

# CAPSULE

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# CAPS BOARD ASKS MEMBERS TO VOTE ON UAW AFFILIATION AGREEMENT

 **By The CAPS Board of Directors**

On Saturday, February 24, 2024, your CAPS Board of Directors unanimously voted to approve an affiliation agreement between CAPS and the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW), and to bring the agreement to the membership for a ratification vote.

CAPS members will decide whether we affiliate as a local of the UAW. Should the membership vote to affiliate, the affiliation agreement shall become effective. Should the membership decline to affiliate, CAPS will continue as an independent union. The ratification vote shall begin at 8:00 a.m. March 18, 2024, and conclude at 11:30 p.m. on March 31, 2024.

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about affiliating with UAW. You will find more detailed answers, information about the board's decision, the Affiliation Agreement language, and how to vote, at <https://capsscientists.org/uaw-affiliation-vote/>.

### What does it mean to affiliate with UAW?

In recent years, CAPS has witnessed UAW make history numerous times, through their collective actions, organizing campaigns, and "one member one vote" change to UAW leadership elections. The UAW prides itself on its democratic heritage and the International UAW Constitution is carefully crafted and designed to secure each member their full democratic right, both as an individual and through their elected representatives. CAPS leadership is working to build a culture of democracy and solidarity within our union, and believes the UAW is the perfect fit for us.

### How will affiliating impact our position at the bargaining table?

California State Scientists have continuously been disrespected by our employer, the Governor of the State of California. It's time for radical change, to reset our relationship with our employer, and to demand the respect that we deserve.

By affiliating with the UAW, we will have the support of UAW International staff (and members in other UAW Local Unions) who have experience bargaining for scientists/researchers in higher education, implementing successful contract campaigns and strikes against large powerful public employers like the University of California, and winning historic contracts. We will also have immediate access to the UAW International Union Strike and Defense Fund, which currently has a net worth of over \$800 million. The UAW Strike and Defense Fund provides one of the best strike fund benefits of any international union: \$500/week for members in good standing and participating in a sanctioned strike. It would take CAPS many years to build up an equivalent strike fund benefit for just a month-long strike.

### Is there any precedent for state employees?

UAW Local 6000 represents Michigan State employees. Local 6000 represents approximately 15,000 members in 1,200 worksites throughout the State of Michigan.

### Is there any precedent for scientists?

Yes! Many California State Scientists actually came from UAW locals throughout California. Most notably, UAW Local 5810 and UAW Local 2865, who represent workers at institutions of higher education employing academic researchers.

### What is the process to affiliate?

CAPS elected leadership has negotiated an affiliation agreement with representatives from the UAW. Affiliation is subject to membership approval of the terms of affiliation, pursuant to the process outlined in Article III of the CAPS Bylaws which requires a majority of eligible members to vote for quorum. This means a simple majority (over 50%) of all CAPS members (Rank and File, Supervisory, Managerial, and Retirees) must submit a ballot. Of those ballots submitted, there needs to be a simple majority of yes votes to affiliate.

A membership vote of approval from a majority of members returning ballots shall constitute application for and acceptance of CAPS as a UAW local union charter governed by the terms of the affiliation agreement.

### What would affiliation look like?

The UAW and CAPS leadership have agreed to a transition period to provide us the opportunity to phase in dues increases, as well as give us time to maintain our existing internal structure, while carefully crafting necessary modifications that remain fully consistent with the democratic values of our union. The UAW's flexibility on this, and on other issues related to affiliation, strongly suggests that it will not be difficult to achieve that goal.

### How will affiliation impact dues?

After affiliation, CAPS will begin transitioning into an equitable dues structure. UAW members pay dues in an amount determined by their pay structure and whether they have a legal right to strike. Dues are set by UAW Constitutional Convention delegates. Dues vary depending on the net worth of the International Strike and Defense Fund. For specific details about the transition and how your UAW dues would be spent, please go to <https://capsscientists.org/uaw-affiliation-faqs/>.

CAPSULE

**MEMBERS PICKET AT NEWSOM'S BUDGET PRESS CONFERENCE**

Scores of our members made their voices heard on January 10 during Governor Gavin Newsom's State Budget press conference and made so much good noise that The Sacramento Bee wrote about our issues in a story published the next day.

