

# insight

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS

OF PROTEC17

Jan/Feb  
2021  
Vol 26  
No. 1



**COVID-19  
vaccinations  
begin**





### On the Cover:

PROTEC17 member Nick CastroLang at Spokane Regional Health District smiles after receiving his first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in January. Public Health members on the frontlines have been some of the first to be vaccinated in the year-long fight against the coronavirus, and many are helping with rollout of the vaccine. Read more on pages 6-7. ■

### News and Features



- PROTEC17 joins the 39th annual MLK March in Seattle.....4
- BFHD members win 3% COLA.....4
- ILCA gives four awards to PROTEC17 for communications.....4
- Over 200 members in new classifications joined in 2020.....5
- Unions negotiate emergency childcare benefit at KC.....8
- PWR! hits the ground running in 2021.....9
- Visit the PROTEC17 swag store to show your union pride.....12



### Political Action

- Historic virtual legislative sessions begin in WA and OR.....10
- PROTEC17 2021 Legislative Priorities.....11



### Professional and Technical Employees Local 17

2900 Eastlake Avenue East, Ste. 300  
Seattle, Washington 98102  
Phone.....206-328-7321  
Toll-Free.....800-783-0017  
Fax.....206-328-7402  
Email.....union@protec17.org  
Website.....www.protec17.org

**President:** Rachael Brooks  
**Vice-President:** Sean Simmons  
**Secretary-Treasurer:** Jessica Garcia  
**Trustee:** Jennell Hicks  
**Trustee:** Emily Tabachnick  
**Trustee:** Renee Thompson

**Executive Director:** Karen Estevenin  
Ext. 101 • karen@protec17.org

**Finance Director:** Jackie Miller  
Ext. 102 • miller@protec17.org

**Operations Director:** Anthony Davidson  
Ext. 121 • anthony@protec17.org

**Project Administrator:** Paul Marvy  
Ext. 109 • paul@protec17.org

### Union Representatives

Denise Cobden  
Ext. 127 • denise@protec17.org  
Alisha Gregory-Davis  
Ext. 116 • alisha@protec17.org  
Youssef El Hamawi  
Ext. 120 • youssef@protec17.org  
Alex Il  
Ext. 118 • alex@protec17.org  
Sarah Lorenzini  
Ext. 110 • sarah@protec17.org  
Steven Pray  
Ext. 105 • steven@protec17.org  
Suzie Saunders  
509-720-4758 • suzie@protec17.org  
Shaun Van Eyk  
Ext. 133 • shaun@protec17.org  
Brent Wagar  
Ext. 131 • brent@protec17.org  
Rachel Whiteside  
Ext. 113 • rachel@protec17.org  
Alexis Young  
Ext. 103 • alexis@protec17.org

### Union Organizers

Melissa Mafua  
Ext. 129 • melissa@protec17.org  
Xuan-Trang Tran-Thien  
Ext. 106 • tran-thien@protec17.org

### Program Directors

**Communications:** Deidre Girard  
Ext. 130 • deidre@protec17.org  
**Research:** Elliot Levin  
Ext. 128 • elliot@protec17.org

### Office Staff

**Communications Specialist:** Donna Clarke  
Ext. 104 • donna@protec17.org  
**Membership Administrator:** Laura Elia  
Ext. 123 • laura@protec17.org

## A new path for a new year



Karen Estevenin  
Executive Director

**F**ipping the last calendar page of 2020 brought a palpable feeling of relief. Despite current struggles and those yet to come, this particular new year feels monumental. This moment is a unique and urgent opportunity, a moment in time perhaps even marked in history, in which we must choose our direction anew. And that direction is clear. We cannot go back to our pre-pandemic way of life. We must make something better.

In this moment, people are rising up to envision a better community -- this includes many PROTEC17 members. Our new member-led coalition -- the PROTEC17 Workers Roundtable (PWR!) -- is mobilizing across our union to exercise our collective power to win fair contracts, racial equity, and respect and dignity for each other (p.9). At King County, we won a historic reimbursement program covering child care for union families (p.8). And virtually at our State capitals, we are working collectively to support legislation pushing tax reform, police accountability, transportation, transit, and public health funding -- all so we can create communities that provide safety, health and opportunity for everyone.

