

To: Dr. Karen Smith, CDPH Director

From: Concerned Richmond Scientists

Dear Dr. Smith:

Congratulations on your appointment as the Director. Welcome to CDPH! We, the Richmond Scientific Staff, need your assistance with our careers.

The State's past fiscal difficulties mean that we have fallen further and further behind our peers in local government, California's private sector, and even local laboratory employers in the immediate Richmond area. Many of our colleagues have left state service for entry-level scientific jobs that pay better than the current state rates, even for career employees with decades of experience.

We are committed to public service and the mission of CDPH, but the realities of high costs for housing in the Bay Area and the ease of getting better-paying outside positions make continuing a viable alternative only for the most senior employees, those who have a lot vested in their PERS pensions and are now on the cusp of making retirement decisions. CDPH has had incredible difficulty in retaining our colleagues and replacing those who have left. Who will carry on this important public health work in the future? We fear for CDPH's mission.

The time to act on this is NOW. The State is in a much better fiscal position than at any time in the last 10 years. CAPS and Cal HR are negotiating now over a contract to take effect July 2, 2015. Many of us with long tenure will be retiring in the next couple of years. Will there be any experienced mid-career employees to replace the retirees and the knowledge that will leave with them? Other Departments are already expressing support for their scientists and numerous scientific supervisor classes have received substantial raises to address this problem.

PLEASE CONTACT CAL HR NOW and let them know the magnitude of the hiring and retention problems we are experiencing. Please tell them that CDPH supports a significant increase in scientist salaries this summer, so that the programs to be affected by the loss of so many long-term employees can hire and retain new people to carry on the work. Tell them that failure to finally make good on this delayed promise will compromise the Department's ability to deliver public health security to the citizens of California! Please let CAPS know of your support.

Sincerely,

Name

Signature

Classification

Progra