

An open letter to Gov. Schwarzenegger

July 10, 2009

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor:

You campaigned for Governor pledging to be a "different kind of leader."

On the campaign trail and late night TV circuit, you played to the applause by promising to "clean up the mess ... stop the special interests ... blow up the boxes."

After the votes were counted, the applause died down, and the spotlights went dark. You Broke Your Word.

You immediately picked up a new script, changed characters, and became another bad actor in a warn-out rerun of failed leadership. You raised more money from special interests and giant corporations than any other Governor in history.

You've paid back your Wall Street friends with tax breaks, lucrative contracts, and special access to you at private parties--for a steep price of course.

You could close tax loopholes that only benefit giant corporations and the super-rich.

Instead you are closing health clinics, shutting DMV offices, dismantling our college and university system, and cutting programs that cost-effectively benefit our most vulnerable seniors and children.

And all the while our roads crumble; our parks close. Public safety is compromised, while college tuition skyrockets and fewer students will be enrolled in the courses they need for a successful future.

You've labeled state employees as part of the problem.

You used your political machine to create a smoke screen around your missing leadership.

And then you launched a relentless assault on the work we do, the salaries we earn, and the benefits we have negotiated.

You've called us a special interest. Well, our special interest is protecting our roads, our rivers, our veterans and our children.

Did you even know we do that kind of work? Who do you serve, Governor? Obviously, not California. Perhaps it's those Wall Street types and Big Oil tycoons who share the cigar tent with you.



The rest of us, governor, are stressed out, anxious and wondering how we're going to pay next month's bills and keep our homes.

When the financial crisis hit, we negotiated a revised labor agreement.

After a deep analysis of the state budget, we knew the financial crisis was real.

Our more than 200 rank and file negotiators pulled together an agreement that your negotiators—signed with your approval—that saves more than \$337 million ... and over \$1 billion if those same provisions were adopted for all other state employees.

Again, you broke your word by refusing to honor the agreement you negotiated. And now you are demanding a 5% wage cut or a fourth furlough day monthly.

Governor, we've sacrificed. And now we've reached our limit. We cannot and will not allow you to use us as pawns in your political power game.

When we negotiated one furlough day monthly, a wage freeze, and other cost saving changes, we were standing up for state services.

While we continue to battle for quality public services, we are now standing up for ourselves as well.

We will fight for a common sense budget that combines cuts and revenues to maintain our quality of life, both now and for generations to come.

Sincerely,

YVONNE R. WALKER
President
SEIU Local 1000

To see President Walker's special address to members - and to read a full-size copy of this letter - log on to seiu1000.org

Progress on several fronts for state workers

Wins in Legislature, courts & SPB protect state jobs

Local 1000 has continued to make progress on several fronts that will protect our jobs during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

No more SCIF furloughs?

San Francisco Superior Court Judge Peter Busch issued a decision on Thursday preventing SCIF from furloughing state-employed attorneys as his earlier decision against furloughs awaits appeal by the governor. This clears the way for a similar lawsuit filed by Local 1000 to exempt the 6,300 SCIF workers represented by Local 1000 from furloughs. A decision on our case may come in early August - but Local 1000 will be filing a motion this week to accelerate this pending decision. Three additional Local 1000 suits challenging furloughs are in progress; two at the Court of Appeals and another in Superior Court.

Another private contract overturned

State Personnel Board (SPB) Executive Officer Suzanne Ambrose agreed with a Local 1000 attorney and disapproved a proposed contract last month at DVA to outsource food services at veterans homes in Chula Vista and Barstow because the contract “does not comply with cost savings provisions” of state law. Local 1000 challenged the proposed five-year contract in April.

This win continues Local 1000’s ongoing campaign to challenge outsourced state workers; in more than 120 challenges, SPB has ruled contracts illegal more than 80 percent of the time.

Progress on unveiling outsourcing details

The state Senate Committee on Governmental Organization voted 7-4 to support AB 756, a Local 1000-sponsored bill that would increase government transparency by requiring state agencies to disclose all private contracts for personal services. AB 756 is part of Local 1000’s demand for a comprehensive review of the more than \$34 billion in outsourced contracts to ensure that tax dollars are well spent. The next stop for AB 756 is the state Senate Committee on Appropriations.

Support for ‘visiting educators’ erodes

The SPB’s full board has dropped its opposition to the AB 755, a Local 1000-sponsored bill that would reduce outsourcing of jobs held by our educational consultants in Bargaining Unit 21. Under the bill, so-called “visiting educators” contracted by the California Department of Education (CDE) would lose incentives that take work away from state employees. These contractors are currently paid a rate far greater than that of state employees who perform the same work. The bill, which is expected go before the Senate PERS committee later this month, is more likely to pass without opposition from SPB.

EDD workload relief moves in Senate

The Senate Labor Committee voted July 8 to approve AB 857, which would require the Employment Development Department to staff its job centers with Unemployment Insurance representatives so that unemployed Californians could obtain in-person assistance. Since the state’s unemployment rate has doubled in the last year, understaffed call centers have fallen behind in their ability to answer questions and solve problems.

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

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