

CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL SUPERVISORS ORGANIZATION

September 25, 2009 - Weekly Update

CDCR Sends Layoff Letters to 1,443 Employees: CDCR on September 23rd sent State Restriction of Appointment (SROA) letters to employees affected by a \$250 million budget reduction in adult offender rehabilitation and other programs for inmates and parolees that was announced last week. This is the first step in the layoff process due to reductions in response to the department's plan to achieve a \$1.2 billion budget reduction.

More than 1,000 positions will be eliminated, but because of existing vacancies, the number of actual layoffs is expected to be somewhere between 600 and 900, depending upon final labor negotiations. More SROA letters must be sent than the actual number of anticipated layoffs due to the complexities of the civil service layoff process.

CCSO will commence meeting with DPA, on the layoff plans, Wednesday October 7th. These will be heated meetings as the layoff plans are directly impacting excluded employees in a harsher way than rank and file because of the smaller numbers involved. This is a fight we will take through the courts if necessary and are working currently with an attorney over the layoff plans proposed by DPA.

Senator Steinberg Says Stop Furloughs: Senator Darrell Steinberg wrote a letter to Governor Schwarzenegger on September 3, 2009 citing various reasons to stop furloughs for state employees. He cites the lose of hundreds of millions of dollars in general fund and says it has become a "pennysaved, a dollar lost" approach that must be corrected immediately. An excerpt from the letter cites:

"The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) provides a good case study: Because the prisons are a round-the-clock operation, workers are not required to take furlough days. In fact, they work their furlough days, although their pay is docked. Instead, they "bank" the furlough hours to use in the future. Correctional workers are being urged to use their banked furlough hours before they take vacation or sick leave, but are banking the time off faster than they can use it.

The department banked 1.3 million furlough hours in the first six months of furloughs, based on data from the State Controller's Office. In only one of those months—July 2009—were all three furlough days applied.

There's another impact, as well. In the same six-month period this year, correctional officers accrued 792,000 hours of vacation. That's a 275 percent increase over last year, before furloughs were a factor. Sick leave balances are also far outpacing budgeted amounts.

The Governor's furlough policy requires state workers use their furlough days off within 24 months of the end of the furlough program. The days are not supposed to be "cashed-out." Both these requirements are problematic for corrections, which doesn't have the relief staff to cover all the days off.

As a consequence of the policy, CDCR is creating a major "unfunded liability" sometime in the future—and a greater future financial liability for the state."

CCSO applauds Senator Steinberg, and will lobby in favor of this letter to the Governor to stop the furloughs.

Riot at ASP: More than two-dozen inmates at Avenal State Prison were injured in a major riot Monday night, September 21st, prompting authorities to put the medium-security prison on lockdown.

The riot erupted about 8:30 p.m. on an exercise yard, said prison spokesman Lt. Doug Snell. It was a conflict between rival Hispanic gangs, he said. About 193 of the 1,026 inmates who occupy Facility 5 were involved, Snell said. This is the third riot at Avenal since Aug. 15. The prison houses 6,430 inmates.

The riot lasted 10 minutes before being brought under control by tear gas. It flared up again briefly about 10:30 p.m., but officers fired foam bullets to quickly quell it, Snell said. The reason the riot started is being investigated, and charges could be filed against those involved.

Manuel Gonzales Memorial Highway: On January 10, 2005 CIM Officer Manuel Gonzales Jr. was killed by an inmate. In his honor, CDCR Secretary Cate joined CIM Warden Aref Fakhoury, Senator Negrete McLeod and other officials in renaming Highway Route 71 between State Highway 60 and Central Avenue in San Bernardino County as the Correctional Officer Manuel A. Gonzalez Jr. Memorial Highway. The ceremony took place on September 18, 2009.

T A K E C A R E A N D B E S A F E