

MEA-RETIRED TRIBUNE

December 2018

NEA-Retired President Sarah Borgman has been asked by a member to write a two paragraph article for state newsletters

Sarah Says...

At our Annual Retired Meeting in June, I challenged our delegates and guests to *stand and fill the gap*. We had just been handed the Janus decision and membership growth---or lack thereof--- threatened all of us. It appears that we have faced that challenge, but what remains today is the fact that there is a job for everyone in our Association whether seeking new active members or those retired of our own. Maybe “selling” membership is not your strong point, but you certainly have stories to tell and can use to help others: new career teachers, aspiring teachers, active members, or those sitting on the fence!

The bottom line is that in our advocacy for students, our profession, and public education there is a job for everyone. YOU are needed to *stand and fill the gap*. Unfortunately, we lose our own members who have been real warriors and someone needs to *stand and fill the gap*. There are jobs to be done in every facet of our work; there are projects waiting to be done; there are calls to be made and e-mails to be sent to legislators; there are committees with vacancies; there are multiple positions to be filled. **Will YOU stand and fill the gap?**

LAME DUCK

Release time leaders and staff,

Good news for a change – the House Education Committee DID NOT pass the House versions of the release time legislation (HBs 6474 and 5368) in their meeting this morning. Testimony was compelling for our side and our lobbying is making a difference.

HOWEVER, we are not out of the woods – there are many procedural methods to get these or the Senate bills (795-796) up for consideration on the House floor. We need to continue the pressure. We’re doing patch through calls today to members in target districts, plus text messages that went last night and today to members asking them to call targeted lawmakers.

To answer the question that last sentence is sure to generate, we are not sharing the target list broadly. Were that list to get out, it would put an arm-twisting target on the backs of those legislators. We’ve reached out to UniServ directors in those key areas to ask them to take particular steps, including getting with release time leaders in those House districts.

Regardless of targets (because the anecdotal pressure is helpful with both friends and foes alike), we need all of you to continue contacting your state representatives and urging your administrations to do the same.

Our Action Network page (which has already generated more than 500 emails in one day) is at <https://www.actionnetwork.org/letters/tell-your-representative-protect-our-public-employees-vote-no-on-hb-6474-and-5368-2> -- please share this with members (we’ve included it in Capitol Comments and on Facebook).

Thanks,
Doug Pratt
Director of Public Affairs, MEA

The 2018 Election

Mark Brewer gave his comments on the 2018 election. ‘It was an extraordinary election in so many ways with record mid-term turnout (4.3 million) in the most expensive mid-term election ever. Democrats won all 12 statewide elections, the 4 major offices - U.S. Senate, Governor, Secretary of State, and Attorney General - and all 8 education board seats. Despite the gerrymanders, Democrats picked up 2 Congressional seats, and 5 seats each in the State Senate and House. But for the gerrymanders Democrats would have won control of the Legislature for the first time since 1983. In another rare occurrence an incumbent Supreme Court Justice, a Republican, was defeated making that Court a little fairer. All 3 ballot proposals won with Proposal 2 providing fundamental changes in the redistricting process starting with the 2022 elections and Proposal 3 rendering sweeping election reforms such as no reason absentee voting, automatic and same day voter registration, early voting, post-election audits, and the restoration of straight party voting. On straight party voting this is the 3d time (1964, 2002, and 2018) the voters of this state have overwhelmingly voted in favor of that option, rejecting GOP efforts to eliminate it. Finally there were many Democratic gains at the county level including the election of a new Democratic Commission majority in Oakland County and the election of a new Democratic County Clerk in Macomb County.’

“But the job isn’t done. The GOP will use lame duck to try to sabotage the minimum wage and paid sick time laws, maneuver to protect dark money in politics, and do whatever they can with their last gasp of control of state government. Starting in 2019 Proposals 2 and 3 must be implemented in the face of GOP resistance. Campaign finance, ethics, lobbying, FOIA, and OMA reforms are needed statewide. Eight years of GOP neglect of public education, infrastructure, and clean water has to be remedied. In 2020 Michigan will once again be a battleground presidential state and Democrats must stay united in order to defeat Trump. We must work to win again up and down the ballot from President, U.S. Senate, and Congress to State House, Supreme Court, and county and township government. There is a lot of work to do but 2018 demonstrated that if Democrats work smart and hard, and stay united, we can make progress. We have to build on 2018 and organize in 2019 to be ready for 2020. Our motto must be #Finishthejobin2020.”

