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Patrick Moran - President

**SB 239 - State Employee and Retiree Health and Welfare Benefits Program –
Domestic Partnerships
POSITION: FAVORABLE**

AFSCME Council 3 supports SB 239. This is legislation that establishes domestic partnerships for the purposes of granting spousal benefits under the State Employee Retiree Health and Benefits Program. Domestic partnership means a relationship between two individuals who are at least 18 years old, are not related to each other by marriage or blood, are not married or in a domestic partnership with another individual, and who agree to be in a mutually interdependent relationship.

The benefits state employees receive are often an important motivator for employees choosing to stay with the state or apply for a state job. Domestic partners were once covered under the state's benefits plan but were removed once marriage equality became legal. Domestic partnership benefits are still important for those wishing not to get married, but who otherwise have a similar interdependent relationship. These benefits should be extended in these circumstances as well.

SB 239 is good legislation, and we urge the committee to provide a favorable report. Thank you.

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An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.
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