Choosing a better path right now will not be easy or without immense challenge, but it will change our future. As a labor union and labor movement, this work is ours to do. The path to a brighter and more equitable future for all will be paved by working people. In the short time I've been in this role, it's been clear that PROTEC17 members are up for the challenge. We had even mapped out our necessary route before the pandemic when we crafted our strategic planning priorities: growing our union, elevating racial justice initiatives, and developing member-leaders. And we cannot rely on employers, management, businesses or the corporate world to take this path -- it is up to us. Let's make it inclusive, creative, beautiful, formidable, and honorable in remembrance of the year we just got through.

February is a month designated to honor the accomplishments and contributions of Black Americans. As we embark on this path towards a better future, it serves as a powerful reminder that for us to make progress, we need to center racial justice. Last month, when she addressed our nation and the world, Amanda Gorman, the United States' first youth poet laureate, described how we can get on the path towards a just form of unity and union:

*And yes we are far from polished  
far from pristine  
but that doesn't mean we are  
striving to form a union that is perfect  
We are striving to forge a union with purpose  
To compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and conditions of man  
And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us  
but what stands before us*

We get lost through any distraction of what stands between us. It's what our enemies want. We need to look towards the horizon where we can share a vision and work to create it together. I look forward to this journey with you, in this new year, and until we're there.

In compassion and solidarity,

*Karen*

## Another vote on the PROTEC17 constitution coming in spring 2021

In 2020, members approved five revisions to the PROTEC17 constitution – our union’s guiding document – in three separate union-wide votes.

The Constitution Committee, a member-led group which has been working hard on these important updates since late 2019, will bring another revision to the broader membership in March. This will come after they present the change to the Regional Executive Committee – our union’s policy-making body – at their bi-annual meeting on Feb. 27.

From housekeeping items, to allowing for electronic voting, to creating a more balanced designation of Executive Board seats, these changes are helping to update this living document so that it will continue to best serve our members. If you have questions for the committee, please email [future@protec17.org](mailto:future@protec17.org). ■

## PROTEC17 wins four ILCA awards in 2020 contest

PROTEC17 is proud to announce that we won four awards in the International Labor Communications Association (ILCA) 2020 Labor Media Contest!

Labor unions from across the United States and Canada enter the yearly contest that selects the best labor writing and digital communications for work created in the previous year. PROTEC17’s awards were given for our website, *Insight* magazine, and two pieces written by PROTEC17 Communications Director Deidre Girard. You can find a detailed list of our awards at: [protec17.org/news](http://protec17.org/news).

Thank you to all of our members for sharing their stories, highlighting the important work that is being done by public sector union members in their workplaces and within the broader labor movement! ■

## PROTEC17 members attend the 39th annual MLK Rally & March in Seattle



PROTEC17 members gather before the 39th annual Martin Luther King Rally & March on Jan. 18 (left to right): Karen Estevenin (PROTEC17 Executive Director), members Rocco Devito, Cristina Olivares, Dani Hurula, and Lucas Smith, and PROTEC17 Executive Board President Rachael Brooks.

## Benton-Franklin members fight for higher wages — and win!

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, public health workers have been working long hours in extreme conditions to keep our communities safe. When we surveyed members at the Benton-Franklin Health District (BFHD) about what kinds of things they wanted to prioritize in contract negotiations in 2020, they were loud and clear. They wanted to see a good cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), extra pay for bilingual workers, and an acknowledgment of their hard work.

The PROTEC17 bargaining team hosted several virtual lunchtime chapter meetings to share bargaining progress and get input on how the team should respond to management’s proposals. Members turned out in record numbers to these meetings. On the last day of negotiations, members also wore the color blue to show their support for the bargaining team.

