



New York State
**PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
FEDERATION AFL-CIO**

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October 17, 2011

Dear PEF Member:

Attached is important information regarding the revised agreement you will be voting on. Please note that the voting period has been shortened in order to prevent layoffs should the contract be ratified.

By rejecting the last tentative agreement our members sent a strong message to the governor that the contract was not acceptable and allowed us to negotiate a contract that more closely matches the needs of our members.

The revised agreement balances the needs of all of our members, directly addresses three of the major concerns our members identified, job security protections, furloughs, the length of the agreement, and reduces the impact of the fourth, health insurance costs, however, one of the most important achievements of this agreement is that if ratified by our membership it will preserve the jobs of 3,496 PEF members who are facing layoffs.

- **Job Security** – The agreement more clearly defines the intent of the existing language in the tentative agreement and covers the entire term of the agreement. It incorporates a side letter into the agreement that clearly spells out the existing protections.
- **Furloughs** – While the contract still contains nine days of "deficit reduction" leave, the new contract converted furlough days into days of deferred pay. This means that over the term of the agreement our members will face no loss in wages associated with the furloughs. Additionally, since the deficit reduction leave is a wage deferral, there is no affect on final average salary for purposes of retirement. To get complete restitution for furlough days, the contract exchanged the lump sum payment. An average member comes out \$600 ahead of the \$1,000 lump sum payment under the new terms.
- **Length of Agreement** – Many of our members identified the five year term of the agreement as too long. By dropping the last year of the agreement, We now have the opportunity to negotiate the next agreement in an economic environment that may be significantly better than the current one. Additionally, it removes PEF from the same negotiating cycle as CSEA, reducing the possibility of being forced into a contract pattern that does not meet the needs of our members.
- **Health Insurance** – Unfortunately, the state refused to make improvements on health insurance premiums. However, to help mitigate the impact, PEF negotiated more flexibility in the Productivity Enhancement Program (PEP) as well as changes so that vacation accruals will more closely reflect their actual cash value when used to offset the employees' share of health insurance costs.

Throughout these negotiations we have all been portrayed in the media in less than flattering terms. Ratification of this revised agreement will show what PEF members already know: that we are willing to sacrifice to preserve the jobs of 3,496 of our co-workers and to maintain vital services we provide to the taxpayers.

I strongly urge you to vote "Yes" to this agreement.

In Solidarity,

President