

46th



Convention

**DAY ONE**

Day One I arrived in Los Angeles at 8am this morning. I really don't know what I was thinking of leaving Philly that early in the morning. However, I arrived at the hotel and was able to check in with no problem. Registration was from 12-5 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. I arrived at the Convention Center this afternoon and was met by several different people from all over with the same agenda



Each member was very personable and pleasant. First thing we had to do was register. I was met by Walter (delegate registration) who works at headquarters, and apparently loves the Washington Commanders. Then we went on to meet Zach (guest registration) who also works at headquarters in DC



Walter on the left and Zach on the right, repping his college in AFSCME green.

After meeting with Walter and Zach we proceeded in line to go up the escalators. There we were met with the sounds of violinists playing music



I went upstairs to receive my AFSCME delegate kit and met several people. First thing we received was information about Project 25. Just a quick guide on the facts if you don't have the time to read 900 pages. I also stopped at the Action Center which sends postcards to people who don't want to vote. Someone special will be receiving a postcard this week. We were also informed that Kamala Harris may be a guest speaker this week. Other than that, there was music, games, mingling and getting to know others. It was GREAT and I am looking forward to tomorrow for the 1st time delegate meeting and reception





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**DAY TWO**

Today started with sleeping in late, which was well needed. Then on to the convention center in the afternoon to attend a briefing for first time delegates and alternates.



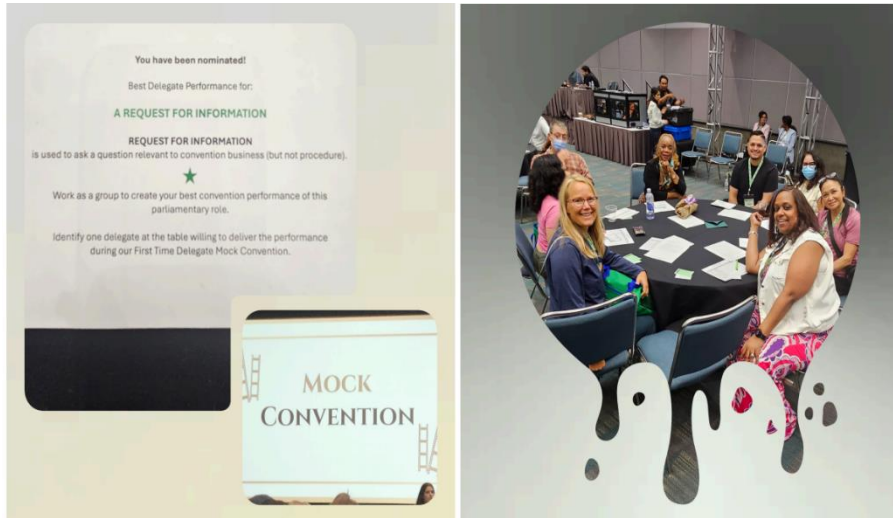
Ben Gallegos, Local 1902, LA, and I were waiting for our shuttle to take us to the convention center. Ben is in the water works industry and has been his local Executive Secretary for a year in a half. The convention center also has a Hollywood Walk of fame that displays different AFSCME stars.

Once we arrived at the convention center, we attended a meeting that informed us newbies with information on what to expect during the week. AFSCME has 1.4 million members and starting tomorrow 4000 members, voted to represent different locals across the US will be in a room together making decisions as a group. Nicole Pollard, executive assistant to AFSCME president Lee Saunders provided us with the Convention business which includes, The rules and order of business, Amendments, Resolutions, Elections and Appeals.



Nicole Pollard and I at the Delegates briefing.

We were then provided a guide on Parliamentary motions by Jim Slaughter which was very informative on how to communicate during the meetings. His guide gave us newbies the insight we needed and the words that we are allowed to use for resolutions. He also showed us a video from 2014 with President Saunders conducting a meeting, where members filed a motion and it was voted on by the floor. Then to see if we understood what to do there was a team building exercise where each table had to work together.



