



Legislative Update

New York Legislature passes union protections in State Budget bill

The New York State budget was passed in the early morning hours of Saturday, March 31st, less than 24 hours before the budget deadline. The \$168.4 billion deal maintained a self-imposed cap on increasing state spending at 2%.

Last year, in an effort to provide some protection against a potential unfavorable court ruling in the Janus case, AFSCME supported legislation sponsored by the State Senate Labor Chair, Marisol Alcantara. The Alcantara bill included five main union protections:

1. **Speedy Processing of union dues:** A public employer must transmit dues to the representing union within thirty days of receiving a signed dues deduction card.
2. **Using new technology to accept a membership application:** A union and the public employer can accept electronic signatures in signing up new members.
3. **New Employee Orientations:** The union will receive a list of new employees every thirty days and be given the opportunity to meet with new employees on work time.
4. **Union membership continues after a leave of absence:** Union membership continues after a voluntary or involuntary leave of absence once they return to the employer's payroll.
5. **“Maintenance of membership” language:** Unions may include language on their membership card allowing for window periods to withdraw from paying dues to the union.

In June of 2017, that bill passed the Assembly but did not pass the State Senate. This year, the language from that legislation was incorporated into the General Revenue bill, which has the same binding effect. That bill passed both houses overwhelmingly. Governor Cuomo, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan were all helpful in ensuring that this language would be included in State budget negotiations.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees New York
212 Great Oaks Blvd ★ Albany, New York 12203
(518) 869-2245 office ★ (518) 869-8649 fax

