

Local 3599 Raises Heck on the Hill during 2009 AFGE Legislative Conference

(L to R) Council Legislative Coordinator Rachel Shonfield, Acting EEOC Chair Stuart Ishimaru, Clinton Smith and Local 3599 President Sharon Baker.



Once again, due to the large number of offices in our Local, we sent three representatives to participate in the 2009 AFGE Legislative Conference. Clinton Smith, our Atlanta

Steward, joined Local President, Sharon Baker, and 3599 Delegate and 216 Leg. Coordinator, Rachel Shonfield. Prior to the start of the Legislative Conference, the 3599 representatives had an opportunity to participate in a Council round table with Acting Chair Stuart Ishimaru and Acting Vice Chair Christine Griffin. The 3599 trio, who had lined up appointments beforehand, then pounded the pavement on Capitol Hill visiting members of Congress who have districts where our EEOC offices are located. The 3599 team joined the rest of the National Council in visiting a record-breaking 140 Congressional offices. As a first time participant, Clint hit the ground running, visiting many offices. Clint even got a face to face meeting to share issues of local and national concern with his own Representative John Lewis (D-GA). Rep. Lewis is a civil rights champion who marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. The



Rachel Shonfield, National Council Legislative Coordinator w/ Congresswomen Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R) FL

3599 team also visited the offices of: Rep. Aderholt (R-AL), Rep. Barrow (D-GA), Rep. Bonner (R-AL), Rep. Castor (D-FL), Rep. Miller (D-NC), Rep. Price (D-NC), Rep. Ros Lehtinen (R-FL), Rep. Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), Rep. Watt (D-NC), and Rep. Yarmuth (D-KY). On the Senate side, we visited: Sen. Cochran (R-MS), Sen. Isakson (R-GA), Sen. Graham (R-SC), Sen. Nelson (D-FL), and Sen. Shelby (R-AL). President Baker encouraged offices to personalize a

template letter with local office concerns, such as staffing gaps, equipment shortages, EAS overload, etc. These letters were delivered to Congressional offices by the 3599 team in person. Legislative action has been successful in highlighting EEOC's staffing and budget concerns. The FY09 budget contains a \$15 million increase, which breaks a five year trend of frozen budgets. The FY10 budget proposal contains a \$23 million increase. The National Council and Local 3599 continue to request even more funds and more staff, specifically frontline staff, to improve your working conditions. We will continue to need your help to press employee issues until we finally have adequate resources in all our offices to support our important civil rights mission.



Clinton Smith, Local 3599 (Atlanta) with Congressman John Lewis, (D-GA). Rep. Lewis marched with MLK for civil rights. He has also been helping EEOC budget efforts through his position on the civil rights committee of the Congressional Black Caucus.

