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California State Senate

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June 3, 2010

Hon. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor
State of California
State Capitol – First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger,

I write to strongly urge you to bargain in good faith with California's twenty-one bargaining units over the next 30 to 60 days.

As you know, twenty of the twenty-one bargaining units are working under contracts that expired nearly two years ago. (Bargaining Unit 5, the California Association of Highway Patrolmen, is the one union with an active contract, which will expire in 29 days, on July 2).

I have talked with the leaders of all these bargaining units and stressed the importance of getting to the table as soon as possible. They all recognize the difficult budget situation we face together. They get it - they have been and remain ready to bargain in good faith.

But there's a serious problem. I have been told by more than one unit, that on several occasions, while in the midst of bargaining, issues unrelated to the terms and conditions of employment have been introduced at the 11th hour by the Department of Personnel Administration, thus halting any momentum the parties may have had to that point. For example, one bargaining unit negotiator was told they must agree, as part of their MOU, to "not oppose" legislation that contained language requiring CalPERS to use "supportable assumptions and data" that was evaluated by "another party." That issue is clearly not an appropriate subject for bargaining. Several other instances of unnecessary roadblocks on the road to agreements have been relayed to me as well.


Existing law authorizes the Governor, not the Legislature, to negotiate employment contracts with state employees. If the administration intends to move forward in good faith now with the bargaining units, we can recognize any agreed upon terms in the budget. The Senate will follow the negotiations closely.

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The administration should not expect that the Legislature will circumvent the collective bargaining process and do what is clearly your administration's statutory responsibility and obligation. The best and only course is to negotiate in good faith now.

I look forward to a positive resolution of this year's budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darrell Steinberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "D".

DARRELL STEINBERG, President pro Tempore
California State Senate