



Illinois General Assembly

May 26, 2016

Governor Bruce Rauner
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Roberta Lynch, Executive Director AFSCME Council 31
205 N. Michigan Ave. Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Governor Rauner and Director Lynch,

It is abundantly clear that the continuation of this stalemate will continue to hurt all interested parties. State employees are particularly jeopardized when considering the impact on their health care costs; and taxpayers lose with continued uncertainty over costs that would be fixed in a new collective bargaining agreement. These outcomes are unacceptable and action must be taken by both parties now.

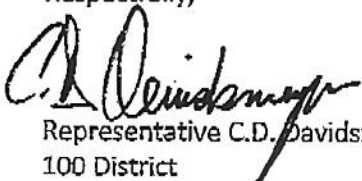
Therefore, we are writing to urge both parties to resume negotiations, with the Governor and AFSCME convened together at the negotiating table with the goal of reaching an agreement on a new collective bargaining agreement that balances respect for taxpayers with the needs of our hardworking, dedicated state employees. It is our strong belief that the Tolling Agreement and Declaration of September 9, 2015 – a joint commitment by the Administration and AFSCME to negotiate in good faith – must be honored to the fullest extent.

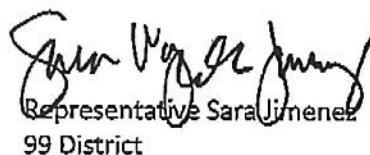
An agreement between both parties will allow all Illinoisans to move forward together, without anyone's ability to negotiate being taken away by an unelected arbitrator or by imposing an unwelcome contract.

The administration has been able to work with 18 separate unions to find agreement on behalf of the people of Illinois. This can only be accomplished by both sides being at the table ready to work. We are confident that meaningful progress can be made toward a collective bargaining agreement when both sides meet in good faith.

As Representatives who serve many of the dedicated state employees and many other hard-working taxpayers, who are all impacted by your interactions, we urge you both to take action to resume good faith negotiations towards a compromise.

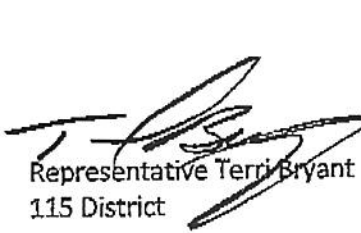
Respectfully,


Representative C.D. Davidsmeyer
100 District



Representative Sara Jimenez
99 District


Representative Norine Hammond
93 District

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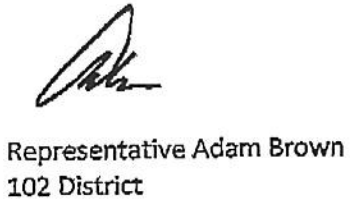
Representative Terri Bryant
115 District



Representative Avery Bourne
95 District



Representative Don Moffitt
74 District



Representative Adam Brown
102 District



Executive Director

Roberta Lynch

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May 27, 2016

Representative C.D. Davidsmeyer
Representative Sara Jimenez
Representative Norine Hammond
Representative Terri Bryant
Representative Avery Bourne
Representative Don Moffitt
Representative Adam Brown

Dear Representatives:

I am in receipt of the letter you sent yesterday to me and Governor Rauner urging "both parties to resume negotiations".

I can assure you that our union would much prefer to reach a contract settlement with the Rauner Administration at the bargaining table as we have done with every previous administration, whether Republican or Democrat.

We have already notified the governor's representatives—and restate to you again today—that AFSCME stands ready to return to the bargaining table and resume negotiations.

Unfortunately, as I'm sure you are aware, on January 8 the Rauner Administration broke off negotiations and has since refused our requests to return to the bargaining table. Instead, the governor is asking the state labor board to give him the power to impose his own demands on state employees—leaving them with no choice but to work under those terms or go out on strike.

Certainly I would like to hope that your letter would produce a more constructive response from the administration, but I must confess to skepticism on that score.

We share your goal of reaching an agreement that "balances respect for taxpayers with the needs of ... dedicated state employees" and believe that such an agreement can be reached if both parties approach negotiations in good faith, recognizing that compromise is essential to any bargaining process.

In reality, HB 580, the fair arbitration bill, represents the surest path to the kind of reasoned negotiations that you support. Yet each of you chose to vote against the motion to override Governor Rauner's veto of this measure.

07/14



American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Council 31

TEL (312) 641-6060 FAX (312) 861-0979 WEB www.afscme31.org 205 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2100 Chicago, Illinois 60601

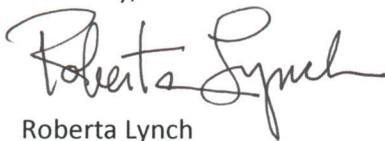
Our union supported passage of HB 580 as a more reliable means to foster the negotiations that you call for. In the public safety units where interest arbitration is already an option, it is well-recognized that the prospect of arbitration often acts as an incentive for the parties to remain at the bargaining table until they reach an agreement. Further, where interest arbitration is invoked, in most instances it spurs the parties to modify the proposals that are ultimately submitted to the arbitrator—leading to the kind of balanced outcome to which you allude in your letter.

Therefore, I would respectfully request that if Governor Rauner fails to respond in the affirmative to your call to resume negotiations with AFSCME, you immediately inform Rep. Chris Welch, the sponsor of HB 580, that you are prepared to support that legislation and ask him to call the override motion again in this session of the General Assembly. I am confident that with your support we could secure the 71 votes needed to override the governor's veto.

Finally, I want to respond briefly to your reference to the "18 separate unions" with whom the administration has reached collective bargaining agreements. I'm sure you are aware that most of those unions represent only a small number of state employees (some with just a few dozen members) as compared to the 38,000 employees represented by AFSCME. However, you may not be aware that those settlements are based on far better terms than the "last, best and final" offer made to state employees represented by our union. Many of the employees covered by those agreements will receive pay increases over the four-year term of the contract, while AFSCME-represented employees would be barred from receiving a single pay increase or even their scheduled step increases. Moreover, employees covered by the Teamsters agreement will receive a significant increase in their health care benefits, as compared to the massive benefit cut—doubling employee costs—that the governor is seeking to impose on the members of AFSCME and other unions that have not yet reached an agreement.

The people of Illinois depend on the vital public services that state workers provide. The men and women of state government who work every day to provide those services deserve fairness and respect. With the public interest and fundamental fairness foremost in mind, AFSCME remains ready to return to the bargaining table. But, of course, that requires Governor Rauner to do so as well. If he continues to refuse to resume negotiations, I hope that you will now take the opportunity to assure the course of compromise that you favor by acting without delay to support a re-vote of the HB 580 override motion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roberta Lynch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Roberta" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Lynch".

Roberta Lynch
Executive Director