

Governor Gavin Newsom  
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Sacramento, CA 95814

Ms. Eraina Ortega  
Director, California Department of Human Resources  
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Dear Governor Newsom and Director Ortega,

As I have watched the negotiations between CalHR and Bargaining Unit 10 (Unit10) I have become more and more frustrated. Until now I have not considered writing to you; over the last 14 years I have become more and more hopeless the State of California will do the right thing, so why waste my energy screaming into the wind. Why play into the illusion CalHR, and by extension Governor Newsom, is negotiating in good faith? Then I looked at my ability to retire. Sadly, because the State of California has decided it does not need to follow the law when paying the scientists of this state, I will not be able to retire and stay in California, the state my family has been a part of for over six generations. My indigenous grandson will not be able to grow up in the state that is central to his identity.

Once I realized I would have to work until I was in my 60s to be able to retire and stay in California, but not be young enough to fully enjoy my retirement, I decided to see what else I have lost due to the State of California's treatment of State Scientists. 1) Had the State of California followed the law, and recommendations of the court in 2014, I could have bought a house in California. As the sole provider for my family, and living in Southern California, I did not have enough guaranteed income to buy a house. Although I worked overtime to make ends meet, I have lived in neighborhoods I could barely afford to make sure my family got a good education and was safe; 2) I could have bought better cars that would have dumped fewer greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. As a scientist I fully understand the dangers of climate change and the world we are leaving for our children and grandchildren. I have always wanted a better vehicle but had to get what I could afford and afford to insure based on my salary; 3) I could have put more into my individual retirement account; 4) I could have weathered impacts of Covid easier. Everyone in my family was impacted by Covid. All our incomes dropped. Stimulus money and unemployment helped some of us, but as a family we reached out to help each other. Some had problems getting stimulus money even though they were eligible, some had unemployment benefits frozen or stopped with no explanation, so the rest of us made sure everyone's bills were paid.

Over the years I have watched people in the engineer's union with less education, less seniority, and less responsibility make thousands of dollars more than I make. I have made myself available to work emergencies to protect the people of California. I have burned myself out working overtime to make sure my family can live in a safe neighborhood and to protect the environment, wildlife, and people of California. It is heartbreaking the disrespect State Scientists endure at the hands of you and your negotiators.

After the court decision forced CalHR to restore pay equality for Unit 10 managers and supervisors, the obvious next steps would be for rank and file members of Unit 10 to be given the same treatment. Unfortunately, every administration has decided the law requiring like pay for like work does not apply to them. The Dills Act requires represented employees' salaries and

benefits be negotiated in good faith. CalHR is not negotiating in good faith when it comes to the table with the intent to continue to break the law.

I understand this mess was not of your making. It is your responsibility to fix it. When we learn of injustice, when we see the mistakes that were made, we are morally obligated to fix them. When the State benefits from the dedication, passion, and expertise of State Scientists; when you are praised for the work of your scientists; you must show your appreciation in action, not just words. When you know your employees are being treated unfairly, bullied by others because they see we are not valued, you must act.

Please Governor Newsom and Director Ortega, do the right thing. Restore the integrity of the State of California. Let the people who helped build this state retire here, keep their families here, and continue to contribute to California.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

*Megan Evans*

Megan Evans  
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cc:

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