

- ▶▶ AFT Connecticut
- ▶▶ American Association of University Professors – Connecticut State University
- ▶▶ American Association of University Professors – UCONN
- ▶▶ American Federation of State, County, & Municipal Employees - Council 4
- ▶▶ Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges/ SEIU Local 1973
- ▶▶ Connecticut Association of Prosecutors
- ▶▶ Connecticut Employees Union Independent/ SEIU Local 511
- ▶▶ Connecticut Federations of School Administrators Local 61
- ▶▶ Connecticut Police and Fire Union/IAFF-IUPA
- ▶▶ Connecticut State Police Union
- ▶▶ CSEA SEIU Local 2001
- ▶▶ International Brotherhood of Police Officers/SEIU Local 731
- ▶▶ New England Healthcare Employees Union, District 1199/SEIU

## *The State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition*

### **State Workers to Urge the Rell Administration and Political Leaders to Focus on "Jobs, Jobs, Jobs"**

Leaders of the unions in the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) have scheduled a first meeting with representatives of Governor M. Jodi Rell's Administration on January 28 to explore "win-win" solutions for Connecticut's lagging economy. Despite press reports over the past six weeks, the purpose of the discussion, as spelled out in the 2009 cost savings agreement between SEBAC and the Administration, is not to negotiate additional concessions.

According to the agreement:

*If the projected revenue from all sources to the General Fund and Special Transportation Fund is \$300 million or more below that in the final adopted budget and the Governor exercises any rescission authority, the following will occur:*

*A. Emergency convening of SEBAC and representatives of the Administration to consider potential savings in addition to those listed below.*

*B. Joint measures taken to encourage voluntary schedule reductions.*

*C. The State's contribution to the State Employees Retirement Plan may be reduced by up to \$100 million annually.*

Members of SEBAC's unions have always supported being part of the solution to Connecticut's fiscal crisis. In 2009 we provided nearly a billion dollars in savings to state taxpayers, by far the most significant contribution of any group toward solving the state's budget deficit. But we warned at the time that the deficit would only continue to grow if elected officials tried to cut their way out of the economic crisis, instead of focusing on rebuilding the economy and providing jobs.

Unfortunately, with Governor Rell and some of our state's most short-sighted politicians, our warning fell on deaf ears. Instead of focusing on jobs, these politicians have focused on cuts. As a result, Connecticut has lost another 50,000 private sector jobs, and the state budget again faces a growing shortfall.

Government must be a key part of the solution to the economic crisis. Leaders of SEBAC unions plan to present big ideas to build an economy that provides good, stable jobs for Connecticut's working families.

Our unions have long supported legislation such as "pooling" healthcare that would save dollars for municipalities, small business as well as individuals currently without healthcare, as well as provide special healthcare subsidies for startup businesses that create new jobs. We will propose extending the

pharmacy discounts negotiated for active and retired state workers to all groups, municipalities, small and large companies. We will also support a series of initiatives that recognize the key role state government must play in jump-starting job growth to rebuild our economy.

State workers are currently offering "win/win" ideas to help improve public services and focus critical public dollars where they are needed the most. Our members are sharing a broad range of innovative ideas to improve government services and save the state money at the same time.

Here are a few examples of the ways in which our members can help improve services and save taxpayers' money:

1. **Solicit Innovations from Frontline Workers** – reinstitute the Innovations Review Panel former Governor Rowland illegally eliminated in 2003 to provide a permanent ongoing process that engages frontline workers and creates a forum to present their ideas for improving services and preventing waste;
2. **Identify Efficiencies** – implement a comprehensive telecommuting and at-home work assignments to save the state money from reduced fuel consumption and improved use of workers' time on the job;
3. **Reduce Duplicative Bureaucracy** – shift focus from management to aim scarce resources on direct services provided by the front-line workforce;
4. **Generate Retiree Savings** – offer delayed retirement incentives to provide savings to the pension fund as well as retiree health insurance costs;
5. **Implement State Contracting Standards Board** – get Board members to work performing a cost-benefit analysis and determining a results-based accountability measurement for goods and services provided by contractors to state agencies.

We share these ideas – as we have in the past – not just with Governor Rell and her Administration, but also with the gubernatorial candidates who seek to succeed her, and our state's legislative leaders. SEBAC leadership remains committed to come to the table with elected officials and candidates to be part of a comprehensive solution that will help lead to a stronger, better Connecticut for all of us.

Franklin D. Roosevelt found a way to bring together working families in the private and the public sectors to provide jobs in the deepest economic crisis our country has ever faced. It's time for that kind of courage and commitment from those who want to lead us out of today's economic crisis. To learn more about SEBAC's campaign for a fair budget and a livable state with great public services visit

**[www.InThisTogetherCT.org](http://www.InThisTogetherCT.org)**.