

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

Craft-Maintenance Division State of California Unit 12
Locals 3, 39 & 501, AFL-CIO

May 9, 2017

***Sent via Certified U.S. Mail
#7016 1370 0000 5720 6892***

The Honorable Governor, Edmund G. Brown Jr.
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Brown,

I am sending this letter to you on behalf of the 11,200 employees that the International Union of Operating Engineers represents in State Bargaining Unit 12.

For the past decade there has been a steady erosion of attention given by the various administrations to the human resources in state government: our members - your employees. High turnover, recruitment and retention difficulties stemming from below market wages, and failure to pay employees their wages and overtime in a timely manner are a few of the reasons that have perpetuated the decline in the quality of services delivered to the public.

While we made some progress in our last round of negotiations, there remains a lot more work to do to restore your workforce to a level where they are competitive with other public agencies and the private sector.

There is a tremendous shortage of skilled and semi-skilled trades and crafts workers in California, making it extremely difficult for departments to fill vacancies. While we can both agree that the State's infrastructure is in shambles and deserves immediate and costly attention, so do your employees.

Our members are responsible for maintaining the State's infrastructure. Whether they are a Caltrans heavy equipment operator on the highway, an electrician or plumber in a prison, or a maintenance mechanic at the State Capitol, they deserve a lot more respect and gratitude from this administration than they currently receive.

In addition to the recruitment and retention problems facing this administration, the State's Vietnam era payroll system is on the verge of a complete collapse. Over the last twenty years, there have been numerous failed attempts to replace the outdated, antiquated system. Not a pay period goes by that our members don't experience a delay in their pay.

For example, after two years of negotiations, we reached a tentative agreement for our new contract on December 13, 2016, yet our members are still waiting to receive their pay increases and retroactive pay back to the January 1, 2017 effective date. Another example is our 1,500 members at Caltrans having to wait four to six months to receive their premium pay for working the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays.

While other public agencies and the private sector are accountable for paying their employees on time, the State is exempt from most of the labor codes having to do with timely payment of wages. As a result, there is relatively little haste in seeing that our members get their hard-earned pay on time.

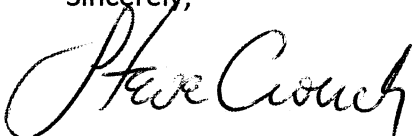
Also, it is not unusual for a department or the State Controller's Office to take up to six months to correct payroll errors for our members.

While we realize you have a lot of challenges on your plate, your employees deserve to be a higher priority than they have been in the last decade. Due to the frustration we consistently experience in dealing with your department and agency administrators, we feel compelled to write this letter to you directly. It is nearly impossible to rectify these problems at the local or CalHR level.

It seems as though the answer is always "No"; the only difference between this administration and the previous one is that it is a nicer "No." We shouldn't have to take our concerns to arbitration or to the courts: we should be able to resolve them at a much lower level.

I look forward to hearing back from you about the concerns raised in this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Crouch". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Steve Crouch
Director of Public Employees