

November 9, 2020

Dear Governor Newsom,

In recent months we've seen massive changes taking place in this State and Nation in response to an impossible array of population stressors. Citizens in every state now face clear and present dangers to their health, financial security, education, physical safety, access to food, and their franchise.

In measuring the impact and origin of all of these challenges and their intersectionality, the underlying role of discrimination has taken center stage across the country. Discrimination can be based on race, nationality, sex, gender expression, gender identity, age, socioeconomic status, or zip code, to name just a few. It takes place in homes, media, workplaces, events and gatherings, and in public policy. Even in California, it takes place between professional technical disciplines and how they are compensated by the State. It has been the lived experience of members of California Bargaining Unit 10 – State Scientists, that a number of these forms of discrimination are taking place synergistically with respect to our treatment by the State for the last 15 years.

Unit 10 scientists have endured a severe pay inequity since 2005. It was unacceptable when it started, and now it has become even more egregious and injurious under today's circumstances. And this is now causing real mission delivery issues within CalEPA agencies and beyond, where environmental scientists and environmental engineers work side-by-side, conducting similar work – and where engineers earn up to 50% more than their peer scientists.

These scientists reside largely in agencies within CalEPA and the Resources Agency. Both Agency Secretaries have now submitted letters to the Director of CalHR expressing the same sentiments contained in this letter, including detailed costs and metrics. Further, CalHR has received similar letters from former Senator Barbara Boxer, District Attorneys, and environmental coalitions. Even representatives of industry have spoken up on this issue. The CA Department of Toxic Substances Control conducted series of statewide listening sessions in 2019, where industry representatives related State Scientist compensation to issues with timely permit and project delivery. This is not a partisan or controversial issue.

It must also be recognized that for female, Black, Native, Latinx, AAPI, LGBTQ+, and other scientists of diversity, a severe and long-standing pay inequity between state employee disciplines represents simply another form of institutional discrimination. There is no meaningful difference between the work conducted by California State Scientists and Engineers. This is a legally settled matter¹. This disparity was resolved for Managers, repeatedly, but a solution for

rank and file scientists yet eludes us – in clear violation of Government Code 19826, which states that “similar and comparable duties must be compensated similarly.”²

We are sensitive to these fiscally challenging times, and State Scientists are not asking for special treatment. But the State must also recognize that these challenges are not experienced equitably, nor proportionately. Scientists of color are disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Many scientists live in high-cost areas and, without the geographic pay differential enjoyed by California Engineers and our Federal colleagues, face disproportionate financial hardships. Many of us now work longer hours to compensate for the 5% shift of the State workforce to COVID-19 contact tracing (affecting each State BDO). The high cost of living in California compounds crises related to student debt, rent, mortgage, food security, education, and childcare experienced by many scientists with advanced degrees – who are not afforded the same educational differentials enjoyed by other Units and our Federal colleagues. As we subsidize our agencies by continuing to work from our homes, which are now essentially State workplaces, we are called in this moment to be even more vocal.

All of these issues intersect and compound our suffering, yet we remain passionate about the crucial work we do to keep all Californians safe from toxic chemicals in their homes and environment, and to ensure they have clean air and water, and safe food. As scientists, we manage and conduct research related to viral outbreaks which is more vital now to health and safety than ever before, while we also work to maintain a richly diverse and productive natural environment. We serve California’s Tribal Nations and overburdened Environmental Justice communities with pride and dedication. And California State Scientists play a crucial role in all areas related to Global Climate Change and adaptation. If California is to really be known as an employer of choice to the full diversity of its citizenry, as well as to the nation and world – these matters must be resolved expeditiously.

Your own inaugural speech on January 7, 2019 included the words “everyone deserves fair pay”, and “it’s never the wrong time to do the right thing.” Your leadership in these times, in many ways, has been inspiring. But as you well know, there is always more work to do – more wrongs to right.

Governor Newsom, you have an opportunity here to:

commit to science,

commit to equity,

commit to fairness,

and adhere to the law.

In fiscal terms, the “fix” State Scientists seek is negligible to the 5th largest economy on the planet.

² https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=19826&lawCode=GOV

And to borrow a phrase from the Social Justice Movement – silence is complicity.

