

 <p>PSC/CUNY Professional Staff Congress AFT LOCAL #2334</p>	<p><u>June 23, 2006</u></p> <p>NYS LEGISLATURE PASSES CONTRACT PAYBILL</p> <p>PSC JOINS MUNICIPAL LABOR BARGAINING COALITION</p>
--	--

June 23, 2006

Dear Members of the University Community,

I received word from Albany today that the paybill providing funds for our contract was passed without opposition by both houses of the New York State Legislature. The Governor is expected to sign the bill, and the new salary schedules and other new contract provisions will then be implemented.

The proposed collective bargaining agreement comes before the CUNY Board of Trustees on Monday, where it is also expected to pass. The paybill was passed contingent on approval by both the union membership and the CUNY Trustees. The first step in the process was taken on June 2, when PSC members ratified the proposed agreement by a margin of 87%.

I want to thank the representatives of the CUNY Chancellor, who worked in close collaboration with the PSC to ensure that the paybill would pass. I am also grateful to the PSC's representatives in Albany, NYSUT, for their sustained advocacy on our behalf.

The paybill also includes the change in the statutory language on the tenure clock negotiated by the union and management. The change increases the untenured period from five to seven years, effective September 1, 2006, for full-time faculty members initially appointed to tenure-bearing titles on or after that date. Once the final approvals by the Board and the Governor are in place, that change will become effective, as will the increase in sabbatical pay to 80% and

the provision for 24 hours of full-paid reassigned time for incoming junior faculty. You will receive more detailed information about the new provisions as soon as the final approvals are completed.

PSC Joins Labor Coalition

The other important union news of the day is that the PSC is among the founding members of a coalition of municipal unions that was announced on the steps of City Hall this morning. Unions representing more than 175,000 municipal workers have come together to bargain collectively with the City of New York. The most significant New York labor coalition in decades, it will bring the concerted power of 20 unions and 175,000 workers to negotiations with the City. Our aim is to shift the balance of power and win a fair contract.

New York City has the largest budget surplus in its history. A good contract for city workers is ultimately an investment in the future of the city itself.

As a vice-chair of the Municipal Labor Committee, I have been among the union leaders working hard to make a coalition possible. I will be a member of the coalition negotiating committee, where I will speak strongly for the needs of the PSC and for the potential for real union power the coalition represents. It was clear from broad discussion across the PSC that CUNY faculty and staff felt it was time to bring greater power to the bargaining table, and that a labor coalition would be one way to accomplish that. The PSC Executive Council voted unanimously to join the coalition, and the Delegate Assembly, in an informal meeting yesterday afternoon, expressed strong support.

The participating unions have all made a six-month commitment to bargain as a coalition; we will assess the PSC's position after six months. Other unions in the coalition include the United Federation of Teachers, and unions representing nurses, lawyers, office workers, marine engineers, sanitation workers, tugboat operators and the faculty at the Fashion Institute of Technology. Other unions have been invited to join. The PSC will still be able to negotiate with CUNY on issues affecting only our union, but the coalition will bargain with the City on economic issues, including salary increases and health benefits. Any proposed settlement would still be subject to the PSC's normal ratification procedure and to the usual approvals by CUNY, the City and the State.

I will keep you informed as the coalition develops. My effort will be to seize the opportunity this moment offers to maximize the power of organized labor in New York City, to bring the force of thousands of City workers to bear on negotiations, and to win what we need as the faculty and staff of the city's university.

In solidarity,

Barbara Bowen

