

July 31, 2015

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

## **A PARADIGM SHIFT: SALARY FAIRNESS NOW FOR STATE SCIENTISTS**

Dear Governor Brown:

Your actions and statements on global climate change indicate your commitment to sound science. But this cannot be reconciled with your apparent lack of commitment to building and maintaining a highly qualified state scientific workforce. California must have such a workforce to face increasing environmental challenges of all kinds.

There is a considerable body of evidence documenting the significant salary inequities between state scientists and scientists employed by other public agencies and private organizations.

***CalHR and DOF have acknowledged that these inequities exist and must be corrected.***

Despite this, your administration has yet to make any meaningful or fair salary offer to non-supervisory state scientists. As a Californian, I am outraged by the utter waste of time and resources that results from the apparent gamesmanship by CalHR/DOF. **The need to correct this matter, now and fairly, is clear. Please do not waste any more time. Please take care of this now, and move on to other pressing needs.**

Governor Brown, there must be a major shift in paradigm. If you are at all serious about building a strong scientific workforce, scientists (and all state employees) must be treated with respect and fairness, not disdain. Rather than exploitation of scientists and the apparent expectation that scientists will be beat into salary submission, engage in respectful, fair negotiations, and get them done. This does not mean that every salary or other benefit expectation will be met, but that there must be sincere effort to do what is right by people who have committed their professional (and often significant parts of their personal) lives to the work of the state.

By not taking this approach, you are squandering a remarkable, invaluable resource: the dedication and commitment of state scientists. I am an Environmental Program Manager (second line supervisory scientist) with more than 32 years of service to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana Region. I know that scientists come to their work for the state with a sincere desire to do good work on behalf of the state, and to make a difference on behalf of the environment. But instead of appreciation for these efforts, rather than being treated even with basic fairness, state scientists continue to be treated with utter disdain. Scientists are naturally left questioning the value of their commitments. If you know people at all, you must understand this.

It is simply not possible to build a strong, well-qualified scientific workforce on these terms. The State will pay dearly for its "pennywise, pound foolish" approach long into the future. The budget situation has improved dramatically; the funds are there to support responsible and fair salary adjustments. Now is the time to make a long-term commitment to a well-qualified and committed state scientific workforce.

I strongly encourage you to engage in discussion of these matters with state scientists themselves. Get to really know and understand the work that we do, and are willing and anxious

to do on behalf of the state. The evidence demonstrates that CalHR is not a reliable source. Perhaps CalHR understands the workforce on paper, in terms of classification descriptions and duty statements. The day-to-day reality is far more complex. State scientists are dedicated individuals who do not work in a vacuum. Day-to-day, we work and interact with other employees in different disciplines. We need to work productively together to get the job done well. Differential, unfair treatment of scientists who work with others everyday leads to the loss of morale and productivity. Please, talk with scientists about this. I would welcome the opportunity to participate in such a conversation.

As a state scientist supervisor, I have been seeking correction of egregious and obvious salary inequities for all scientists for more than 10 years. But I write to you as a citizen of California who wants to see my elected officials and their representatives act sensibly, responsibly and fairly. I want a strong, highly-qualified scientific workforce engaged in work to protect the precious resources of California. Please, take this matter seriously and immediately. Correct glaring inequities now.

Sincerely,



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