When management gave a final COLA offer of 2.5% for 2021, the bargain-

ing team pushed back. They shared stories about how workers were tired, burned out, and even quitting due to the stress of working through the pandemic. The management team was moved by the testimonies, and agreed to go to the Board of Health to ask for a higher COLA for their employees. The Board voted overwhelmingly to give PROTEC17 employees a 3% COLA for 2021 and a guaranteed 1-to-2% COLA for 2022. Non-represented employees only received 2.5% for 2021. Additionally, the team won a seat at the table to decide on a policy for extra pay for bilingual workers, and they successfully fought back a proposal to split off some supervisory employees into another unit.

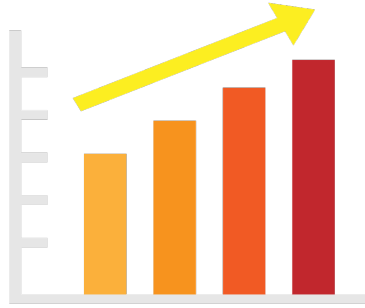
In a year when many workers around the state lost their jobs, were forced to take furloughs, or received no COLA, Benton-Franklin Health District members banded together and used the power of their union to fight for more. ■



## PROTEC17 is growing! Nearly 200 members in 14 new classifications joined in 2020; 95 more already certified in 2021

**D**espite the pandemic – and in part because of it – PROTEC17 grew its member-powered strength last year, adding nearly 200 members in 14 new classifications to our union. In an unprecedented year of job, health, and economic uncertainty, this growth highlights an upward trend in the national labor movement where union members are slowly gaining a larger share of the workforce.

While the majority of our organizing campaigns took place within the City of Seattle, brand new union members joined from King County and Snohomish Health District (SHD) as well. Our newest King County members are Functional Analysts at the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, and Project/Program Managers, Educator Consultants, Engineers and even one Statistician at the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS). At SHD, Emergency Management Specialists voted to join PROTEC17. And in Seattle, Civil Rights Analyst Seniors, Planning & Development Specialist Seniors at the Human Services Department, Tennis Professionals, Building Inspectors, Research



and Evaluation Assistant IIs at the Office for Labor Standards, Strategic Advisors I/ IIs at the Office for Civil Rights, Legislative Analysts, and Conservation Policy Analysts all won their union in 2020. Most of the 14 organizing campaigns that started in 2020 were because current or former members wanted to connect their coworkers with our union.

The King County DCHS unit is the largest member group to join, with 127 represented positions throughout the department.

Sung Cho, who helped organize the DCHS unit and serves on the bargaining team to negotiate their new contract is excited to be a part of PROTEC17 and hopeful that it will create a climate of fairness.

“Being in a union is a way to get genuine discussion going and hopefully movement on topics that impact staff, as well as to get leadership to take staff seriously and hear our concerns and recommendations,” said Cho, who works in both the Developmental Disabilities and Early Childhood Supports Division and the Office of Equity and Social Justice.

The Seattle Tennis Professionals were finally added to the PROTEC17 Seattle bargaining unit after waiting patiently for four years – the group was first certified by the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) in 2016, but various hurdles delayed the accretion into our Seattle contract. And member Al D’Allesandro, a Business Finance Officer at King County who has tried to unionize his position in four campaigns over the last three years, finally won his union, which was certified by PERC on February 4.

If you know of colleagues in non-union positions who want to join PROTEC17, please reach out to Xuan-Trang Tran-Thien, PROTEC17 External Organizer at [tran-thien@protec17.org](mailto:tran-thien@protec17.org). We’d love to welcome them to our union! ■



The King County PPM bargaining team on a Zoom meeting to discuss negotiations for their brand new contract. Top (left to right): Xuan-Trang Tran-Thien (staff), Shaun Van Eyk (staff), Jennell Hicks; Middle: Denise Cobden (staff), Adam Schmid, Rebecca Roy; Bottom: Reginald Cole and Sung Cho.