As your CalHR Bargaining Team continues to “plead poverty” throughout our ongoing collective bargaining process, we would appreciate a clear response from your Administration to this plea so that we can continue our important work for California – a State we yearn to assert is increasingly progressive and Leads by Example through enforcing fair and equitable compensation for all of its employees.

cc Sec. Blumenfeld - CalEPA
 Sec. Crowfoot - CNRA
 Dir. Ortega – CalHR
 Dir. Bosler - DOF
 Pres. Gordus – CAPS

Signed	Classification
Charles Striplen, MS, PhD	Environmental Scientist, NCRWQCB
Ange Darnell Baker, PhD	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW
Dylan Inskeep	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Katrina Smith, MS	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW
Madeleine Wieland	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Erum Razzak, MS	Environmental Scientist, LARWQCB
Susan Stewart	Environmental Scientist, NCRWQCB
Raffica La Rosa, PhD	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Angineh Shahnazarian	Environmental Scientist, LARWQCB
Cherilyn Burton, MS	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW

Jeb Bjerke	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW
Alexander Prescott, MS	Environmental Scientist, LARWQCB
Snejana Toneva, MS	Environmental Scientist, LARWQCB
Itzia Rivera	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CVFPB
Mariel Boldis	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Jennifer Stewart, MS	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CVFPB
Jessy Fierro, MS	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), Dept of Toxic Substances Control
Lala Kabadaian, MS	Environmental Scientist, LARWQCB
Manjul Bose	Environmental Scientist, Department of Toxic Substances Control
Michele Fortner	Environmental Scientist, NCRWQCB
Catherine Woody	████████████████████
Elias Scott	Environmental Scientist, NCRWQCB
Laura Radke	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Isabella Roman	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Juanita Bacey	Senior Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Bonny Lew	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Hae Lee	Research Scientist I, DTSC
Mia Hunt	Environmental Scientist, CalRecycle
████████████████████	████████████████████

Heather Perry, PhD	Environmental Scientist
Kari McClanahan, MS	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Craig Zeff	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Laureen Barthman-Thompson	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Taiho Kim, PhD	Research Scientist III, DTSC
Pragya Pandey, MS, PhD	Senior Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Marcia Grefsrud	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Matt Erickson	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
John Downs	Senior Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Kelly Grant, PhD	Senior Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Eliana Camargo	Environmental Scientist, DWR
Nyein Aung, PhD	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Ted Daum, MS	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), DWR
Adam Weinberg	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Michelle Romero Fishback, PhD	Senior Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Jill North	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Melanie Day	Sr. Environmental Scientist (CDFW)
Abigail Noble, PhD	Senior Environmental Scientist, DTSC
██████████	████████████████████

Ashley Olmeda	Environmental Scientist, LARWQCB
Kaylee Vanni	Environmental Scientist, DWR
Emily Duncan, PhD	Sr. Environmental Scientist LARWQCB
Topher Buck	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), DTSC
Akiko Masuda, MS	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Jonathan Pham, MS	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Chris Carr	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
“Allen” C.L. Tsao	Associate Toxicologist, CDFW
Miles Claret	Environmental Scientist, DWR
Justin Fitt	Environmental Scientist, NCRWQCB
Justin Reyes	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Suzanne Gilmore	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW
Kathryn Ferrer	Environmental Scientist, CalRecycle
Phillip Zoucha	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Grace Myers	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
██████████	██
Elizabeth Brusati, PhD	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW
Matthew McCarron, M.S.	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) DTSC
Shay Richardson, M.S.	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB

Xochi Martinez	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Mehdi Nikbakht	Research Scientist, DTSC
Lynn Nakashima, MPH	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) DTSC
Ali Tohami, MMS	Environmental Scientist
Mallory Burden	Environmental Scientist, CalRecycle
Aleksandr Soin, PhD	Research Scientist III, DTSC, ECL Berkeley
Guilan Partow-Navid	Research Scientist I, ECL Pasadena
Kelsey Moore	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Simranpreet Supra	Research Scientist I, DTSC, ECL Berkeley
Mehdi Nikbakht	Research Scientist, DTSC
Desiree Ramirez	Environmental Scientist, DWR
██████████	██████████
Zack Zwahlen	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Thomas P. Lanphar	Senior Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Shannon Strong, M.S.	Environmental Scientist, NCRWQCB
Chris Monary	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Maria Lourdes Mertens, REHS	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB-DWP
Serge Glushkoff	Senior Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Carrie Tatoian Cain	Senior Environmental Scientist,DTSC

