

Adjunct Action: CFT, AFT 1521 Urge Membership to Lobby for Healthcare

By Evan Henerson

When Governor Gavin Newsom proposed a \$200 million allocation for part-time faculty healthcare in his state budget, AFT 1521's adjunct faculty members hailed the move as a solid start to addressing a problem greatly in need of attention: healthcare for adjunct faculty.

"The problem varies by district," said Chris Coffey, who teaches political science at L.A. City College and L.A. Mission College. "Some districts have benefits, and in other places, it's absolutely horrible that they do nothing to offer benefits to adjuncts. There are a lot of long-time employees who don't have health insurance at all or they don't have it through their primary employer."

"Proposing \$200 million is a major accomplishment," said Coffey, who is an appointed representative to the higher education committee of the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), "but it doesn't help unless we can get it across the finish line."

With that finish line in sight, Local 1521 and CFT are engaged in a campaign to promote awareness and lobby state legislators about the importance of this funding allocation remaining in place. Guild President Joanne Waddell and Executive Vice President William Elarton-Selig are both members of CFT's Part-Time Faculty Campaign Committee.

To keep up the positive momentum, Local 1521 is asking members to become involved in the campaign through several different channels.

Faculty can [send a letter to their legislators](#) via an online Action Alert. They can also [sign up to testify](#) at the legislative budget hearing to be held virtually on Tuesday, April 5 at 9 a.m. Adjunct faculty members are also asked to [complete a confidential survey](#) about their experiences.

CFT and AFT are also gearing up for a [part-time faculty conference](#) to be held May 1 and 2 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Sacramento. The conference will focus largely on workplace issues, legislative advocacy, and CFT's campaign, "Organizing for Equity in Higher Education." It will also feature a lobbying day, during which attendees will be trained in lobbying and advocacy.

Members are invited to attend with the costs being covered by the Guild or by CFT.

Local 1521 Lead Organizer Seo Yun Son said that the campaign and the conference are ways that members can work together and build solidarity, hopefully having fun while they're doing so. The principle behind the effort, however, is a serious one.

"Many of our adjunct faculty feel a continued lack of respect and exploitation," she said. "The 'gig-ification' of adjunct faculty can be seen nationwide. We as a faculty union believe that healthcare is a human right."

For more information on our campaign, [click here](#).