

- ▶▶ 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

Rell Administration's Demands Unfair to Good Faith Bargaining and Devastating To Connecticut's Economy

State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) leaders received a second letter from the Rell Administration with their request to solve the budget situation "through collective bargaining changes" and again reacted with strong disapproval. Each leader of the coalition unions signed a letter that was sent to Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Secretary Robert Genuario, the Governor's Chief Budget Officer, condemning the administration's insistence on balancing the budget on the backs of State workers who have already provided \$700 million in savings in 2009. Those savings, which included pay freezes and increases in healthcare costs for State employees, are providing even more savings than predicted in the current fiscal year, and will provide hundreds of millions of additional savings out into future budget years.

Breaking those agreements, the unions pointed out, would cut needed services and harm an already fragile economy:

Where the sides really differed in the winter and spring of 2009 was in the Administration's faith that it could somehow cut its way out of the budget crisis, and our warning that Nobel Prize-winning economists all agreed that approach was economic suicide. In fact, we told you in writing in February of 2009 that while our members were willing to be part of the solution to Connecticut's economic and budgetary woes: The supposedly easier alternative of cutting public services not only abandons Connecticut's people just when they need services the most - thereby building up more costs that will need to be paid in the future - it makes the economy worse, which will only cause more suffering and future budget crises.

SEBAC did meet with the Administration early this year to discuss concrete ideas for saving precious budget dollars and for involving frontline workers in improving government efficiency. Governor Rell refused to implement or accept those ideas and has only wanted to seek further concessions at the expense of job losses.

The leaders wrote:

Even though the very rich in Connecticut pay about half as much as a percentage of their income on state and local taxes as the middle class does, the governor went on to insist on a budget that had only a token tax increase for Connecticut's richest few, and had billions in public service cuts. This drew demand and resources away from the private sector economy, and will cost Connecticut's economy as many as 50,000 additional jobs – a 50% increase in Connecticut's already spiraling unemployment rate.

Governor Rell stubbornly insists on breaking labor agreements reached in good faith last year even while alternative solutions are presented that can create jobs and bring Connecticut's economy out of recession.

SEBAC leadership concluded:

So we decline your invitation to "deal with the budgetary situation through collective bargaining changes," not simply because it is unfair, but because it would only make the real problems of this state worse.

To read Secretary Genuario's second letter to SEBAC, the Coalition's response letter, and learn more about the campaign for a fair budget and a livable state with great public services, visit

www.InThisTogetherCT.org.