

- ▶▶ AFT Connecticut
- ▶▶ American Association of University Professors – Connecticut State University
- ▶▶ American Association of University Professors – UCONN
- ▶▶ American Federation of State, County, & Municipal Employees - Council 4
- ▶▶ Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges/ SEIU Local 1973
- ▶▶ Connecticut Association of Prosecutors
- ▶▶ Connecticut Employees Union Independent/ SEIU Local 511
- ▶▶ Connecticut Federations of School Administrators Local 61
- ▶▶ Connecticut State Police Union
- ▶▶ CSEA SEIU Local 2001
- ▶▶ International Brotherhood of Police Officers/SEIU Local 731
- ▶▶ New England Healthcare Employees Union, District 1199/SEIU
- ▶▶ Protective Services Employees Coalition/IAFF-IUPA

## The State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition

### Response to Governor Rell's Third Budget Deficit Mitigation Plan

On Thursday, February 19, the Governor released to the legislature her 3rd deficit mitigation plan which unfortunately continues her misrepresentation that Connecticut can cut its way out of the current economic crisis. The plan included a retirement incentive to be unilaterally imposed on state employees, and \$48 million in additional proposed labor cost savings to be achieved before July 1, of this year. The State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) has emphasized that any discussions about retirement incentives must take place across the table where they can be part of a comprehensive plan to help solve the state's budget crisis, not as part of a press release or legislative package. Speaker of the House Chris Donovan, asked his view by the press, agreed "that's where this proposal belongs," and that the legislature's role is not to negotiate agreements between the unions and the administration.

**(Note: The Feb. 21 meeting between SEBAC and the Administration was postponed at the request of the Administration)**

SEBAC representatives are currently in formal conversations with the administration, which could – if the administration responds thoughtfully and fairly – result in a tentative agreement which would be brought to the membership for approval. Decisions about wages and benefits – including health and pension benefits – must be ratified by the membership, not imposed by politicians, and SEBAC will not allow the Governor's press tactics to deter the process that is already in progress. In order for state employees to play a fair and constructive role in the current crisis, SEBAC has called upon the Governor to put her energies where they have the best chance of succeeding and that is at the table. Representative Donovan's comments reaffirm that legislative action is not an appropriate substitute to these conversations.

Slashing public services, when people need them most, only sends Connecticut's economy further into recession and hurts the middle class. As a recent report by UCONN's Connecticut Center of Economic Analysis found, slashing compensation for public sector workers results directly in job losses in the private sector. In fact, using currently accepted economic analysis, the governor's proposed budget, if enacted, would cost the state's economy between 30,000 and 50,000 jobs. The economic crisis is a problem that extends far beyond the public service sector. Real solutions will have to be comprehensive in nature, not guided by posturing and false assurances that the state can overcome our fiscal crisis solely by slashing spending on public services or on public service employees.

SEBAC leadership continues to come to the table to be part of a comprehensive solution to Connecticut's fiscal crisis that will protect the vital public services the public needs in this recession and provide a solution that will help lead to a stronger better Connecticut for all of us.