**“Being in a union is a way to get genuine discussion going and hopefully movement on topics that impact staff, as well as to get leadership to take staff seriously and hear our concerns.”**

Sung Cho, PROTEC17 Program Manager and bargaining team member, *King County*

**Find more news on our website: [www.protec17.org/news](http://www.protec17.org/news)**

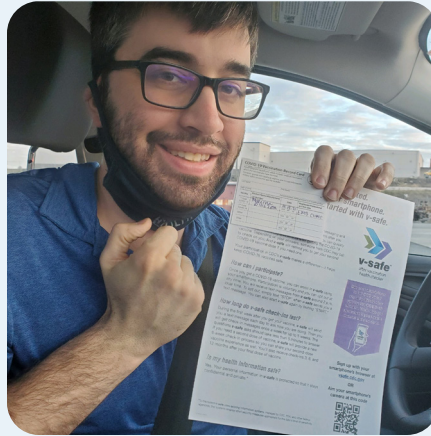
## COVID-19 vaccinations rollout: Member shares his experience and why it's important to get vaccinated

**A**s we approach the one-year mark of fighting the coronavirus pandemic, several vaccines have begun mass rollout across the country. Thanks to the quick and collaborative work of scientists across the world, the vaccine – which was granted emergency approval by the World Health Organization and the U.S. Food & Drug Administration – is becoming more widely available as states organize their efforts and prioritize the most vulnerable among our populations.

PROTEC17 members who work on the front lines in Public Health were some of the first to receive the vaccine in January. These members know that the vaccine can save lives and help end the pandemic once a critical mass of the population is protected. That's because many of our Public Health members are health educators, medical assistants, and other

**“I am grateful we have vaccines and I'm excited for people to get a vaccine. It's the only way to get through this pandemic. We need to trust science and the experts in Public Health who know how viruses work and how best to fight this.”**

Nick CastroLang, PROTEC17 member and Administrative Assistant in Treatment Services, Spokane Regional Health District



PROTEC17 member Nick CastroLang shows off his vaccine card after his first dose of the Moderna vaccine in January.

professionals who promote and administer a variety of vaccinations – even in non-pandemic times.

Vaccines work by triggering our bodies' cells to make proteins that build immunity to a virus. As of this writing, two vaccines have been approved for use in the United States to prevent the spread of COVID-19. One is made by the pharmaceutical company Moderna and the other by Pfizer. Both underwent a rigorous testing, review, and approval process to establish their safety and effectiveness.

At Spokane Regional Health District, PROTEC17 member Nick CastroLang expressed his gratitude for the vaccine when he got his first dose in January.

“I am grateful we have vaccines and I'm excited for people to get a vaccine,” he said. “It's the only way to get through this pandemic. We need to trust science and the experts in Public Health who know how viruses work and how best to fight this.”

The vaccine requires two shots spaced about four weeks apart. Some mild to moderate side effects have been reported and are normal signs that our

bodies are building protection. Common side effects include pain or swelling at the injection site, fever, chills, tiredness and headaches, but they should dissipate within a few days. The vaccine is free of charge.

“After the vaccine, my arm was a little sore, but the process was super efficient and great,” said CastroLang. “The Fire Training Facility [in Spokane] was a fantastic place and the EMS people who provided the vaccine were great.”

While CastroLang is not working directly on SRHD's vaccination efforts at the mass clinic at Spokane Arena, he works on the frontlines of the opioid epidemic – another health crisis in our communities. He gets his second dose of the coronavirus vaccine in February.

Both the Washington Department of Health and the Oregon Health Authority have created eligibility phases to organize the demand for the vaccine, and to prioritize frontline healthcare workers, the elderly, people with multiple medical conditions, and other vulnerable groups to get their shots first. The plan is to distribute vaccinations through traditional delivery systems, like hospitals and pharmacies, but also to ramp up distribution through other means, like mobile vaccination teams, community-based pop-up clinics, and mass vaccination sites. Visit the resources and links on the next page to find out which phase you will be eligible to get your vaccine and where the nearest vaccination site is to you.

Knowing the broad, long-term impact that the pandemic is having on workers and our economy, employers and unions are working together, too, to encourage workers to get the vaccine and to organize communication and outreach efforts.

At the City of Seattle, a pop-up clinic was organized for employees over 65 years of age and working onsite at least three

**For COVID-19 resources and info, visit: [protec17.org/covid19](https://protec17.org/covid19)**

days per week. Because of its success, more pop-ups will be scheduled in the coming weeks. We will be communicating information to Seattle members as we learn more.

