

Dear Eraina Ortega,

It is time State Scientists received higher pay for their valuable work. You can help to make this occur.

I am an underpaid environmental Scientist working for the State of California. I am proud of my work protecting water quality but demoralized when I stop and think about the amount I get paid versus the approximately 27% greater amount my engineering colleagues make.

I think about the cost of living, my hard work that I do every day that leads to high stress and probably shortens my life, and the fact that my engineering colleagues do the same or similar work as I for that 27% greater pay. I would find pay parity with my colleagues really handy for paying the big bills like house payments and fixing our broken bathroom.

I will most likely retire at an older age and have less years to enjoy my hard earned and what will be a smaller pension than my colleagues. I know state scientists who are not saving money because of the cost of living in our county.

Do you really value scientific work less than engineering work? Or if you do, do you value it 27% less? Who are the persons who carried us through safe practices, developed test kits and developed vaccines for Covid 19? Scientists. In this state among our responsibilities are protection of your water, air, invaluable aquatic habitats, upland habitats that sustains wildlife, agriculture, and packaged food just to name a few things. How can you gamble with staff that protect two things essential to all life, water and air.

Pay equity now. Please.

Kim Sanders (she, her)
Environmental Scientist
Central Coast Water Quality Control Board
San Luis Obispo, CA

