

December 3, 2009

Retired Brothers and Sisters,

In late August the Lodge began hearing from retirees about an \$11 premium that they would be paying for the dental insurance which was previously provided at no cost to retirees. I immediately attempted to find out how this could happen and why.

Troopers Lodge #41 does not negotiate health care for our members. Because state law provides that all state employees receive the same health care benefits, the largest state employee union negotiates health care. That union is AFSCME. Whatever AFSCME negotiates, all state employees receive. I contacted AFSCME and spoke with Director Bayer. Director Bayer advised me that AFSCME had never negotiated for health care premiums to be passed along to retirees. I have since reviewed what AFSCME negotiated and as Director Bayer stated, the agreement AFSCME made with the state does NOT include premiums for retirees. AFSCME immediately took action, filing a grievance. That grievance went before an arbitrator in November and the matter was taken under advisement.

On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, I was contacted by Director Bayer and advised that the arbitrator issued his decision and that he found in favor of the state. The arbitrator did not focus on the issue of what was negotiated in the contract, but instead focused on whether AFSCME had the right to arbitrate, in essence, challenge something that affects retirees. The arbitrator felt that because retirees are not part of the collective bargaining unit, they are also not part of the collective bargaining process. Therefore, AFSCME could not grieve the issue.

Director Bayer has advised me that the issue is not dead. AFSCME will continue to challenge the fact that the State is requiring retirees to pay for health care. I can also promise you that this Lodge will take any and all steps necessary to do the same. Director Bayer is aware that this issue is one that affects our retirees and that we will offer whatever assistance is needed.

I also promise to you that the Lodge will keep you, our members, informed. Any updates we have will be posted on our website [www.iltroopers41.org](http://www.iltroopers41.org) and you can call the Lodge at any time. Thank you and I will also take this moment to wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday.

Fraternally,

Fred Scholl, President  
Illinois Troopers Lodge #41