



Local 3599 on the Move at the AFGE 2010 Legislative Conference

Local 3599, the biggest local in the National Council, had a lot of ground to cover at the AFGE Legislative Conference. Eight states and fourteen cities mean a lot of U.S. representatives and Senators to visit. That is why Local 3599 showed up strong again to the conference with a three-member team, as in past years. This year the team consisted of Sharon Baker, Local 3599 President, Rachel Shonfield, Local 3599 Delegate, and David Hamilton, Tampa Alternate Steward. The team visited 30 offices. The visits included several exciting face to face meetings with actual members of Congress. Sharon met personally with Rep. Brad Miller (D-NC) and Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC). She also visited with her own representative, John Yarmuth (D-KY). David had an opportunity to participate in a roundtable between civil rights icon Rep. John Lewis (D-GA) and AFGE members. David and Rachel actually escorted Tampa Congresswoman Kathy Castor (D-FL) from her office to the Capitol for a vote. The team shared with each office the Council's talking points (available on www.council216.org) urging Congress to adopt the FY11 budget increase for EEOC. The Council advocates that the increase should be targeted at hiring more frontline staff. While on the Hill, the team educated Congress on the Council's intake plan, which would finally provide adequate resources to intake on the front-end and free up investigators to work on their pending inventories. Local issues of concern, especially about staffing, were raised with members whose district covered that EEOC office. The 3599 team also attended: AFGE's conference, where Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) was the keynote speaker; the Civil Rights Luncheon, where former EEOC Chair Rep. Eleanor Norton Holmes spoke; and the EEOC workshop, where Acting Chairman Ishimaru spoke and Rachel moderated.