Newsom tried to keep the press conference's location hush-hush by announcing it the morning of the event to credentialed members of the Capitol press corps and no one else. Through well-placed sources, however, we figured out when and where the Governor would be. A strategic group wearing CAPS' signature green showed up at the downtown Sacramento office building carrying signs, blowing horns, marching, and chanting for two hours to let Newsom and anyone in the area know State Scientists deserve pay equity!



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PHOTO: CAPSule

# CAPSULE IS GOING GREENER

In the next few months, our CAPSule news- letter will be making some significant delivery and format changes.

First, we will begin delivering issues via email to you and all CAPS members with an opt-in to continue receiving a print version via USPS. Second, the CAPSule e-version will be formatted for easy reading on mobile devices.

There are many reasons for this change: You can review, retrieve, and save electronic issues for easy reference and reduced clutter. You can immediately respond to calls to action with clicks instead of phone calls or snail mail. Digital information is easy to share electronically with friends and colleagues. The cyber CAPSule will also save on postage costs, shrink our carbon footprint, and reduce our waste stream.

This is a significant change that requires action by your CAPS Board, so it is still a few months off. Please watch CAPS' weekly emails and this publication for more details.

# DEPARTMENTS RELEASE UPDATED TELEWORK POLICIES, CAPS REQUESTS MEET AND CONFERS

Recently, different Agency Secretaries and management chains have released information that there is a movement to "update hybrid work" and require more in-office days for all employees. As of March 5, our CAPS labor consultants have received official notice from CalEPA, CDFW, CalHHS, the Department of Cannabis Control, and the Department of Consumer Affairs.

Your CAPS Bargaining Team has sent information requests to each affected department, which will provide us with additional information that will likely clearly support the current telework policies. Also, we have called for Meet and Confers with each department to fight for continued telework rights and maximum flexibility. Your in-office or telework schedule should be based on whether the duties can be performed remotely, and your and your supervisor's decision-making to determine what schedule works best for your work and performance.

If your supervisor informs you either verbally or in writing that your telework schedule will be changing, request that this change in your working conditions be communicated in writing via the modification process of the STD 200 and notify the CAPS general inbox ASAP at [caps@capsscscientists.org](mailto:caps@capsscscientists.org).

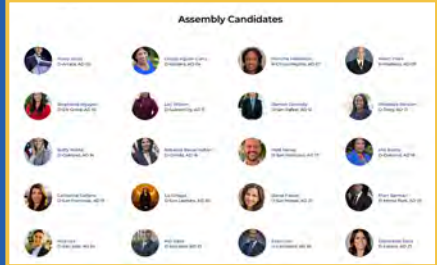
Additionally, your CAPS leadership is currently working with other state unions to create a coalition to show the State that telework flexibility is supported not only by CAPS, but by all state employee unions.

# LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES ENDORSED BY CAPS WIN BIG

There were still many votes to be counted in the days and weeks ahead, but as of March 15, CAPS-endorsed legislative candidates led in 68 of 69 primary races, including 11 of the 12 in contested campaigns for open legislative seats. In California's statewide primary election, the top two candidates advance to the General Election on November 5, regardless of party.

In local races, CAPS-endorsed Humboldt County Supervisor Mike Wilson had a comfortable lead. CAPS endorsed two candidates in the Sacramento mayoral race: Flo Cofer was running first, and Kevin McCarty was running third, just 0.23% of the vote behind the second-place candidate. Sacramento Councilwoman Katie Valenzuela was behind in her bid for reelection. In those local races, if no candidate receives 50%-plus-one of the votes, the top two contenders face off in November.

You can view the list of candidates endorsed by CAPS at <https://capsscscientists.org/legislative-program/caps-endorsements>.



# CAPS RANK AND FILE MEMBERSHIP TRENDING UP!

After a period of slow decline, the percentage of CAPS membership in Unit 10 rebounded last year, with nearly 3 in 4 rank-and-file State Scientists on the CAPS' rolls. As of January 1, our union's membership percentage was 74%, up from 66% a year earlier. Membership among Unit 10 supervisors and managers was 57%.