In Portland, PROTEC17 member and GIS Specialist Paul Cone has been mapping vaccination sites in the city for a public-facing resource.

Many other PROTEC17 members across the Northwest are helping in different ways to support the rollout of the vaccine – even if that just means being patient and waiting for their phase to be given the green light to get vaccinated.

“I want people to stay patient and make sure you only receive the vaccine when you are eligible, and remember that the public health workers and healthcare workers are doing their best,” said CastroLang.

The coronavirus pandemic has also underscored the vital importance of our Public Health system, and how quickly it can become overwhelmed. While our members and their local systems have been doing an incredible job with the resources they have, the last year has demonstrated how chronically underfunded the Public Health system is.

Funding via the state legislature, as well as federal and local dollars, are so important to tackling all of the issues that need to be addressed in our communities says CastroLang.

“We need to be prepared to attack public health crises outside of COVID-19,” he said. “We have racism, gun violence, the opioid crisis, and many more – and we must be proactive. Public Health is viewing the whole of society and attacking all of our health issues head on.” ■

## Getting Vaccinated for COVID-19

**Vaccinate WA**  
CovidVaccineWA.org

Fighting the pandemic has been hard, but now we have two vaccines to protect us from COVID-19.



### Both vaccines are provided at no cost.

The federal government will cover the cost of your vaccine. You should not be charged or billed. Your provider should also not charge you for an office visit if you only go in to get the vaccine.



### You will need to get two doses.

You will get two doses of vaccine, three to four weeks apart.



### Both vaccines are safe and effective.

The vaccines are 94 to 95 percent effective. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized the vaccines for emergency use and found no serious safety concerns. Independent experts confirmed it met high safety and efficacy standards.



### People at highest risk will get the vaccine first.

As we get more vaccine, more people will be able to be vaccinated. The Department of Health made choices about who will get the vaccine first and focused on those at highest risk. Everyone will be able to get vaccinated when we have enough doses. Visit [FindYourPhaseWA.org](https://www.findyourphasewa.org) or call 1-800-525-0127, then press # to find out when you can get vaccinated. (For interpretive services, say your language when the call is answered.)



### You may feel side effects.

Like other routine vaccines, you may get a sore arm, fever, headaches, or fatigue after getting vaccinated. These are signs the vaccine is working.



### Stay safe.

After you get the vaccine, wear your mask, stay six feet (two meters) apart, and keep gatherings small for those who haven't been vaccinated.

Questions? Visit: [www.CovidVaccineWA.org](https://www.CovidVaccineWA.org)

# Get the facts!

[covidvaccineWA.org](https://covidvaccineWA.org)  
[wslc.org/covid-vaccine](https://wslc.org/covid-vaccine)  
[covidvaccine.oregon.gov](https://covidvaccine.oregon.gov)

## Union-negotiated emergency childcare benefit at King County offers parents relief during the pandemic

**E**arly in the coronavirus pandemic, PROTEC17 Union Representative Denise Cobden started noticing a trend as she returned phone calls from her members at King County.

With schools closed, parents – most often mothers – were concerned about how they were going to work and take care of their school-aged children with limited childcare options available. This was particularly true when one or both parents were deemed essential workers and not able to telecommute, but it was also becoming an issue with telecommuting parents trying to juggle their work, meetings, childcare and remote schooling.

“With many of our members doing essential work either on-site or remotely, the need for help balancing the difficult demands of work and family has been made abundantly clear by the pandemic,” said Cobden.

The data is now showing that COVID-19 is having a dramatic impact on women in the workplace, especially those who are parents. Many women are quitting as a result of the stress of managing work and online schooling or because they cannot afford or secure adequate childcare.

**“We’re so grateful for the COVID-19 childcare reimbursement for offsetting the additional childcare costs that we have faced due to the pandemic.”**

Caroline VanHarmelen, PROTEC17 member and Project Manager,  
*King County*



PROTEC17 member Caroline VanHarmelen is grateful for the new emergency childcare benefit, which has helped her pay for a nanny-share for her son (pictured above) while she does her work for King County Metro.

