



*State Employee Alliance-Communications Workers of America,
Local 7076, AFL-CIO, CLC*

**Bargaining Update # 5
September 30 and October 1, 2008**

After our fifth bargaining session with the State of New Mexico, we still have not seen any major movement from the State. The State negotiators have provided counter proposals that clarify existing language, but no language has been agreed to that is new.

Counter proposals received from the State negotiating team clearly reflect the negotiators' position to undermine our union contract and defer to SPO rules and regulations.

The State's counter proposals would limit the union's ability to better represent members in disciplinary matters and reprimands. The State also rejects the union's proposal to use Alternative Dispute Resolution as another method of resolving employees' grievances.

The State proposes to extend the 45-day time period for imposing discipline. This proposal would submit employees to a greater threat of retaliation and personality-driven discipline and reprimands and allow for the State to conduct "fishing expeditions."

Most alarming was the State's misunderstanding of being able to change economic terms and conditions of employment spelled out in the contract during the period the contract is in effect.

We submitted our comprehensive pay proposal to the State. This includes an across-the-board \$1500 to every worker, a longevity increase in 5-year increments, language to address pay inequities (new employees hired at hourly rates above more senior employees), and compensation for additional duties performed where vacancies exist and when employees are on leave. The state acknowledged the union's concern for vacant positions and then responded that if employees weren't willing to perform those duties without additional compensation, then state workers aren't team players. This did not go over well with those of us who have worked our job **and** vacant positions for months on end.

As bargaining concluded, the state wanted to schedule additional bargaining sessions through December of 2008. The State's desire to schedule dates into December indicates to us a lack of urgency to complete negotiations for the new contract.

As we continue to negotiate with the State, we rely on you to inform your co-workers about the progress that is being made at the bargaining table. Remember, your voice will be necessary for our success in this process. In the weeks to come we may be calling on you and your co-workers to take action in order to help move the negotiating process forward.

In Solidarity,
Your Bargaining Team

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