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Patrick Moran – President

HB 1044 - State Agency Workforce Policy for the 21st Century Act

**Appropriations Committee
March 7, 2024**

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

AFSCME Council 3 represents state employees who work in the State Personnel Management System (SPMS) in the executive branch of state government. We support HB 1044 with amendments. On January 2, 2024, the Taskforce on the Modernization of the State Personnel Management System released a [report](#) with 11 recommendations after spending the Fall discussing barriers to hiring within the SPMS. Ultimately, the taskforce decided that legislation was not the primary factor inhibiting state hiring, and focused recommendations on internal processes that could be improved first. The taskforce concluded that more discussion with stakeholders is necessary before we alter state personnel law. We support that HB 1044 furthers these conversations and recommend the following amendments:

On page 2, strike lines 1-32. This language in HB 1044 does not account for positions in state government that rightfully so, require a college degree, but may not be required for the occupation. We have already removed many educational requirements out of state positions, including for most positions we represent in state government. We share the same concerns of other SPMS taskforce members that by further reducing these requirements, and more broadly, we run a risk of reducing job requirements that could impact the quality of services being delivered and/or the safety of others.

On page 4, line 26, insert a new subsection:

(g) The Secretary shall take no action under this section:

(1) which reduces the pay or hours of any employees in the skilled or professional service; or

(2) where the action would affect employees represented by a certified exclusive representative, without notice and an opportunity to bargain to that certified exclusive representative.

We support employees having accurate job descriptions and jobs titles but want to protect from attempts to diminish pay and benefits as this work occurs. We also support the Secretary working with the exclusive bargaining representatives to access which positions are apprenticeable within state government, and to establish apprenticeship programs where they are bargained.

On page 5, strike lines 23-31; On page 6, strike lines 1-4.

We do not feel like this language is necessary to accomplish more school-to-career pathways in state government, or to highlight the benefits that state jobs have. This already possible without changes to statute. We already have members who have come directly from programs in their high schools into entry-levels state jobs and have had long careers with the state. This barrier is generally much more about funding, not having enough personnel or a marketing budget to do outreach to schools in the area. We think it would be more effective to fund the 11 recommendations of the SPMS Taskforce, which include adding more dedicated personnel to help with recruitment and retention.

We appreciate the opportunity to continue these discussions. Please provide a favorable report HB 1044 with these amendments.