Unemployment rates for women are on the rise over the last few months and the women’s labor participation rate has been falling full percentage points.

“This month is a disaster for working women – 865,000 women dropped out of the labor force; 216,000 men did,” said an October 2020 article by Mike Madowitz, economist at the Center for American Progress.

Although COVID-19 has been a struggle for all parents, it has had a disproportionate impact on women. Couple that with childcare affordability – which can cost more than half the income of a single parent in Washington State – and it becomes a recipe for disaster for working parents.

The idea of an Emergency Childcare Program was brought up in the Joint Labor Management Insurance Committee

(JLMIC), the group that negotiates health insurance benefits for King County, by Cobden and union partners. Unions in the JLMIC and King County management liked the idea and, quickly worked on designing a program that would provide immediate relief to help parents during the pandemic. The resulting \$9 million fund can now be used by King County employees to cover emergency childcare expenses during the current school year.

Because COVID-19 has been deemed a national emergency, the program is tax-free. The \$9 million will be distributed on a sliding scale, allowing for parents making less than \$80,000 to receive the program maximum of \$5,000 per child per school year. The fund covers childcare expenses such as licensed and un-licensed daycares, pre-schools, school-aged programs and in-home care for children under the age of 12. It also covers children over the age of 13 with documented special needs or an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

PROTEC17 members are expressing their gratitude for the new benefit.

Caroline VanHarmelen, a Green Building Project Manager at King County Metro, returned to full time work last March only to lose the childcare she and her partner had arranged when the pandemic began. After juggling their jobs and childcare all spring and summer, they found a nanny-share for the school year – but it cost 50% more than what they had previously paid.

“We’re so grateful for the COVID-19 Childcare Reimbursement for offsetting the additional childcare costs that we have faced due to the pandemic,” said VanHarmelen. “Thank you PROTEC17 for advocating for our families.”

PROTEC17 is proud to have been a part of implementing this progressive benefit in King County because we all benefit when our fellow colleagues, friends, and neighbors are able to find some relief in these difficult times. ■



## PROTEC17 Workers' Roundtable (PWR!): Member-led group hits the ground running in 2021

**A** new member-led group – called the PROTEC17 Workers' Roundtable (or PWR! for short) – met on Jan.

28 to discuss what issues to prioritize for the coming year and how members can support each other across chapters and show solidarity for common causes.

About 25 members joined the two-hour Zoom meeting led by members Kelsey Hopkins (King County), Sundar Sharma (City of Seattle), and Neil Loehlein (City of Portland). PROTEC17 members from the Washington State Department of Transportation, Department of Licensing, and Spokane Regional Health District also joined the call.

The union-wide group started coming together in mid-2020 during the massive nation-wide calls for racial justice and an end to police brutality. Several Chapters had formed their own separate racial justice groups, but wanted to develop a more visible presence on the issue across PROTEC17. Today, with anti-racism and

racial justice at the top of the group's priorities, PWR! is pushing forward on a broad spectrum of economic, racial and social justice issues.

To get the discussion going at the meeting, participants in smaller breakout rooms were asked: “*why are you here?*”, “*how do we want to show up as a union?*”, and “*what are the important causes for your chapter?*” Back in the larger session, the group collaboratively found trends and commonalities among the responses, and selected some of the top themes and objectives to start working on in 2021.

One of the biggest themes involved creating more communication and connection between chapters, and demonstrating union-wide solidarity during contract negotiations.

Another theme centered around building PROTEC17's strength and visibility within our employers, the labor movement, and in the broader community by showing up in a more physical way on the ground.

The PWR! meeting was recorded and is available on our YouTube page for members to get a sense of what the group's all about. You can find it here: [https://youtu.be/U3Ojg-\\_MVs](https://youtu.be/U3Ojg-_MVs).

Hopkins, Sharma and Loehlein were pleased with the engagement and ideas generated by members in the meeting. PROTEC17 Union Representative Rachel Whiteside, who acts as a staff resource for the group, also gave kudos to the three leaders for their hard work and the preparation required to facilitate a successful meeting.

