

'Just plain wrong'

Calling three furlough days per month “just plain wrong,” Local 1000 President Yvonne Walker said this week, that “The legislators’ and the governor’s refusal to close tax loopholes, eliminate waste in private state contracts, and make big tobacco and big oil pay their fair share, is another series of bad decisions.”

“We’re furious about the failed leadership in Sacramento,” Walker said following word that legislative leaders and the governor had agreed to extend three furlough days through June 2010 as part of a budget deal. “Their decision shows a lack of political courage to stand up to corporate giants and wealthy special interests.”

Walker said that any change to wages or benefits is a collective bargaining issue and called on the governor to follow state law that mandates any changes in represented state employees’ wages and benefits must be negotiated with employees’ unions.

“We’ve done our share—we negotiated a contract with the governor that, if applied to all state employees,

would save \$1 billion,” Walker said. “We cannot accept three furlough days ... we’ll fight it in the courts, in the Legislature and in the workplace to have it cut back.”

Walker urged state workers to “step up and show your anger through unity in our worksites and our strike authorization ballots.”



“We cannot accept three furlough days ... we’ll fight it in the courts, in the Legislature and in the workplace.”
- Yvonne Walker

Strike authorization vote underway

Urging members to stand up to Gov. Schwarzenegger’s attacks on state employees, the Local 1000 Council unanimously voted July 9 to authorize an all-member vote on job actions “up to and including a strike to protect our pay, benefits and job security.” This is the second such action taken by Local 1000 in three years. Last Saturday, strike authorization ballots were mailed to all 95,000 members represented by Local 1000.

Statewide meetings are now underway - answering member questions on furloughs, our contract and the state budget. Members may also vote on the strike authorization in person.

To find the most convenient meeting for you to attend, contact your steward or your Local 1000 area office, which are listed on the back page.

Strike Authorization Questions & Answers

Q *Is it legal for state employees to strike?*

Yes. In a case brought to the California Supreme Court by SEIU in 1985, the court held that strikes by public employees are legal in California. Since the 1985 ruling, there have been scores of legal strikes by workers in cities, counties and school districts throughout California.

Q *How can we strike if our contract contains a “No Strike” clause?*

If an employer’s unfair labor practices leave the union no option but the “last resort” of striking, then state law provides that the strike can be legal even if a contract contains a “No Strike” clause, as ours does.

Q *If a majority vote “yes” in this strike vote, does that mean we are on strike?*

The Local 1000 Council unanimously voted to ask members to give the union’s officers authority to call for “concerted actions up to and including a strike, if necessary” to protect members’ pay, benefits and job security. If a majority of members voting give Local 1000’s officers authority to call job actions, a variety of actions and possibly a strike will be considered. No actions would take place until some time after member ballots are counted on August 1.

Q *Can the state sue me if I participate in job actions or go on strike?*

No. Any court action filed by the State would be filed against Local 1000, not against individual employees.

Q *Where is our contract in the Legislature?*

The governor is refusing to support the Tentative Agreement he reached with Local 1000; as a result, our contract bill failed in its first legislative vote, falling three votes short of the two-thirds needed when no Republican voted for our contract.

Q *Can we talk about this at work?*

It is legal to talk about what the union is doing to fight back against the furloughs, layoffs and changes in working conditions, even at work. Workers should not claim, at work or anywhere else, that Local 1000 has made the decision to go on strike; no such decision has been made.

Q *Can I be fired or disciplined if I participate in job actions or a strike?*

The state cannot discipline anyone who participates in a legal and protected job action or strike. As an added protection, Local 1000 will ensure that any resolution includes an amnesty clause—a provision guaranteeing that members who participate in a strike will be protected from discipline or adverse administrative action by the state.

Q *Why aren’t my dues being decreased?*

Your dues have already been reduced as a result of the governor’s furloughs. Local 1000 dues are calculated as a percentage of your gross monthly salary. If your salary is reduced due to furloughs, your dues decrease proportionately.

For a complete set of Questions and Answers go to seiu100.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL LOCAL 1000 TOLL FREE: (866) 471-SEIU (7348) or visit our website: www.seiu100.org

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