

Problems at BOE take center stage

Local 1000 presses legislators to move workers out



"We need funding from the legislature to get everyone out now – it's not safe here."

— Ed Perez
16-year BOE employee

Our members continued to put pressure on the legislature and the Department of General Services to approve a timeline for moving 2,500 Board of Equalization (BOE) employees out of the dangerous Sacramento headquarters building.

Local 1000 filed another complaint with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) – more than 200 members say they have suffered health problems and injuries related to the building. Six of the 25 floors are not in use because of water intrusion and mold.

Flooding, mold & broken elevators

More recently, flooding forced the closure of two floors, additional mold was found on five others and two employees were injured in two separate incidents in which an elevator malfunctioned. At Local 1000's request, legislative staffers recently toured the closed floors giving members hope that the nightmare at 455 N Street will be resolved.

"We need to invest in moving the entire building out," said Ed Perez, a steward and 16-year BOE employee. "We can't do this on a piecemeal basis. We need funding from the legislature to get everyone out now – it's not safe here."

For more information on problems at BOE headquarters, see the special Channel 1000 News report at seiu1000.org



"We don't understand why the other floors are still open. Our members don't deserve to work under these challenging conditions."

— Bill Borwegan
SEIU industrial hygienist

New agreement clears legislative hurdle

Full state Assembly may vote on AB 964 next week

Our ratified agreement is expected to come up for a vote by the full state Assembly next week.

The bill – AB 964 – passed its first hurdle last week when it was approved by the Assembly Public Employees, Retirement and Social Security Committee by a 4-2 vote.

Local 1000 & DPA together

Local 1000 President Yvonne Walker joined representatives of the

Department of Personnel Administration speaking in support of the bill.

"The committee recognized the hard work by Local 1000's elected bargaining team," Walker said.

Two-thirds vote

In order for our ratified agreement to take effect, the bill must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly and the state Senate, and then signed into law by Gov.

Schwarzenegger.

If approved by the full Assembly next week, AB 964 would then be introduced to a Senate committee a week or so later.

To follow the latest news on our agreement as it progresses through the Legislature, go to seiu1000.org and watch the Channel 1000 News. At our web-site there will also be updated news on other issues of importance to Local 1000 members.

Legislature looks at EDD staffing

Members & jobless describe delays, lack of resources

Frustrated unemployed workers joined Local 1000 members in asking the legislature for increased resources and better technology at the Employment Development Department (EDD), to serve thousands of newly jobless Californians.

Gail Hannon, an employment program representative, was one of several speakers who told a special state senate joint committee hearing last week that EDD was unable to cope – because of outdated technology and insufficient staffing – with the flood of people seeking benefits since the unemployment rate topped 10 percent in California. In January, an estimated 42 million callers were unable to get through. But even before the recent economic crisis, Local 1000 and independent audits have all pointed out that the workload for call center workers was too high for years before the recession began.

Not enough workers

“I hear from people who have spent days trying to call EDD with no success,” said Hannon, who works in a Sacramento call center. “These are people who just lost their jobs. They’re scared, stressed and confused. And we don’t have the resources to provide them with the help they need.”

Hannon spoke after two jobless people recounted calling EDD hundreds of times without ever reaching a human being.

“I hear from people who have spent days trying to call EDD with no success.”

—Gail Hannon
Sacramento call center representative



Bill to expand EDD services

Jobless would receive walk-in help

With California’s unemployment rate at 10.5 percent – a 25-year high – Local 1000 members are circulating a petition in support of a state bill to expand services for jobless workers.

The state’s system of call centers is failing because few unemployed callers can get through with their questions. So they keep redialing, and redialing in the hope of getting an Employment Development Department (EDD) worker to answer their queries. In January and December, about 67.5 million calls went unanswered. Local 1000 and independent audits have noted that EDD call centers were understaffed even before the current economic crisis, and the problem skyrocketed last fall.

AB 857 addresses gaps in current law to require EDD to have available walk-in unemployment insurance services at all comprehensive one-stop centers.

To sign the petition, go to seiu1000.org and click the link for “political action”

KNOW YOUR NEW CONTRACT

The real scoop: Holidays still count toward weekly overtime

Last week, a Department of Personnel Administration (DPA) representative was quoted in the media saying that a state holiday cannot be counted toward your 40 hours of work per week necessary to qualify for overtime.

Our new contract says only sick leave is exempt – all other leaves, including holidays, are still counted in overtime

calculations. Local 1000 leaders obtained an exemption from recent legislation that exempts all leaves and holidays, from overtime calculations, for other state employees.

As in all contracts when there is a serious disagreement management and employees’ union, the issue will have to go to arbitration to be resolved. If you

or anyone you know has been denied overtime because your supervisor refused to count any leave, other than sick leave, toward your 40 hours worked per week, call one of the phone numbers on the bottom of this page to speak with a Local 1000 Union Resource Center representative.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL LOCAL 1000 TOLL FREE: (866) 471-SEIU (7348) or visit our website: www.seiu1000.org

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Read our new agreement & frequently asked questions at seiu1000.org or local1000ratification.org