“There was great energy in the group and you did an amazing job of planning, leading, and inspiring our members,” said Whiteside.

PWR! plans to meet roughly quarterly, and is building a list of members across PROTEC17 who want to take action on the issues impacting our members both within and outside the workplace. If you'd like to participate, please reach out to your Union Rep to get connected to the group. ■

Below: one of the Zoom breakout rooms during the PWR! meeting on Jan. 28 with member Kelsey Hopkins leading the discussion.

**GRP 3 - Kelsey**

Why are you here?	How do we want to show up as a union?	What are the important causes/fights for your chapter?
Newly re-joined union member!	practical ways, community focused	addressing discrepancies between POC members and white members in terms of how they are treated in the work place
Feels the union has room for growth around racial + social justice	aligned with union policy goals	housing affordability
curious, wants to listen to ideas/what's happening	physical presence ✓	climate justice
understanding the union in a better way	build on the KC/MLK Labor council SPOG expulsion	land use
meet other union members	active, affirmative anti-racist voice	digital equity
understand what others are doing at PROTEC	Type something	criminal justice reform ✓
		just transition for previously incarcerated
		criminal justice + worker rights

Participants: 8

Unmute Stop Video Participants Chat Share Screen Record Ask for Help Reactions Leave Room

## First ever virtual legislative sessions underway in WA and OR; PROTEC17 sets four funding, policy priorities for 2021

**T**he legislative sessions are in full swing in both Washington and Oregon, and they are shaping up to be the most challenging and consequential in many years. The pandemic response and accompanying recession are clear priorities that will shape new policy and revenue to relieve suffering and revive the economy.

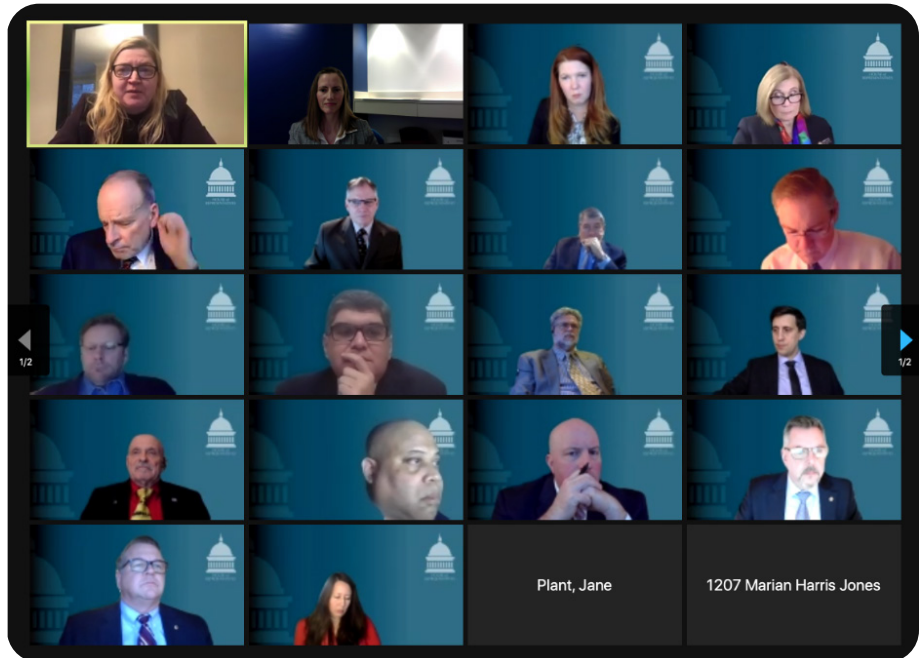
PROTEC17 will be active in elevating four priorities in the legislature this year. These priorities, which correspond with our organization's strategic plan and members' needs, include: reforming the revenue system to provide funding for critical public services, strengthening our public health system, creating jobs through investments in our public infrastructure, and ending the history of violence against communities of color. You can find our 2021 legislative priorities on the next page.