Our rank-and-file membership growth last year has defied the weakening membership rates seen by other California state-employee unions. According to a analysis of State Controller data by *The Sacramento Bee*, just 64% of rank-and-file state employees were dues-paying union members as of October 2023, down about .5% from a year earlier. Union leaders quoted in the story said telework was a significant challenge to recruiting.

(It's worth noting that The Bee's reporting included badged units – correctional officers, CHP officers, CalFire firefighters, and other public safety staff – that tend to have membership percentages of 90% or more. So, if those are backed out, the membership percentage for the remaining state-employee population would be significantly lower.)

Our membership has grown and strengthened for a number of reasons:

**Our fight for a fair contract:** The months of October and November saw a spike in membership as State Scientists signed up to have a voice in the strike authorization vote and to support the Defiance for Science strike. The strike authorization passed with 93.51% approval. Then thousands of us walked off the job and into history from November 15 to 17 as the only union to go on strike since the 1977 Dills Acts allowed state

employees to collectively bargain.

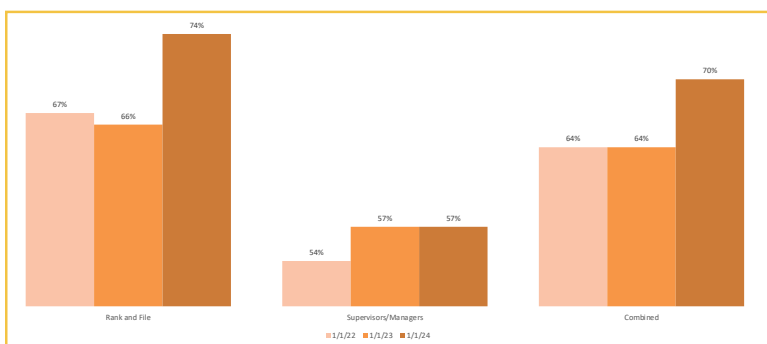
**Personal contact:** Membership is the lifeblood of our collective power. That's why CAPS leaders and staff have focused time and resources on reaching out personally to every new Unit 10 hire in the state through new employee orientations, one-on-one meetings, on-site events, and more. We also contact longer-term State Scientists who haven't yet joined us. Our Referral Program provides a \$50 monetary reward to any CAPS member who recruits a new member, rank-and-file or supervisory, as an incentive to activate interested and capable members.

**Activism:** When a State Scientist joins us, they are joining a dynamic organization that draws in newcomers with the promise of being part of something bigger than themselves. We offer outlets for deeper involvement by, for example, joining our Contract Action Team.

**Transparency:** While CAPS is a union organized and operated by State Scientists for State Scientists, we handle our business transparently. No secrets. So, when our colleagues join us, they know what's going on. Members are the boss.

While our numbers are heading in the right direction, we cannot rest. So please talk to colleagues who aren't yet members about why they should join. Explain that our collective strength comes from individual commitment. Tell them what CAPS is doing to achieve pay equity for State Scientists. Let them know that they need CAPS, and CAPS needs them.

Let's keep growing together!



► **Note:** From 2022 to 2024, the total of Unit 10 State Scientists (rank-and-file, supervisors, and managers) increased 20%. Despite that sharp overall growth, CAPS' membership percentage also grew.



# CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SCIENTISTS

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## STRIKE FUND + DONATIONS = UNION POWER!

We made history in November with the first-ever state-employee strike by a union covered by the 1977 Dills Act. Our three-day job action gained global media attention and sent a loud message to Governor Newsom that we're serious about achieving an agreement that values State Scientists and our work.

We don't want to walk off the job again, but if we must, a healthy strike fund is key to assisting colleagues who can least afford unpaid time off. So please share <https://givebutter.com/StateScience> on your social media posts, ask people you know to donate – or give to it yourself if you can. Every dollar makes us stronger.



## CAPS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2024 DEPENDENT SCHOLARSHIPS



From now until June 1, your CAPS Member Benefits Committee is taking applications for Dependent Scholarships. Each year, the program awards \$750 scholarships to dependents of 15 CAPS members to support their college education. Qualified applicants must be enrolled in an accredited university or community college (but not a vocational school) for the coming fall semester and complete [this online CAPS Scholarship Application](#).

**NOTE:** Previous applications from 2023 or earlier do not roll over. To be eligible for a 2024 scholarship, all candidates must file a 2024 application.

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