

- ▶▶ AFT Connecticut
- ▶▶ American Association of University Professors – Connecticut State University
- ▶▶ American Association of University Professors – UCONN
- ▶▶ American Federation of State, County, & Municipal Employees - Council 4
- ▶▶ Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges/ SEIU Local 1973
- ▶▶ Connecticut Association of Prosecutors
- ▶▶ Connecticut Employees Union Independent/ SEIU Local 511
- ▶▶ Connecticut Federations of School Administrators Local 61
- ▶▶ Connecticut State Police Union
- ▶▶ CSEA SEIU Local 2001
- ▶▶ International Brotherhood of Police Officers/SEIU Local 731
- ▶▶ New England Healthcare Employees Union, District 1199/SEIU
- ▶▶ Protective Services Employees Coalition/IAFF-IUPA

## The State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition

### Membership Update and Statement on Keeping Negotiations Out of the Press

As we draw closer to learning whether an agreement with the Rell Administration is possible, some members of our unions have asked why SEBAC leadership has not been briefing them on the details of the discussions in writing or on union websites. While many members have shared ideas, attended union meetings, or been verbally briefed by stewards, delegates, or other union leaders, other members have heard rumors, or seen unofficial written summaries or descriptions of the discussions, some of them slightly or even wildly inaccurate.

Here is why SEBAC leaders have chosen not to prepare written briefings of each discussion.

In a coalition that includes 50,000 members, any writing is virtually certain to become public. There are many problems with providing a snapshot description of any negotiations, but the most important here is that public means the press.

If the parties discuss the negotiations in the press, each is almost certain to defend its position and to attack the position of the other side, making movement towards common ground much more difficult. Not impossible, but much more difficult. We don't want a repeat of the contentious negotiations that took place in the press in 2003.

We continue to believe it is possible to reach an agreement with the Rell Administration that provides a framework that helps solve the problems generated by the economic crisis, while protecting our members and the services they provide. We don't want to decrease the chances that these discussions will succeed by inadvertently involving the press.

This means that the unofficial written summaries that some members have seen are totally unreliable. In fact, some are glaringly inaccurate.

We recognize that this is frustrating, and that the process of verbally briefing nearly 50,000 members, even through our systems of stewards and delegates, is far from perfect. And of course, no agreement can be reached without a full discussion, participation, and democratic vote by the membership.

SEBAC leaders are hopeful that we will reach an agreement with the Rell Administration that will *help reduce the state's budget deficit, protect vital public services for those in need, and that will be fair to the working families we represent.* As we move towards the stages of discussions that will likely determine if an agreement can be brought back to our members, SEBAC leaders appreciate your solidarity, patience, and dedication.