



Glimmer of Hope

Compromise on Collective Bargaining Negotiated

Our strategy of meeting with the members of the Joint Committee on Finance and Senate leadership, testifying at the hearings on the biennial budget bill (AB 75), and the calls, emails, and letters from ASPRO members to legislators appears to be working.

A meeting of ASPRO's lobbyists and the Chief of Staff for Senate Majority Leader Russ Decker was the tipping point. That discussion prompted a call for representatives from AFT to meet with ASPRO's lobbyists, and staff to Senator Decker and Senator Hansen, the author of last session's Senate Bill 353 on collective bargaining for faculty and academic staff.

Both AFT and ASPRO are opposed to the collective bargaining language in the Governor's budget bill (AB 75) and negotiations which began at that brokered meeting have culminated in a draft amendment to the budget bill which will pull Governor Doyle's language and replace it with language which will do four things:

1. Allow collective bargaining units for faculty and academic staff on each campus, the UW Colleges, and UW Extension (not just UW-Madison, UW-Milwaukee, and all others in a third unit).
2. Allow the academic staff of the UW System Administration to join with academic staff at the Madison campus (they had not been allowed to join a unit in AB 75).
3. Allow any collective bargaining unit to combine with any other unit – faculty with academic staff and a unit from one campus with a unit at another campus (AB 75 prohibited faculty units and academic staff units from EVER combining).
4. Academic staff and faculty on a campus can opt to create a combined unit for both academic staff and faculty immediately -- as the first vote for collective bargaining at that campus.

As with any compromise, ASPRO did not get everything it would have liked. While this compromise does not mirror ASPRO's proposed compromise, the ASPRO Board feels that it is a tremendous improvement compared to the disastrous language in AB 75.

The Joint Committee on Finance has not yet scheduled when it will act on this section of the biennial budget, but we expect the action to be within the next week or two.

As always, your comments and reactions are welcome. Feel free to share your thoughts with us by emailing aspro@aspro.net.