STAND UP TO ALEC

The last results are trickling in around the country, but the verdict is clear: voters around the country rejected the ALEC agenda.

352 ALEC legislators are leaving our state legislatures in 2019. That's over a quarter of all known ALEC legislators, and it's a huge deal.

Voters turned out earlier this month at record levels—the highest we've seen in over one hundred years. At the polls, they voted overwhelmingly against the growing list of right-wing politicians who have cozied up to Donald Trump and molded themselves in his image.

This is disastrous for ALEC. Their political strategy relies on indoctrinating and cultivating the next generation of radical conservatives to push their fringe ideology. Now, hundreds of their members are leaving office. This includes some of ALEC's worst of the worst:

- Idaho State Senator Dan Foreman – berated his constituents on multiple occasions, both in the Idaho capitol building or at a county fair.
- Colorado State Representative Tim Leonard – compared participants of the Women's March to Nazis.

- Iowa State Senator Rick Bertrand – was accused by staffers of making lewd comments about women at work, including about a colleague’s wife.
- Kansas State Representative Steve Alford – claimed that African Americans were more likely to abuse drugs “because of their character makeup, their genetics.”

The American people can rest easy knowing that these politicians and 348 of their colleagues won't be back next year. It's clear that exposing ALEC politicians is having an impact, but we still have a lot of work to

MEA-RETIRED ON-LINE VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

FEBRUARY 4-15, 2019

Beginning February 4, 2019, MEA-Retired members will begin casting their ballots for MEA-Retired delegates to the MEA Representative Assembly, the NEA Representative Assembly, and the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, as well as Region Directors (Odd numbered regions).

**ON-LINE VOTING WILL BEGIN ON FEBRUARY 4, 2019 AT 8 AM EST AND WILL
CONTINUE UNTIL 4 PM EST ON FEBRUARY 15, 2019**

Here's how – You can use your own computer, your neighbor's, your grandchildren's or one at your local library.

1. Go to the MEA website at <https://www.mymea.org/onlinevoting/>
2. Follow the Login instructions:
 - First Name (often your legal first name)
 - Last Name
 - Last four digits of your social security number
3. Click the “Login” button.
4. If your record is found and the polls are open, your ballot will be displayed.
5. Select the people that you would like to vote for. Clicking the “Additional Info” link next to a ballot item will allow you to read biographical information on the candidate if it has been submitted.
6. Once you have made your selections, click the “Confirm Ballot” button.
7. A preview of your ballot selections will be shown. To modify any of your selections, click the “Modify Ballot” button.
8. To cast your ballot, click the “Cast Ballot” button. Once your ballot is cast, you will see a confirmation page.
9. Click the “Sign Out” link to log out of the system.

If you have any problems using the MEA Online Voting application, please contact the MEA IT Department at 517-337-5440 from 8 AM – 4 PM, Monday through Friday. If you call after hours, please leave a voicemail, and they will return your message as soon as possible.

If you are interested in receiving a paper ballot you will need to fill out the form below and return it to Dan Rudd c/o MEA-Retired, 1216 Kendale Blvd, PO Box 2573, East Lansing, MI

48826-2573. The request **MUST** be postmarked no later than January 8, 2019. Please use the address you will be at after December 31, 2018.

NAME _____
STREET _____
CITY _____ STATE ____ ZIP _____

Recipe for Christmas All Year Long

Take a heap of child-like wonder
That opens up our eyes
To the unexpected gifts in life—
Each day a sweet surprise.

Mix in fond appreciation
For the people whom we know;
Like festive Christmas candles,
Each one has a special glow.

Add some giggles and some laughter,
A dash of Christmas food,
(Amazing how a piece of pie
Improves our attitude!)

Stir it all with human kindness;
Wrap it up in love and peace,
Decorate with optimism, and
Our joy will never cease.

If we use this healthy recipe,
We know we will remember
To be in the Christmas spirit,
Even when it's not December.

By Joanna Fuchs