlos H. Barrera - Judge, County Court at Law no. 8  
Nicholas Chu - Judge, Probate Court No. 2  
Celia Israel - Travis County Tax Assessor-Collector



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## WORKING FAMILY

*Champions*



### COUNTY DISTRICTS

Jeffrey Travillion - County Commissioner, Precinct 1

Tanisa Jeffers - Justice of the Peace, Precinct 5

Adan Ballasteros - Constable, Precinct 2

George Morales III - Constable, Precinct 4

Ann Howard - County Commissioner, Precinct 3

Tonya Nixon - Constable, Precinct 1

Stacy Suits - Constable, Precinct 3

Carlos B. Lopez - Constable, Precinct 5



### AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

Vanessa Fuentes - District 2

Chito Vela - District 4

Krista Laine - District 6

Mike Siegel - District 7

Ashika Ganguly - District 10



### PROPOSITIONS

AISD Prop A - FOR

Travis County Prop A - FOR

# AFSCME WORKS