Valerie Taylor	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Monia Holleman, MPPA	Environmental Scientist, DWR
Brennan Ko-Madden	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Brendan Thompson	Environmental Scientist, NCRWQCB
Chloe Hakim	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Sean Farrow	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Abigail Smith	Environmental Scientist, SFRWQCB
██████████	██
Cory Copeland	Environmental Scientist, Delta Stewardship Council
Rachel Prat	Environmental Scientist, NCRWQCB
Rebecca Nordenholt, MS	Environmental Scientist, SFBRWQCB
Gabrielle Tomblin Bohrer	Environmental Scientist, DWR
Alexandra Laughtin	Environmental Scientist, DWR
Patti Rich-Crawford	Research Scientist III, CDPH
Joy Nishida, MS	Environmental Scientist, DWR
Kaylee Griffith, MS	Environmental Scientist, Delta Stewardship Council
Sam Bashevkin, Ph.D.	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) Delta Stewardship Council
Eva Bush	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) Delta Stewardship Council
Danielle Elledge	Environmental Scientist, CDFW

Dylan Chapple, Ph.D.	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), Delta Stewardship Council
Chelsea Batavia, Ph.D.	Environmental Scientist, Delta Stewardship Council
██████████	██ ██
Erin Aquino-Carhart	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Joshua Black, MEM	Environmental Scientist, DWR
████████████████████	██
Flavio Florez, Jr., BS, MBA	Associate Hazardous Materials Specialist
Justin Traina	Hazardous Materials Specialist
Jason Traina	Hazardous Materials Specialist
Heather Rodriguez	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW
Margarete Beth-Teicher	Environmental Scientist, SFBRWQCB
Adam Meyer	Environmental Scientist, DWR
Marisol Reynoso	Environmental Scientist, DWR
Kelley Nelson	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Mary Bartholomew	Environmental Scientist, NCRWQCB
Laurie Taul	Environmental Scientist, SFBRWQCB
Ashley Gage	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), DTSC
LeeAnn Young	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Dylan Stern	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), Delta Stewardship Council

Zaid Heyari	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Tiffany Hendrixson	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Allison Mitchell	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Quang Le	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Kenneth Neely	Research Scientist II, DTSC ECL – Berkeley
Teng Andy Yang	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), DTSC
Julie Coombes	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Clayton Creager, MEM	Environmental Program Manager I, NCRWQCB
Sean Cochran	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
██████████	████████████████████
Robynn Swan	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW
Michelle Battaglia, MS	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW
Derek Acomb	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Dan Resnik	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Christina Toms, MS, EIT	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), SF Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
Catherine Mandella	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Joseph Kermish-Wells	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Todd H. Keeler-Wolf, PhD	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW, annuitant

Christopher M. Loomis, MS	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Jessie Maxfield	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDFW
Sarah Estrella, MS	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Desiree Dela Vega	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Edlin Gonzalez, MS	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Joseph Martinez	Environmental Scientist, SFBRWQCB
Arvin Chi	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Mary Olswang	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Karen Black	Environmental Scientist, SWRCB
Anne Cooper Doherty, PhD	Senior Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Carolyn Buesch	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
John Krause	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Juan VillaRomero, PhD	Research Scientist
Mayra Molina, MS	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Cindy Castaneda, MS	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Jennifer Rippert, MS	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Mia Bianchi, MS	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Clint Stevens, MS	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Jennifer Nelson	Environmental Scientist, CDFW

Lan Wang	Research Scientist, DTSC
Leeanne Laughlin	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Glenn Forman	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) DTSC
Allan Fone, PhD	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), DTSC
James Hansen, MS	Environmental Scientist, CDFW
Adriana Aldana	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Xiangmei Wu, PhD	Research Scientist III, OEHHA
Nygerma L. Dangleben, Ph.D.	Staff Toxicologist (Specialist), OEHHA
████████████████████	████████████████████
██████████	████████████████████ ████████████████████
Bryan K. Eya, Ph.D.	Staff Toxicologist, Specialist, OEHHA
Farla Kaufman, PhD, MSc	Staff Toxicologist, Specialist, OEHHA
Anna Costello	Environmental Scientist, CDPH
Lisa Calhoun, MPH	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), CDPR
Gavin McCreary	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Thomas Anderson	Environmental Scientist, DTSC
Lisa Turknett	Staff Chemist, DTSC-ECL
Francisco Montalvan	Environmental Scientist, DTSC-ECL
Songmei Gao	Research Scientist, DTSC-ECL

Qiang Wang	Research Scientist, DTSC
Yishi Chen, Ph.D.	Research Scientist, DTSC
Ranjit Gill, MS	Research Scientist II, DTSC
Miaomiao Wang, PhD	Research Scientist, DTSC
Roshni Sarala	Research Scientist I, DTSC
Hyounggee Baek, PhD	Research Scientist, DTSC-ECL
Sarah Kuo	Environmental Scientist, CDPH
Beatris Karaoglanyan	Environmental Scientist, DTSC - EERD