



# *Alaskans Working For Alaska!*

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## Contract Negotiating Committee Statement of Gains and Losses

July 22, 2004

ASEA Members,

Enclosed is a ratification ballot for the Tentative Agreement that was reached on June 8 between your Contract Negotiating Committee (CNC) and the State. The Tentative Agreement is for a three-year **term**—July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2007.

The following CNC members believe that this is the best agreement that could be reached without a strike of the membership. We **recommend** a **yes** vote in support of the agreement.

The terms discussed below are clear **gains** for the GGU membership:

1. The State has agreed to increase its per member/per month contribution to your **health insurance** plan by **\$58** during the first year of the contract. In years two and three the contribution will increase by the amount necessary to maintain the State's Select Benefits Economy Plan at its current level of benefits. That number will be computed using industry standard actuarial techniques. This is substantially better than the conditions achieved by any other union.
2. In year two of the Contract the **wage schedule** will increase by 1½% and in year three it will increase an additional 2%.
3. Due to strong member input, the team negotiated one final chance for members in the sick/annual system to **convert** to the personal leave system. The window will be in November 2004. If you do not convert to personal leave you will remain in the sick/annual system for the duration of your service as a GGU employee.
4. We have regained the floating **holiday** that we had prior to the 2000-2003 Contract. Every year each employee will have an additional day of leave deposited in his or her account. The leave can be used either for vacation or it can be converted to cash.
5. The **contracting out** article has been substantially strengthened. This is important because of the current administration's interest in privatization. Timelines have been tightened, feasibility studies have been defined, the Union has a better opportunity to respond, and there are now compliance requirements.

6. The **injury leave** provisions have been greatly improved. We have implemented and funded a program designed to help those workers who are assaulted on the job.
7. We have created an **emergency leave** account. This is a voluntary program designed to help members with serious long-term health problems that need additional leave. It was modeled after successful programs used by numerous teacher and educational unions in the state.
8. We have formally created **Labor Management Committees** to address three specific issues. The parties recognize that employees whose regular shift includes Saturday and Sunday should receive a **differential** for their work. We also recognize that some employees regularly work on **emergency assignments** performing work that is clearly not covered in their class specifications so we need to look at the pay inequities in such situations. Finally, because there is clear evidence that many GGU members experience health problems that are the result of poorly designed workplaces, we created an **ergonomics** committee.
9. The **Parking** Committee that was created with the current contract has had its authority broadened so that it can address issues at more worksites.
10. There is now language that gives **probationary** employees increased protection. The union can now file level two Complaints protesting probationary drops. This will save time and resources.
11. Performance **Evaluations** are now limited to the preceding twelve months.
12. Pay for **acting in a higher range** is now required when you work fifteen or more days. This shortens the existing time requirement by one day.
13. The state now has to give an employee twenty days notice of a **shift change** instead of the current five.
14. Language has been added allowing bargaining unit members to receive health benefits when they are called to active **military duty**.
15. The union **security** clause was restructured to allow the Union to conduct internal business without interference from the state.
16. All **LOAs** are automatically extended unless specifically cancelled.

The terms discussed below are losses for the GGU membership:

1. The State only has to offer an **interview** for a job to the three most qualified bargaining unit members. This is a reduction from the current requirement of five.
2. The authority of an arbitrator has been limited to questions of procedural **arbitribility**.
3. Employees now have to work for more than two hours past their normal shift to qualify for an additional half-hour paid **lunch** break.

In addition to the above there are some other issues that should be mentioned:

1. The CNC believes that GGU members deserve a greater **wage increase** than we were able to accomplish. The hard-line position of this administration, coupled with other unions settling early in the process, were formidable barriers to achieving a greater

increase in wages. We did, however, make some important non-monetary gains (listed above) in the tentative agreement.

2. The administration was determined to freeze **merit increases** for year one. Despite that determination we successfully preserved your merit increases.
3. The monetary terms of this contract will not be funded until there is **legislative approval**. That approval cannot happen until the legislature goes back into Session in January 2005. Until that time you will have to pay the additional \$56 necessary to fund your health plan. After the legislature acts you will receive a check to reimburse you for the \$58 per month employer increase that is part of this contract.

The complete terms of the tentative agreement can be viewed at the union website: <http://www.afscmelocal52.org> . You can also contact your Steward, a Chapter officer, a State Executive Board officer, a member of the CNC, or staff if you have questions.

In Solidarity,

**Contract Negotiating Committee**

Jerry Farrington, Rural Chapters Representative

Chris Lyou, Class I Representative

Rob Miller, South East Region Representative

Tammy Westover, Seasonal Representative

Toya Winton, Central Region Representative

Lew Brown-Coon, Alternate Class I Representative

Dianne Hardy, Alternate Rural Chapters Representative

Heidi Morrison, Alternate Seasonal Representative

Matt Wilkinson, Alternate Northern Regional Representative