

KOSE MOBILIZES IN WICHITA



On March 8th dozens of members of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) from around the country arrived in Wichita. Attendees from as far away as Alaska and Connecticut came to help

strengthen and energize KOSE and its members through a training and mobilization program AFT conducts annually.

During the week long program participants received morning training sessions on how to engage, organize, and activate workers. Then, in the afternoons and evenings, they developed those skills as they traveled across south-central Kansas conducting worksite visits, knocking on doors and making calls to talk to KOSE members. You may have seen or heard from them yourself.

This year, participants in the Wichita mobilization and KOSE members in the area got a special treat as AFT chose Wichita as the location for the national launch of the “Reclaiming the Promise” initiative.



AFT’s National Secretary and Treasurer, Dr. Loretta Johnson flew in to join speakers Reverend David Hansen from the Wichita Interfaith Alliance and Annie McKay from the Kansas Center for Economic Growth in highlighting the need for workers to stand up and organize to ensure they have safe and dignified workplaces, Kansans receive quality public



services, and all of our kids receive a quality public education.

That is what “Reclaiming the Promise” is all about - helping every American reclaim their rightful share of American prosperity.

From the unprecedented feedback received from new members signing up and existing members showing a renewed commitment to making their workplace better, KOSE declares this mobilization a SUCCESS and sets Kansas state workers on the path to strong activism for the respect and dignity they deserve!



NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL

With the legislative session adjourned for the rest of April here are some of the bills and issues KOSE is closely tracking for state workers.

HB 2750

3% Raise vs Losing Longevity Pay

HB 2750 would provide a 3% salary increase for classified state employees with an annual compensation of \$35,000 or less. For each classified state employee with annual compensation over \$35,000, the compensation increase would be mathematically determined according to a sliding scale. KOSE asked for member feedback on this issue and received unprecedented responses. With opinions in at approximately 70% against this proposal, KOSE took a position against the bill. The legislature held a hearing on the bill on Tuesday, March 18th. Several KOSE members testified in opposition

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KOSE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT JOHN BATES

John Bates, a Correctional Officer at Lansing Correctional Facility is a true leader for KOSE. As a member of KOSE, John has taken his role of Steward very seriously, standing and working with other employees assisting them through grievances, understanding their contract, and overall leadership at the Lansing Correctional Facility.

Recently, John appeared before the Kansas Legislature to speak on behalf of Kansas Public employees regarding legislation the potential reform of KPERs. On the same day, John also appeared for a television interview to speak about the anti-Bullying legislation currently before the Legislature, and before heading back to Lansing to assist with an "Opportunity to Appear" for another KOSE member. All in a day's work for this amazing KOSE member.



Currently, John is working with other KOSE members at Lansing Correctional facility to start their first Organizing Committee in effort to grow and strengthen membership. Identifying other leaders at his worksite, he is training them not only on the role of a steward, but how to build their power through numbers and the protection of the Memorandum of Agreement.

KOSE is pleased to spotlight John and the amazing job he does every day as a Correctional Office, KOSE steward, member, and activist.

NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL

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opposition to the bill and told their personal stories of how it would affect them. **KOSE is unaware of any plans for further hearings or for a committee to work the bill.**

Gannon Decision

The Supreme Court decision ordering greater funding for education.

While the Supreme Court decision ordering over \$150 million in additional school funding did not specifically mention any workers covered by KOSE, we remain vigilant that any solution to the school funding case is not done on the backs of state workers. **KOSE is actively monitoring several bills and funding discussions to ensure workers are protected.**

HB 2470

Bill to increase the pay of state legislators.

KOSE opposes this bill. Legislators should not be given a raise unless or until the state starts meeting its obligation to fairly compensate state workers for the quality public services they provide.

HB 2519

Bill to switch KPERs to a defined contribution plan.

This bill was heard in the House Pension and Benefits Committee with KOSE members and staff testifying against the bill. The committee heard how much additional costs the state would face in implementing a defined contribution system and how it could affect current workers' retirement plans. **There has been no further action on this bill since that hearing.**

SB 454

The bill was represented as straightforward pay bill. It is not.

SB 454 provides an "annual payment" of \$300 for certain full-time state employees and \$150 for certain part-time state employees, **eliminates longevity pay**, and requires the executive branch to adopt an overarching philosophy regarding pay plans and to develop a pay plan consistent with that philosophy. This bill may be advanced when the legislature reconvenes in a few weeks. **While your legislator is home, schedule a face-to-face meeting to explain State employees need a real pay raise.**

STAY IN TOUCH!!! For up to the minute information on your union's activities, legislative developments, or just to see what your co-workers are up to check in on the KOSE Facebook page, surf over to the website at <http://kose.ks.aft.org>, or feel free to stop by the KOSE office in Topeka at 701 SW Jackson St, Suite 200. KOSE people are all super fun, you know you want to know us all!!!