

MAY 27
2015

UNION UPDATE



Local 1000 President Yvonne R. Walker responds to the May Revise

Earlier this month, Governor Brown released revisions to his 2015-2016 budget proposal, commonly known as the “May Revise.” Now, the Governor and the Legislature will spend the next month hammering out the details of the next state budget.



While Prop 30, coupled with an improving economy, has resulted in additional revenue, we are not out of the woods yet. Our research and legal staff is analyzing the revised budget closely and our legislative staff is in constant contact with elected leaders to make sure our members’ voices are heard as the budget moves through the process.

Here are some of the issues we are monitoring closely:

State retiree health care

The Governor has indicated a determination to bargain changes to the manner in which retiree health care is funded. Local 1000 will continue to maintain its position that state employee retirement security requires both a strong pension system and affordable medical care in retirement. We remain committed to insuring that retiree health care is protected and that the promises made to state workers are safeguarded.

State civil service

The May Revise includes proposals for reforming certain aspects of our civil service system. Many of these proposals have been raised in the past. Our members are the experts on how the work of the state gets done. I have taken steps to ensure that our members have a seat

at the table in all negotiations about improving the state civil service system. Our focus will be to ensure that any reforms provide upward mobility and training for our members and increase our ability to deliver quality public services.

Department of Developmental Services

We will closely follow the state’s proposals to close developmental centers by 2021. These proposals have been in motion for several years. We will insist that the state honor its obligation to meet and confer with the union over the effects of the closures on the wages, hours and working conditions of our members.

State employees do more than just come to the office every day. We raise our families, live in communities and we believe in the value of public service to keep California moving forward. As our economy begins to recover, our budget priorities should reflect the kind of California in which we all want to live.

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We will continue to provide you with updates as we hold legislative leaders accountable to you and the pursuit of a bright future for all Californians.

Unit 15 arbitration win reinforces members right to wear hats at DGS

Custodians pushed back against arbitrary uniform restriction

Unit 15 custodians are wearing hats again at three state office buildings after an arbitrator ruled a DGS “no-hat” directive “overly broad and unreasonable.”

Custodians at state buildings in Los Angeles have a long standing practice of wearing hats with their uniforms. It makes sense for those working a sometimes-dangerous and often dirty jobs; hats keep heads warm in unheated buildings and prevent dust and particles from falling into custodians’ eyes. It’s a reasonable safety precaution. DGS branch directives are silent on the issue so custodians there have the right to wear hats.

Our custodians demanded respect and pushed back when management announced that hats would no longer be allowed. They circulated a no confidence petition



“This is what happens when custodians stand together.”

Maria Patterson
Vice Chair, Bargaining Unit 15

against DGS management and used the grievance procedure as an organizing tool. Local 1000 pointed out that nowhere in the policies provided by DGS does it state that custodians can not wear hats and, furthermore, our contract states that the union must

be notified of any change in workplace policies.

Three worksites were affected by the new rule: the Ronald Reagan building, the Junipero Serra building and the CalTrans District 7 building. An arbitrator ruled the directive was overly broad and unreasonable and ordered that it be withdrawn.

The arbitrator’s decision noted that such long-standing practices usually develop for a reason—signifying that our custodians know what they are doing when it comes to staying safe.

“We always fight for safety and respect,” said Maria Patterson, vice chair of Bargaining Unit 15. “And this is what happens when custodians stand together.”

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CTF teacher learns how Politics Matter to state workers

Legislative fellowship invigorates political activism for Central Coast steward

Maureen Thompson is returning to her job with a fresh outlook on Local 1000’s work after completing a three-month legislative fellowship at our Sacramento headquarters.

Thompson’s fellowship opened up a new world for the member who has already served the union as a job steward, District Bargaining Unit Representative (DBUR) for District Labor Council (DLC) 741 and delegate to the Monterey Bay Central Labor Council.

Thompson gained a sharper perspective on the challenges Local 1000 faces in this time of big money anti-labor attacks.



“My biggest takeaway is that politics matter,” she said. “We need to increase membership and COPE (Committee on Political Education) contributions because we have a battle in front of us; they’re coming at us with all their money. Every day we hear about how evil unions are and how state workers are sucking everything dry.”

Thompson also got first-hand experience with the union’s work at the capitol, “There are so many bills to track that are coming at us every year and so many bills we want. Seeing how the president and vice presidents and the staff interact with the legislature has been an eye opener for me.”

Thompson is leaving her fellowship with a much broader understanding of how members direct the day-to-day business of the union.

“Our union really is member-led. Our members do a lot.”

Maureen Thompson,
Legislative Fellow from DLC 741

“We have a staff that knows so much; their knowledge is amazing,” said Thompson, who returned to teaching at the Correctional Training Facility in Soledad on May 18. “But our union really is member-led. Our members do a lot.”