

FEBRUARY 24, 2010

UNION UPDATE

LOCAL 1000
SEIU
Stronger Together

Members keep up outsourcing fight

Volunteers examine contracts, seeking wasteful, illegal deals

Local 1000 members are continuing their three-year campaign to expose waste through overpriced private vendor contracts on several fronts.

"We will keep fighting to show how much taxpayer money California is wasting on contracts for work that can be done at a substantially lower cost by state employees," Local 1000 President Yvonne Walker said. "This is about transparency in government. This is about showing taxpayers how their money is being spent. This is about increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of state government by shining a light on the contract process."

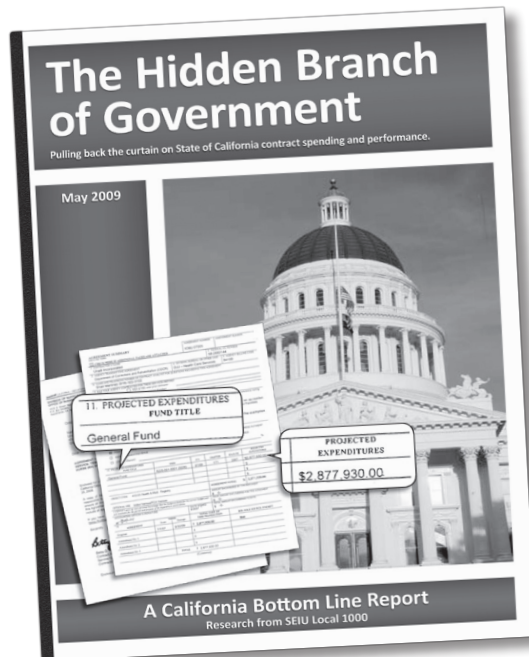
Nearly 70 state worker volunteers met last weekend in the Los Angeles area to analyze private vendor contracts to find waste and develop the groundwork for future legal challenges to the State Personnel Board, where Local 1000 has had an 80 percent success rate in overturning wasteful and illegal contracts. This is the second such meeting. In addition, dozens of state workers have been meeting every furlough Friday to review private contracts.

Also, Local 1000 is working with state Assemblymember Mike Eng (D-Monterey Park) to re-introduce legislation that would increase government transparency by putting all state vendor contracts on a searchable Internet database. For two years, the governor has resisted similar legislation, and last year he vetoed a government transparency bill by Eng.

"We will keep fighting to show how much taxpayer money California is wasting on private vendor contracts ... This is about increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of state government by shining a light on the contract process."

—Yvonne Walker
Local 1000 president

"The state has been unwilling to collect information on private contracts and make it publicly available," said Marie Harder, a senior information systems analyst and member of Local 1000's Outsourcing Task Force. "We need to make the state more accountable."



This 2009 research publication is just one of several prongs in Local 1000's effort to stop the wasteful outsourcing of state services.

To read the "Hidden Branch of Government," go to seiu1000.org/Political/whitepapers/default.aspx

Private prisons hurt public safety

Gov wants to cut prison jobs

Gov. Schwarzenegger is floating some bizarre and possibly illegal proposals to save money by turning large parts of the prison system over to private companies, including outsourcing thousands of inmates to Mexico. Local 1000 has joined a growing coalition of law enforcement, civil rights and crime-victim groups in opposing the experiment.

"Private prisons cost more in the long run," said Robyn Sherles, chair of Bargaining Unit 15. "Outsourcing appears cheaper, but only because contractors cut corners and put profits ahead of public safety. Recidivism will increase under the governor's plan, leaving the general public less safe than before."

Almost every major government study on private prison cost savings has found that the data is either inconclusive or that the savings from privatization are negligible. Private prisons often withhold data, preventing a thorough evaluation, according to a study by the federal General Accounting Office (GAO) in a 2007.

"A methodologically sound cost comparison analysis of federal prisons and private ... facilities is not currently feasible," the GAO reported.

Resource Center

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Bill to exempt employees of non-General Fund agencies

A Local 1000-supported bill to provide furlough exemptions to all state workers whose salaries are not drawn from the General Fund passed the state Senate by a 30-6 vote. It is part of a multi-pronged strategy to stop the governor's illegal furloughs.

SBX8 29, sponsored by Senate President Pro tem Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento), passed with bipartisan support Feb. 18 as three Republicans joined Democrats in backing the bill.

"The governor declared a fiscal emergency based on the General Fund deficit, yet his executive orders on furloughs apply to all state departments, regardless of the funding source," Nancy Lyerla, chair of Bargaining Unit 17 testified on SBX8 29. "The governor's policy makes no distinction to positions that are funded through fees or federal funds, or to revenue-generating departments and boards. These departments function outside the General Fund and furloughing these workers does not reduce the \$20 billion or more General Fund deficit."

The Senate vote comes on the heels of a Dec. 31 decision by an Alameda County judge ruling that non-General Fund employees were furloughed illegally. Also, the Senate Office of Oversight and Outcomes reported on Feb. 12 that furloughs at the Franchise Tax Board cost the state \$7 in uncollected tax money for every dollar furloughs save.

Apply for SEIU scholarships

SEIU awards scholarships that enable SEIU members and their children to pursue educational goals at accredited colleges, universities and technical schools.

Scholarships are awarded to individuals interested in the visual and performing arts, economic and social justice work, labor studies and health. Award amounts vary from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

The deadline to apply is Mon., March 1. For further information about the scholarships visit seiu1000.org

Know Your Rights

Article 14.8 Contracting Out

Stopping outsourcing of state work

Your union contract contains hundreds of provisions designed to protect your rights.

Article 14.8 - Contracting Out, protects our jobs from being outsourced. This Article entitles Local 1000 to meet and confer with departments who contract out, to mitigate or avoid the need for that contracting.

Your Local 1000 contract guarantees:

- The state must make every effort to hire, utilize and retain bargaining unit employees before hiring private contractors.
- Employees should not be displaced by private contracts.
- Displacement includes layoff, involuntary demotion and involuntary transfer to a new location requiring a change of residence and time base reductions.
- Departments must provide Local 1000 with sufficient information to determine if unnecessary and additional costs are being incurred by contracting out.
- Departments must provide Local 1000 with copies of personal service contracts for services in bargaining unit classifications.
- Any contracting by the state must comply with the process governed by the State Personnel Board (SPB).

How to take Action

Contact your Local 1000 steward if you feel your department is not complying with its responsibilities. Your steward will work with you, management and Local 1000's legal and research departments to determine the best course of action.

For more information regarding Article 14.8 - Contracting Out, review your contract by logging on to seiu1000.org