Our mock resolution involved changing the color of the AFSCME headquarters building. Our table consists of members from locals located in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Virginia, California (Sacramento & San Diego), Minnesota and of course, New Jersey local 2278!!! This exercise provided us with knowledge involving motions while reviewing resolutions and after we were finished our table understood what we are expected to do.

Our Next Stop....





After the meeting was over the first-time delegates, alternates and their guests met at the West Hall with the rest of the delegates and enjoyed live entertainment, Los Angeles cuisines and fellowship.



Just a glimpse of the people who showed up to mingle at the reception.

Tomorrow starts with Council 63 holding a morning caucus with breakfast at 7am and the meeting starting at 8am.

Onto day three.

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DAY THREE

Day Three - First Day of AFSCME 46th International Convention

Monday morning started at 7am with Council 63 serving breakfast and a meeting immediately following. The meeting which was conducted by Steve Tully (Executive Director) provided us with updates and expectations for Council 63.

They also gave out Council 63 pins that could be traded with AFSCME brothers and sisters during the convention. The pin was designed by Jeff Trout, from local 3596 in Cape May. It appears that most locals from the state have created pins to trade during the convention.

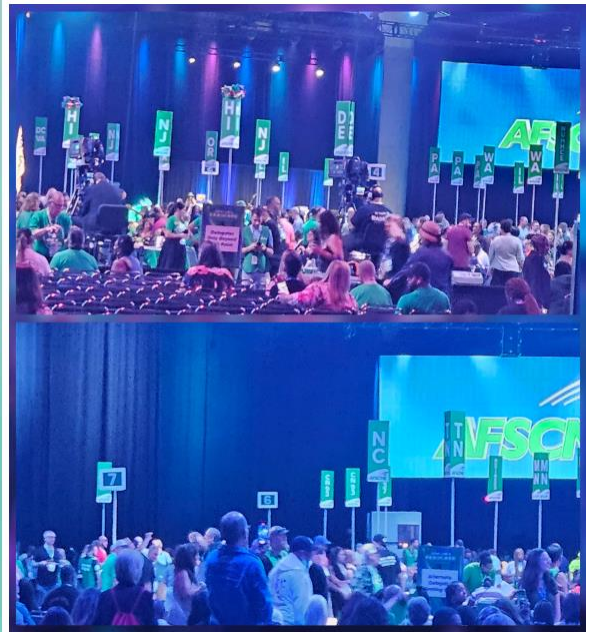


Our pin this year "The Only Boss We Listen To" with our council number on Bruce's guitar.

As a newbie it's crazy to see how obsessed people are with these pins. They approach you wanting to know if you wanna trade. They run from table to table to collect as many pins as possible. **We have to get pins so that the next representative for local 2278 is prepared at the next convention.**

We arrived at the Convention Center ready for the first day to begin. The morning started with singing, dancing and a drumline. I felt like I was at a family reunion, with over 4000 brothers and sisters excited for the day to begin.





Our Keynote speaker was AFSCME President Lee Saunders. He spoke about who we are and what we do. "We are everyday heroes who make their communities happen through their work for state and local governments. WE ARE THE UNION FOR PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS." He also discussed why AFSCME is for Harris and Walz. Why we need to vote, and what will happen if we don't.



We can't tell you who to vote for, but know this: Project 2025 calls for a complete ban on public sector unions like AFSCME. Our contracts, benefits, representation and freedom to negotiate could disappear overnight.

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**DAY FOUR**

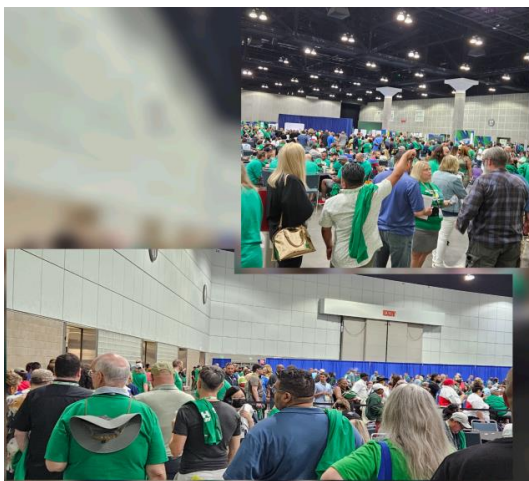
Day Four - 2nd day of AFSCME's 46th International Convention

This morning started with breakfast at 7am and a short meeting before heading to the convention center. Today was T-Shirt Tuesday, in support of the International Vice President Debbie Parks. Council 63 members wore their shirts and attended the nominating caucus to show solidarity in support of re-electing Debbie for the Eastern Region.



