

July 6, 2021

Ms. Eraina Ortega, Director
California Department of Human Resources
1515 S Street, North Building, Suite 500
Sacramento, California 95811-7258

Dear Director Ortega:

I have worked as a State Scientist for CalRecycle for 14 years. Pay parity with Engineers has been at issue during my entire career here.

Around 2008, CalRecycle, then called the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), lost about 10% of its workforce to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) because of the pay discrepancy. I considered moving to CARB then, but I liked my work and my colleagues at CIWMB, so I stayed here.

For several reasons, I also believed that pay parity would come soon:

1. Government Code 19826 says "that like salaries shall be paid for comparable duties and responsibilities."
2. Pay parity existed between State Engineers and State Scientists who performed substantially similar work prior to my arrival in 2007.
3. In 2008, the Department of Personnel Administration (DPA. Now, CalHR) agreed with the California Association of Professional Scientists that salary equivalency between State Scientist Supervisors and State Engineer Supervisors should be restored.

Of course, pay equity did not return.

The financial impact for me is a loss of about \$385,000 over 14 years.

In 2014, Governor Brown finally restored salary equity for State Scientist Supervisors in light of the 2008 DPA opinion. But he didn't address rank-and-file salaries.

I thought it was one thing for the State to ignore pay inequality between Engineers and Scientists and quite another for it to ignore a vertical salary relationship between rank-and-file State Scientists and their supervisors. Of course, the pay disparity remains to this day.

I know that I will never see that lost money. Neither will the thousands of other State Scientists who have suffered a similar loss.

I know this isn't the only pay parity issue in the State, but it's one that can easily be fixed.

I am hoping that the State can end this injustice by investing some of its \$80 billion surplus to fund State Scientists who work every day to protect public health, the environment, and California's natural resources.

Sincerely,

Frank Severson
Senior Environmental Scientist
Local Assistance and Market Development
CalRecycle