

# MCEA NEWS *Extra*

Feb. 15, 2005

Maryland Classified Employees Association

## Hearings on MCEA bills set for Feb. 22

The Appropriations Committee has scheduled a Feb. 22 hearing for HB 922, legislation that would require a grievant's agency to pay the costs of appeals to the Office of Administrative Hearings. The committee also will hear HB 923, which would authorize the Department of Budget and Management to require that an agency accept a negotiated grievance settlement. Both hearings are set for 1 p.m. in the House Office Building, Appropriations Committee Room 130, along with other personnel and retirement bills.

## How should the State deal with rising health care costs? Complete the MCEA survey and let us know

One of the most important issues facing State employees and retirees is the fast-rising cost of the health benefits. As you know, the Department of Budget and Management did not implement many of the increases planned for 2005, so participants should brace for some painful increases. Some time this spring a second open enrollment period will be held for the fiscal 2006 program that will begin July 1, 2005 and run through June 30, 2006. DBM is considering some very dramatic changes to the medical and prescription drug plans. These recommendations include: increasing the employee's share of the total cost for the PPO, POS, and HMO plans, requiring that the participant pay 50 percent of the dependent's cost, and charging \$10/\$20/\$35 for prescription drug co-pays. MCEA is distributing a survey that lists most of the options currently on the table. The survey has been mailed to Chapter Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Convention delegates, and will be available at Area meetings. You also may download a copy from MCEA's web site at [www.mcea.org](http://www.mcea.org). We ask that you complete a survey and return it to the Headquarters office, or fax it to Bob Stephens at 410-298-6182 or 410-298-8058.

## Health insurance town hall meetings set

On Feb. 23, MCEA will host a town hall meeting for State employees on the controversial health care pro-

gram proposals, 7 p.m. at the C. Burr Artz Public Library, 110 E. Patrick St. in Frederick. The Department of Budget and Management's money-saving options will be discussed. MCEA also has scheduled a meeting to be held March 28, 4:30 p.m., at Salisbury University's Guerrieri Center. Details are forthcoming.

## Elected new officers? Let us know

MCEA is implementing a more efficient process for chapters to update our records on new chapter officers. In addition to providing information about chapter elections on the quarterly chapter meeting report form, please contact your Area office as soon as possible with any changes in the names, addresses, and e-mail address of chapter officers. The contact persons are:

- Areas I and II: Gail Buntin, Headquarters, 410-298-8800 or 1-888-611-MCEA or [gbuntin@mcea.org](mailto:gbuntin@mcea.org)
- Area III: Mary Herndon, 410-269-6993 or 1-888-613-MCEA or [mherndon@mcea.org](mailto:mherndon@mcea.org)
- Area IV: Vicki Moreland, 301-724-8770 or 1-888-614-MCEA or [vmoreland@mcea.org](mailto:vmoreland@mcea.org)
- Area V: Karen Coulbourne, 410-749-9135 or [kcoulbourne@mcea.org](mailto:kcoulbourne@mcea.org)

The Secretaries will notify the appropriate persons to ensure that the changes are made immediately.

## Support MCEA's tsunami relief fund

Have you wanted to aid the people devastated by the South Asian tsunami but was concerned that your monies may not go for your intended purpose? MCEA is providing you with a secure and credible vehicle to contribute to the tsunami relief fund. MCEA will accept your donations and forward them to the American Red Cross. Let's demonstrate that Maryland public employees and retirees care. Mail your contribution to MCEA, Attention: Tsunami Relief Fund, 7127 Rutherford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21244. A special thanks goes to the chapters and individuals who supported the Feb. 2 benefit basketball game vs. the General Assembly and who already have mailed in their generous donations.

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MCEA – 410-298-8800 or 1-888-611-MCEA • [www.mcea.org](http://www.mcea.org)  
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