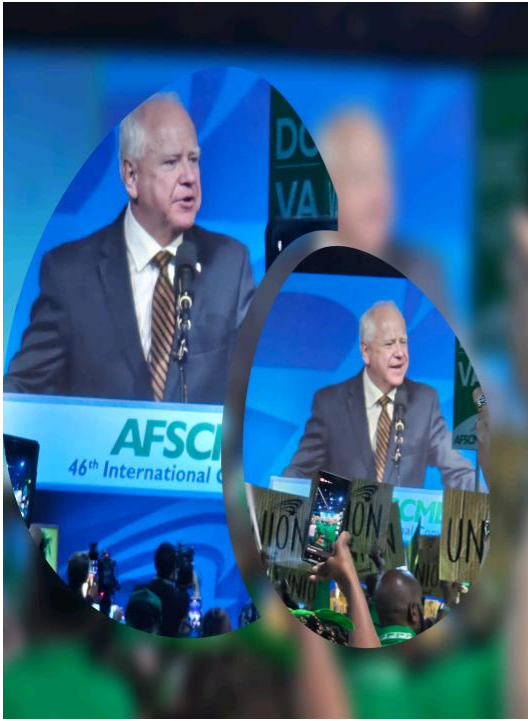
The "Bruce Shirt".

We arrived at the Convention Center and it was a long process. We knew Vice President candidate, Governor Tim Walz would be a guest speaker today. We stood in line for over two and a half hours to be screened by the secret service.



Governor Walz can relate to union members like us because he was a member of the teachers union and a member of the middle class. His speech didn't bash his opponent, he also thanked him for his service. However, he brought knowledge and facts of the importance of unions like AFSCME, and why they have to exist. How not having a union can affect us, our job, our pay, and our benefits. He did speak about Project 2025, which is important. He said "If you're gonna take the time to draw the play book, You damn sure gonna use it." I asked that you take the time to read it and educate yourself.





After Governor Walz speech, we had the pleasure to listen to the keynote speaker of the day Elissa McBride. Her speech focused on the role of AFSCME and what it supports. What we offer and who we continue to help. She ended her speech with "Have no fear, AFSCME's here", which was chanted as she walked off the stage.



Then we reviewed resolutions, and amendments and voted on them. We also nominated and voted for AFSCME President and Secretary-Treasurer for the next four years.



Lee Saunders and Elissa McBride were re-elected.

Once we left the convention floor, council 63 went into a private room and nominated and voted for the International Vice President for the Eastern region. Debbie Parks was reelected as the VP.



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DAY FIVE

Day Five - Third Day of AFSCME's International Convention

The morning started with the normal 7am breakfast and 8am meeting. Since the pins are a hot commodity Steve decided to do a contest. Apparently, everyone wants the Hawaii pins. He was given two, so he decided to do a contest like guess the jelly beans. However, we have to guess how many times he said "this is ridiculous" while waiting in line for two hours and forty minutes yesterday. We also signed cards for our sister and re-elected International Vice President Debbie Parks, DE.

I arrived at the Convention center and had to pick up my shirt and I was able to enjoy all the amenities before the 10am meeting started.



T-Shirts given for the rally today and taking pictures at the photo booth.

Re-elected president Lee Saunders began the meeting, which included voting on appeals, amendments and resolutions. In between the voting several guest speakers spoke to the crowd. Members thought that VP Kamala Harris would appear on Tuesday to speak to the crowd. Walz appeared instead, but she recorded a video that was for AFSCME members.



