



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio's Largest Public Service Unions Unite to Endorse Amy Acton for Governor

WESTERVILLE, Ohio — Ohio's public service workers delivered a strong show of unity today as OCSEA, OAPSE, AFSCME Ohio Council 8, and AFSCME Retirees Chapter 1184 came together to endorse Dr. Amy Acton for Governor. The announcement took place at the OCSEA headquarters in Westerville and featured remarks from OCSEA President Chris Mabe and AFSCME International President Lee Saunders.

Together, the unions represent over 100,000 workers who keep Ohio running. They said Dr. Acton earned their endorsement because she respects public service and supports the freedom of working families to speak up for the resources and fairness their communities deserve. Leaders also pointed to Dr. Acton's consistent support for working people, including walking picket lines, speaking out for higher wages, and advocating for strong public services.

They noted the contrast in this race is clear. While Dr. Acton has shown up for working families, [her opponent has used public comments to criticize American workers as "lazy" and "mediocre,"](#) remarks that hit hard for working people who keep communities going every day.

AFSCME International President Lee Saunders told the crowd that the joint endorsement sends a clear message.

"Dr. Amy Acton's story is an Ohio story, full of grit and guts. She is part of a union family. Her grandfather worked in the Youngstown steel mills. She understands the challenges facing working families because she has lived them," said **Lee Saunders, President of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)**. "Now, Dr. Acton is ready to meet the moment — to lift up, empower, and show solidarity with working people across Ohio. That's why all our AFSCME affiliates in the state are proud to endorse her today. For the next 11 months, she will have the full force of AFSCME's political power behind her."

Following Saunders' remarks, Dr. Acton thanked the unions for their support and reaffirmed her commitment to the people who keep Ohio's communities safe, healthy, and supported.

"The women and men of OCSEA, OAPSE, AFSCME Ohio Council 8, and AFSCME Retirees Chapter 1184 are on the front lines of public service. They keep our communities and schools thriving and our families and kids safe. They connect us to one another, ensure our health and well-being, and lift up those most in need," said **Dr. Amy Acton, AFSCME-endorse candidate for Ohio Governor**. "I am deeply honored by the support and vote of confidence of this incredible coalition of hard-working Ohioans. As Governor, I will support and honor their service, and ensure that the dignity and value of their work are respected at all levels."

The endorsement launches a coordinated volunteer and member engagement effort across the three affiliates as they prepare for the 2026 election.

Chris Mabe spoke on behalf of Ohio's state workers and emphasized why Dr. Acton has earned the confidence of public service workers.

"Ohio deserves a Governor who truly understands the everyday struggles that working people face and that's why we are supporting Amy Acton," said **Chris Mabe, President of the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association (OCSEA)**. "She is a proven leader who has always stood with labor. Amy is deeply committed to the people of Ohio, and with her compassion and determination, she is the right person to lead our state into the future."

Building on that, OAPSE Executive Director Joe Rugola highlighted Dr. Acton's support for strong public schools and the workers who serve Ohio's children.

"Public education, and our members who serve Ohio's schoolchildren, are foundational to our democracy," said **Joe Rugola, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Public School Employees**. "Amy Acton is committed to strengthening our public schools and our communities."

AFSCME Ohio Council 8 President R. Sean Grayson underscored the everyday services Ohioans rely on and why leadership that values public service is essential.

"Having been a public servant herself, Dr. Amy Action understands the need to fund and properly staff the public services Ohioans rely upon every day," said **R. Sean Grayson, President of AFSCME Ohio Council 8**. "Ohioans deserve good public schools, clean water, public transportation, safe roads, clean streets, parks, and other recreational facilities, good health and mental health care facilities, reliable waste removal, and safe

neighborhoods. Dr. Acton is committed to supporting Ohio's working families and their communities."

Retirees also made clear why they believe the stakes are so high in this election.

"I trust Dr. Amy Acton because she comes from a union family and understands what seniors and working people go through every day," said **Lou Maholic, President of the AFSCME Retirees Chapter 1184**. "Dr. Acton stands head and shoulders above her out-of-touch billionaire opponent, who is focused on enriching himself and the wealthiest one percent, not the working families who keep Ohio going."

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