



(AP) State senators will vote on a new contract for state employees that would give thousands of workers their first raise in years. The contract up for approval Thursday would give thousands of state employees a 2 percent pay hike the first in 3 1/2 years. The contract covers seven different working groups, including the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 5 and the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees.

A Senate and House subcommittee recommended approving the contract last month. The House is expected to vote on the contract sometime next week.

The contract will expire June 30. Negotiations for the next deal just started. Gov. Mark Dayton says he will push to include same-sex domestic partnership benefits in that contract.