

CAPSule

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Bargaining Produces No Gains

Four consecutive business days of meetings with Governor Brown's negotiators during November failed to make any progress whatsoever towards Salary Equity for all state scientists. Several days of meetings did produce a few conclusions:

- The reconstituted CAPS Team maintained a firm stance on the need to reach Salary Equity for all state scientists.
- CalHR and the DOF refused to make any new proposals of its own. The state's team invited new proposals from CAPS, but steadfastly maintained that any proposal from CAPS must not exceed the total expenditure of approximately \$53 million, which was the approximate cost of the "5 - 5 - 5" final offer rejected by the CAPS membership in the October 6 MOU ratification election.

The CAPS Team offered alternative scenarios in which to achieve Salary Equity. These were aimed at provoking discussion and negotiation on new terms that would ultimately achieve Salary Equity for one and all state scientists during the term of a new MOU. New ideas included phasing raises in over time, using Merit Salary Adjustments -- rather than General Salary Increases -- as the vehicle for implementing the increases, revisiting the Reclassification and Pay Project, among others. All such proposals were rejected because they exceed the maximum expenditure threshold indicated by Governor Brown's Team.

CalHR and the Department of Finance typically use a "1%" number in costing

compensation increases. That calculation represents 1% of salary in each bargaining unit, including the cost of salary, plus the additional cost of benefits such as retirement contributions, payroll taxes, health benefits, etc. For every dollar a state scientist receives in salary, add an additional 35% to 45% for the cost of benefits. CalHR and the DOF estimate that every one percent increase for Unit 10 currently costs approximately **\$2.9 million**. This includes the cost of salary and associated benefits.

The \$53 million cost of the "5 - 5 - 5" plan can be found on the CalHR web page. We also know that the costing number arrived at by the DOF drives the number that ultimately

gets reviewed and adopted by the state Legislature as part of the state budget act. In other words, their numbers are very influential.

The state also has consistently discounted the fact that the vast majority of funding for state scientists is from "special" or "other" funds, not the General Fund. The state's view is that one dollar is like every other dollar, no matter its source. They point out that many special funds are in dire deficit mode even if the General Fund currently isn't.

Bargaining is next scheduled for January 11, 12 and 13.



Scientist Gets Help! CAPS reported that Environmental Scientist Victoria Monroe of CDFW needs leave contributions in accordance with the Catastrophic Leave Program (MOU Section 3.10). Shortly after CAPS' call for help, many of YOU responded. Here's what Victoria had to say:

"Thank you so much for the CAPS support during this difficult time. It means more than words can express. My family and I are so very grateful..."

The CAPS MOU permits the transfer of eligible leave credits (vacation, annual leave, holiday credits and CTO) to an employee who has exhausted his/her leave credits, and has been approved for the program. Sick leave can't be donated. If you wish to contribute leave credits to Victoria, please download and complete this Catastrophic Leave Donation form: <http://capsscientists.org/catastrophic-leave-donations/>. Designate the amount and type of leave credits you are donating and submit the form to your department personnel/payroll staff to process. Donations must be in whole hour increments. Victoria and CAPS thank all who are able to assist!

California State Scientists ... Knowledge, Innovation, Protection

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Perspective

By Patty Velez, President

On December 2, I got a dose of what is becoming reality for far too many people worldwide. The terrorist attack in San Bernardino left 14 people dead and 22 injured. What makes this tragedy hit so close to home is that these were California **public health workers** enjoying a holiday party. The vast majority of them were public health professionals trained in scientific disciplines just like us. In fact, I understand their contemporaries in state government are state scientists headquartered primarily out of the Richmond Campus.

One of those heroic public servants--jolted out of her "regular" life by the tragedy--agreed to comment on the attack a few days later. She acknowledged that her life is now an effort to get through one day and into the next without reliving the horrors of those awful few minutes. Trudy Raymundo of the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health then had this to say at a December 7 news conference with first responders:

"Mourn with us the loss of our colleagues, of our friends, of our families and our loved ones. I ask that you come together, and hold each other...I want you every day to be grateful for those of us that were spared and those who are still with us today...in what will be the unimaginable weeks and months ahead. We will get through this, day by day, minute by minute. We will be stronger...when we get to that other side."

I have sent my personal condolences to the public health staff of San Bernardino County. I know that this attack could have been perpetrated on any one of us. We are ALL incredibly vulnerable to the dark natures of people bent on terrorism, whether it's based on workplace differences, religious zealotry,

or something else. Few of our workplaces are secure against those bent on violence. I saw a YouTube video recently with helpful suggestions on how to survive a random mass shooting. It emphasizes three words: escape, hide, fight. The idea that I would need to do ANY of these things during the course of normal work day is unsettling to say the least. We should **ALL** be able to leave our homes with the notion that we will return that evening without being shot down by some crazed gunman.

It's also true that the work many of us do gets people angry. We are regulators. The decisions we make often affect other people's ability to earn a living. Events in San Bernardino and in Paris on November 13 teach us that nothing can fully protect us from this type of sudden, random, extreme violence. It isn't just the threat of Islamic extremists either. We have plenty of our own religious zealots and mentally unhinged individuals.

Finally, I urge everyone to appreciate the beautiful things in life, and to treat one another with kindness. The challenges we have every day can sometimes reflectively bring out crankiness and criticism. Instead, please look for the better angels of our nature, a term I believe coined by Abraham Lincoln in his first inaugural address. We should be easier on each other, **especially** when there's a disagreement. The end result is very often the same, but relationships aren't terribly frayed getting there.

Thank you for all the support given to the new Board of Directors and Bargaining Team as we attempt to reach a new agreement achieving salary equity for all.

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