

May 8, 2015

Governor Jerry Brown  
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: Petition to Support, Approve, and/or Adopt Proposed Bargaining Unit 10  
Salary Ranges to Take Effect August 1, 2015

Dear Governor Brown:

We, the undersigned, request your immediate action to ensure pay equity for all State scientists by approving the California Association of Professional Scientists' (CAPS) proposed competitive salary adjustment and reclassification changes currently under consideration.

The work performed by dedicated State scientists is extremely valuable--at times essential--and often equivalent to that of other technical classifications receiving significantly higher pay. In particular, State scientists often work directly alongside State engineers and geologists in protecting vital California natural resources, including surface and ground waters, public health, and environmental quality, while ensuring timely and safe design and approval of critical projects. State scientists bring a unique range of expertise that is essential for public health, resource protection and capitol development projects. Yet State scientists are paid at least **35% less** than their engineer and geology counterparts even though their work is frequently equivalent in technical complexity. Similarly, State scientists are paid on average up to 33% below salaries of equivalent scientist classifications in local and federal agencies within California.

These pay inequities actually cost California money over the long term. They significantly hurt State scientist staff retention and replacement. Over time, the State is losing the competition to attract and retain good scientists. This will hurt State efforts to tackle such vital problems as the drought, Bay Delta Conservation Plan, alternative energy, high-speed transport, timely approval of major infrastructure projects, and other critical topics.

In partial recognition and acceptance of these facts, State scientist supervisors and managers in 2014 received a 40 percent salary increase, by court order. The same principle applies to rank-and-file State scientist salary classifications. The time is now to complete that recognition, fulfil the State's obligation to ensure pay equity, and improve its competitiveness in the scientist job market by providing the remaining State scientists with fair and adequate salary increases.

State scientists demand SALARY EQUITY for ONE and ALL State scientists!

**Signed and Submitted by 5 State Scientists**

State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
West Sacramento, CA 95691  
May 20, 2015

Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.

Dear Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.:

Today a number of my colleagues are asking for your support in increasing the wages of California's State scientists. I, personally, am asking for your support. I have been a scientist with the State for over ten years and enjoy the challenging and important work I do. The downside has been living paycheck to paycheck every month since being employed with the State. Since my employment, I have seen my wages diminish over time as my health care premiums increase and share into retirement increase. The cost of living has increased and I find myself stretching my dollars even thinner each month. Late last year my spouse was laid off from his full-time job and has not found employment. I am the sole bread-winner in my family, and the stress of being a full-time mother and bread-winner has taken a toll on my health this year. With three young children, an unemployed spouse and stagnant pay for so many years, I have found myself seeking employment outside of State service. I have formed many strong co-worker bonds and find the work my agency does interesting, yet it is not allowing my family to realize the 'American Dream'. It has been depressing as I realize I cannot afford to purchase a home.

I wanted you to see my side of the story. I feel as though I am a member of the working poor. And it saddens me that State scientists are under-appreciated in the invaluable work we perform for the State. I have seen many of my talented scientist colleagues leave the State for greener pastures. Please keep in mind that this is the legacy you are creating. In the end, you are my "boss", and I, as many other State scientists do, work very hard for you and the State of California every day. We give what we are asked for each day, but we feel no gratitude from you in return. Please provide us what we deserve - what we have been waiting for so very long - pay parity for ALL State scientists.

Sincerely,

State Scientist

## MEMORANDUM

May 2 2015

To: Governor Brown:

From: Underpaid SWRCB Environmental Scientist

On behalf of my colleagues here at the SWRCB office, I would like to appeal to your common sense on compensation for SWRCB Environmental Scientists. While I understand the circumstances apply to state scientists statewide, I must emphasize the especially difficult circumstances we face in trying to make a living for ourselves and our families in the Sacramento region. I would like to share with you my personal message on why I feel our pay is inadequate.

As a Mother and a family provider, I know how to make ends meet, but when I saw my first paycheck I gasped - \$2974.31 was my net. What also disheartens me is the number of Mothers, which work for Cal EPA that tell their very own children- not to be Scientists. It just does not pay. It appears unjustified to have people with sophisticated technical abilities being denied a fair pay for the work they do. I also hear from many Mothers that state they are looking for second jobs on the weekend. I have to ask would you like your scientist that is working on the drought crisis to greet you at Home Depot on the weekends?

From a broader perspective, SWRCB is missing out on some of the best talent available because it isn't salary competitive. Why would anyone these days take an entry-level Environmental Scientist position in Sacramento (or anywhere else in the state for that matter) when they have other better paying options? The answer is, they won't, and they don't! This is no reflection on our most recent hires, but rather suggests that they will be leaving too, at the first opportunity we should pay a competitive salary in order to keep good talent. The state deserves the best choices when hiring new scientist, and those new scientists deserve to receive a competitive salary. Neither is occurring currently.

Prior to 2005, state scientists and engineers had the equivalent salaries. That means exactly the same or within a few percent. Then and now, state scientists and state engineers at SWRCB work side-by-side on complex environmental and regulatory issues as part of multi-disciplinary teams. The work is similar and the job duties are often interchangeable. But since 2005, salaries have vastly diverged. State engineers at SWRCB have seen substantial salary growth, yet SWRCB scientists have seen no real salary growth (and arguably a real reduction in purchasing power). The fact is that our salaries lag far behind not just state engineers, but our Sacramento scientific counterparts working in both the public and private sectors. We know this because we deal with them in our work EVERY DAY! Frankly, it is embarrassing and demeaning to always be the lowest paid professional in the room when we meet to get the important work of the public accomplished. It undercuts our professional standing not to mention our morale.

We hear from you and other SWRCB managers the importance of hard work, accountability and the importance of accomplishing the mission of this department. On that score, please count me as a true believer. I work hard, and want to see my contributions make a positive difference for you, this

department, and the public. But I also want to see both words and deeds from you and from Governor Brown that recognize my important work.

Please strongly and openly support salary equity for your hard-working scientific staff.

Sincerely,

Environmental Scientist

CC: CAPS

July 21, 2014

Bruce H. Wolfe, Executive Officer  
Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region  
1515 Clay St, Ste 1400  
Oakland, CA 94612  
(Copy by email)

Dear Mr. Wolfe,

Please accept this notice that I am resigning from my position as Environmental Scientist with the Regional Water Quality Control Board. I have accepted a position with the East Bay Municipal Utility District, requiring me to start Monday, August 11, 2014. Therefore, my last day of employment with the Water Board will be Friday, August 8, 2014. I wish I could provide more than three weeks' notice.

This bittersweet decision was difficult to make, as for the past five years have truly been rewarding. However, as we are fully aware, the State's Environmental Scientist salary is disparagingly below market rate. Thus, this was the primary driver in my decision in accepting a position that I simply could not pass up. I am grateful to have served for the State and Water Boards. The professional development has been invaluable. My hope and desire is to eventually return one day to the Water Board family -- perhaps by then, as an engineer or geologist.

I will assist in my fullest capacity with this transition.

Sincerely,

Copy by email:

Aleathia Gary, Associate Governmental Program Analyst  
Brian Thompson, Section Leader

Yola Tang, Division Chief

Dylan Whyte, Assistant Executive Officer

Thomas Mumley, Assistant Executive Officer