Because the pandemic has prompted our governing bodies to hold their hearings remotely instead of in Olympia and Salem, it is easier than ever for PROTEC17 members to support or oppose a bill, provide public comment, or sign up to give virtual testimony. Your input will be critical and could make or break policy and funding decisions that have a direct impact on you and your fellow PROTEC17 members.

### Washington

In the first two weeks of the Washington state legislative session, PROTEC17 members at the Department of Licensing (DOL) dove into the political process, opposing a bill that would impact public safety and their jobs. PROTEC17 Licensing Service Representative (LSR) member Marian Harris-Jones provided live testimony, while Nicole Chambers and Carla Goudy submitted written testimony.

The legislation – House Bill (HB) 1207 – would extend the driver's license and ID



PROTEC17 Union Rep Alexis Young (upper left), Executive Director Karen Estevenin (next to Alexis) and member Marian Harris-Jones giving testimony at the committee hearing for WA House Bill 1207.

card renewal cycle from six to eight years and would allow for online renewal with an electronically updated photo every 16 years. While this may sound great for those who dread going to a Licensing Office, it would keep drivers on the road that otherwise shouldn't be, as PROTEC17 LSRs screen and examine each customer's vision and competency to drive.

"If we issue licenses that that can be renewed online indefinitely, there will be people out there that shouldn't be behind the wheel. We need to see our drivers. We need to assess whether they are safe to drive," said Harris-Jones.

This is just one of the bills we're tracking in Washington this session. For a full list, please visit our Political Action page: [protec17.org/political-action](https://protec17.org/political-action).

### Oregon

The legislative session in Oregon will be largely dominated by budget deliberations and COVID-related concerns. But

some of the top, labor-specific bills we are tracking include: Senate Bill (SB) 412, which changes the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act provision for interim contract negotiations; HB3029, which allows electronic signatures when organizing new union members; the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) cleanup bill, which will fix some technical issues created by previous PERS cut bill in 2019; plus SB477, SB483, and HB2205. To learn more about these bills, visit our website, or contact PROTEC17 Oregon Legislative Advocate Elliot Levin at [elliott@protec17.org](mailto:elliott@protec17.org).

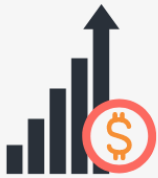
Legislators want to hear from their constituents about the issues that impact your jobs, health, families, and communities. We encourage you to participate in this important process. Visit our Political Action webpage to find more detailed information about upcoming bills and how to contact your legislator or sign into a bill: [protec17.org/political-action](https://protec17.org/political-action). ■

**To learn more about the current legislative session, visit:**  
**[www.protec17.org/political-action](https://www.protec17.org/political-action)**



# 2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## INVEST IN OUR COMMUNITIES



Oregon and Washington's public services - and the jobs of our members - are badly underfunded because the States' tax systems take the most from those who earn the least. Tax code reform can greatly improve the system's fairness and also allow for necessary investments in our critical programs and services.

## STRENGTHEN PUBLIC HEALTH



Even as our public health members have been at the front lines of the pandemic, unstable funding, lack of support, and inadequate coordination have undermined their efforts. There is proposed legislation that would strengthen our public health system by drawing in funds from private insurance companies and the soda industry.

## END HISTORY OF VIOLENCE



This session provides a unique moment to address the long history of violence against communities of color. As racial justice is one of the key priorities in our strategic plan, we will work to end this violence by supporting the establishment of an accountability system for police officers who violate professional standards while preserving core labor principles.

## BUILD INFRASTRUCTURE



Our transit and transportation networks have long been underfunded. The economic boost that bold public investment in infrastructure - like bridges, roads, rails and buses - would provide is especially needed during the current pandemic-induced recession.



Professional and  
Technical Employees  
Local 17

2900 Eastlake Ave. East, Ste. 300  
Seattle, Washington 98102  
www.protec17.org

**PRO  
TEC17**

Periodicals  
Postage  
**PAID**  
at Seattle WA

**Did you move?**  
Let us know! 800-783-0017

# SHOW YOUR PROTEC17 *pride!*



Visit our new webstore to order PROTEC17 merchandise, like t-shirts, hoodies, water bottles and more – *at cost!* – to show your union pride!

**protec17.myshopify.com**