Her speech was directed to us, and what she plans to do for people like us, when she is elected to office. She also spoke about how project 2025 is set to eliminate unions. It's important that everyone understands what's set to happen. Remember, when we fight, we win!!!

Another guest speaker was Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass. Some of us saw her on TV, in Paris to retrieve and bring the flag bag to LA for the next Olympics. She was also a union member, when she was a nurse and physician assistant.



ASFCME presented an award for a person who never quits, and continues to do what they love to do and help people. While this role is a reminder of how far she has come, she doesn't stop. She continues to be involved even when people are done with her program. She is a mental health specialist in the state of Oregon, who helps women and families in her role at her program.





Amy Simpson 2024 Never Quit Service Award Winner.

Before the meeting came to an end, Local 3299, CA, President Michael Avant and his secretary spoke to the crowd because they needed our assistance. They need a fair contract that focuses on the cost of living. The University of California is not budging and this contract affects the workers at the university's campuses, hospitals, clinics and labs.



Michael Avant Local 3299 President

Once the meeting was called into recess, AFSCME sisters and brothers went to work. We put on our shirts and marched across the street. Traffic was stopped, motorists were angry, and the horns were honking.



## **SOLIDARITY!!**

Tonight, I will be attending a Council 63 reception to continue to fellowship with our members, as well as President Saunders and Secretary-Treasurer McBride.



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**DAY SIX**

Day Six - Fourth Day of AFSCME's 46th International Convention

We met for the normal 7am breakfast and 8am briefing. Due to elections and Steve being on the elections committee, the meeting was conducted by Debbie Parks. We were able to vote this morning in an attempt to win the pins that everybody wanted. So many people traded with the members from Hawaii that they ran out.



Hawaii pins, pineapple and hula girl.

Today was also the People's T-Shirt Day. Elissa McBride asked us to show support and wear the commemorative T-shirt celebrating AFSCME's 46 International Convention, and the people responded.



After the morning briefing, we headed over to the Convention center to attend morning workshops, and utilize the amenities. The day was spent voting on resolutions, amendments and appeals.



We stood as a family when our members from NJ & DE supported and spoke about resolutions.



Brian Bradford, Local 3911, DE at mic 9 speaking on why he is in support of Investing in Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

The entire day was focused on voting and approving resolutions, amendments, and appeals. President Saunders and Secretary-treasurer McBride controlled the floor and ran the session.

Last night Steve Tully with the help of his staff held a reception on the Plaza deck for Council 63 delegates, alternates and their guests. We had a GREAT time. There was dinner, dancing, and fellowship with others. The weather was beautiful and we stayed out there until it was over.





Photo to the left, Steve Tully Executive Director, Yolanda Lawson Council 63 staff representative and I. The photo to the right, Ron McMullen President, Council 63, Yolanda Lawson, and Mary Patterson Monmouth County Public Library.

This experience has allowed me to meet people from all over. Whether I was sharing a seat with someone on the shuttle, sitting at a table with them or just having a general conversation, everyone was very personable and respectful.

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DAY SEVEN

Day Seven - Final Day of AFSCME's International Convention

The morning started with the normal 7am breakfast and 8am briefing. The briefing was short because we needed to be at the Convention center at 9am. Steve was able to get his hands on another pineapple Hawaii pin. So, there was another contest this morning to win this pin.

We headed over to the convention center for the final day of reviewing resolutions. Steve spoke in support of resolution six, Defend Affirmative Action and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The members of council 63 who are still here stood up in support for our Executive Director.



President Saunders finished the final resolutions, thanked retiring international VP's, and those who are not returning. He showed clips which displayed photos of the five VP's that are retiring. The day was short and there was the last and final motion, to end the 46th International Convention.





President Lee Saunders on the last day. #SEAOfGREEN #GREENMACHINE

I just want to thank the members of Local 2278 for this opportunity, that allowed me to be a part of this memorable experience. I met so many people not just from NJ but across the US. I loved that I was able to witness AFSCME at work.



My lanyard with the pins I collected.

