

AFSCME Council 32: Memo to the Joint Committee on Finance

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TO: Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Susan McMurray, AFSCME Wisconsin Council 32

SUBJECT: State Employees Should Not Pay More for Healthcare

As the Joint Committee On Finance (JFC) looks for savings in state employee health insurance programs, AFSCME Council 32 urges the Committee to not raise deductibles, out-of-pocket limits or co-pays on state employees.

Over the last six years, state employees have taken significant cuts to their benefits, in particular their healthcare, which has created a host of negative consequences for the state of Wisconsin.

On the issue of self-insurance, the Group Insurance Board (GIB) issued a memo on the 26th of May listing the numerous benefits cuts state workers have received in their healthcare plans since 2011. That list, for reference, is below:

2011: State employees share of premiums increased from 6 to 12% - an \$82.4 million cut for state employees

2012: GIB switches to 90/10 co-insurance model - a \$65 million cut for state employees

2016: \$250 individual/\$500 family deductibles added, office copayments and coinsurance for prescription drugs. All adding to an \$84.7 million cut for state employees

As the legislature looks for savings, AFSCME Council 32 urges legislators to demand that the Walker administration negotiate better contracts with the insurance companies in the state health plan.

A reduction of insurance company profits will provide the savings the legislature needs without having to further cut benefits for state employees.

Therefore, AFSCME Council 32 urges legislators to demand the Walker administration negotiate better contracts on behalf of Wisconsin with insurance companies.

State workers have been treated as a piggy bank by the Walker administration for far too long. Additional cuts to benefits, such as the ones being discussed currently in the legislature, only serve to further undermine the already fragile workforce and infrastructure required for state services to operate effectively.

The legislature should do right by state workers - approve the pay raises in the budget, and don't cut benefits.