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BY HAND DELIVERY

May 10, 2013

Governor Paul LePage
Office of the Governor
1 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0001

Re: Ten-day notice to bargain

Dear Governor LePage

Thank you for your prompt, personal response to my letter of May 6, in which I demanded negotiations over the pending shutdown. I appreciate your decision to show leadership and take responsibility for this critical situation. Thousands of state workers are working in fear and apprehension, facing the prospect of a mass layoff. Their incomes support many more family members, businesses, and communities. These loyal and dedicated public servants are eager to do their jobs, serving the people of this great state. They need to hear your assurance that you intend to keep the state open, and that you will not shutdown state government for political leverage.

You and I both owe it to state workers and their communities to work together to solve problems. Even if a shut down is averted, they need us to work together to minimize their fear, answer questions, and develop contingencies. Here is a partial list of issues that must be resolved before the First of July:

1. Who will be retained as "essential" employees?
2. For employees who are laid off, what seniority rights and notice will they be afforded?
3. Will laid off employees continue to receive health insurance and other similar benefits?
4. Once funding authority is restored, will laid off employees be paid for the time they were unable to work?
5. What steps can the State and the Union take to facilitate the processing of unemployment benefits in the event of a mass layoff?

These are the kinds of questions our members are asking. These are mandatory subjects of bargaining. The State Employees Labor Relations Act requires that your administration meet with this Union, within ten days of my May 6 letter to Ms. Whitcomb, to negotiate in good faith concerning these matters.

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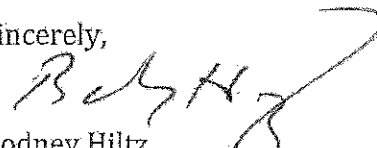
Furthermore, I respectfully decline your invitation to disclose the source of our information concerning directives to state agencies to plan for an "inevitable" shutdown. My letter did not say that the directive came from your office, and it may well have come from elsewhere, as you imply. I note that you do not deny that such a directive was issued, but only that it did not come from your office.

We stand by our original report, as it came from a credible source. Moreover, we received further confirmation of this report after I sent my letter, from an independent source at another state agency. I will not expose these courageous state employees to retaliation by disclosing their identities. I will offer, however, that Representative Amy Volk attended one of our membership meetings Wednesday night, and made clear that she also expects a shut down on July 1.

Finally, whether the shut down is "inevitable" or merely potential, I reiterate this Union's demand that the Administration negotiate over the impact of any shutdown on bargaining unit members. We have scheduled negotiations for Monday, and we stand ready to work with you and your administration to solve problems and alleviate the fear that pervades state government.

In closing, let me reiterate that I appreciate your direct personal communication concerning this important issue. I invite you to come to a bargaining session and meet the negotiating teams on both sides of the table who are working so hard to resolve important issues facing state government.

Sincerely,



Rodney Hiltz
Chief Negotiator

cc: Breena Whitcomb

