

AFSCME files lawsuit against state, calling new collective bargaining law unconstitutional

Gov. Branstad signed the bill into law on Friday

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SIOUX CITY, Iowa - On Friday Gov. Branstad signed into law a new collective bargaining agreement that the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees says "strips every state employee of every protection and right under their current agreement."

AFSCME filed a lawsuit in Polk County District Court Monday against the state saying this new law is unconstitutional.

"This is an ill thought out law, this is a law that was rushed through the legislature, this is a law that there was absolutely no input for anybody other than legislatures" says Danny Homan, President AFSCME Iowa Council 61.

During a morning conference call with reporters, Danny Homan, president of AFSCME Council 61, used security guards as an example of how the new law strips the rights of some while maintaining others in the same line of work.

"They can't get the same treatment as every other law enforcement, potentially every other law enforcement officer in the state of Iowa will get. They're not going to be able to bargain over their health insurance, they're not going to be able to bargain over safety concerns, not going to be able to bargain over vests, not going to be able to bargain over a wide range of things" says Danny Homan, President AFSCME Iowa Council 61.

Homan says the new law establishes 2 classes of public bargaining employees.

A guard at the state prison in Clarinda, an Iowa State University policeman, a DOT enforcement officer and a University of Northern Iowa employee are also part of the lawsuit.

An arbitration hearing is set for Wednesday. Union leaders say they want the Iowa Supreme Court to hear the case.

"This is not the end, the governor signing this bill is not the end, this is only the beginning. We intend to use every legal opportunity we have to challenge the constitutionality of this law, and I believe there are other lawsuits that are also being prepared" says Danny Homan, President AFSCME Iowa Council 61.