



HETTY ROSENSTEIN
NJ Area Director

2/11/2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Please read this letter carefully

Today Chris Christie addressed a joint session of the New Jersey Legislature. He began his address by criticizing public workers and calling us a special interest. He referred to two extreme examples of public employee pensions and acted as if those pensions in some way reflected our modest pension plan. He exhorted the Legislature to pass hastily drafted bills to cut our pension and health benefits and said that he would be demanding more than that as well.

Governor Christie then went on to outline \$2 billion in cuts he is making to this Fiscal Year's budget (which is up June 30, 2010) and promised even more drastic cuts in his March 16 Budget address for Fiscal Year 2011. The \$2 billion in cuts include \$500 million in cuts Governor Corzine had already made, over \$500 million in cuts to school aide, and \$1 billion in cuts to State programs. These cuts will lead to cuts to our schools and to social services. We are carefully examining them in order to understand their impact.

Christie is unilaterally imposing 25% healthcare and prescription drug premium charges to management and anyone who is not in a union.

Governor Christie's plan did not, however, do either of the following:

1. Invoke "Emergency Powers" (Fiscal Emergency is not Emergency Powers - There has been talk that the Governor would try to invoke the Disaster Emergency Act. We do not believe that this law applies and he did not try to do that.)

2. Layoffs of our members.

What we are facing:

We have a very difficult year in front of us. We know that many members of the Legislature want to try to show that they also will attack public workers and their benefits and we are going to have to fight on two fronts. We know that the Governor will have even more draconian cuts in the next Budget. We know that we will have to bargain a new contract with this Governor in 2011.

We are going to have to fight very hard and it will take all of our commitment, strength, experience and resources to prevail. Most of all it will take the will of our Members to stay strong and unified.

We are planning the following:

1. We are working with all of the public sector unions to maintain pressure on the Legislature to slow down the bills that Sweeney and Christie are trying to railroad through so that there is at least enough time to review them and see what they do, who they hurt and try to get some legislators to stand up for collective bargaining.

2. We are working hard to communicate quickly and effectively with our members. If you are not getting email from us, or getting phone messages from us, please log onto our website www.cwanj.org and update your personal information. We especially need home email, home and cell telephone numbers so that we can keep you informed.

3. We are trying to put together a joint media fund with other public sector unions. Everyone agrees that we cannot get our message out through newspapers and radio stations that are hostile to public workers. We are going to need to pay for media. We estimate that we will need \$6 - \$10 million between all of the unions to run the kind of campaign we are going to need and it is going to be difficult to raise this money quickly. Your Local leaders will be talking more to you about this plan and hopefully you will soon see some of your own co-workers – real state workers – on TV and radio.

How you can help:

1. Please call your legislator and strenuously press them to not rush through the pension and health benefit bills;

2. Stay up to date by checking the website, coming to union meetings and checking in with your shop steward.

3. Participate in union activities and maintain union solidarity.

4. Wear Red Thursday to show unity.

Thank you for everything that you do. We will keep you informed.

In Solidarity,

Chris Shelton
District 1 Vice President