

For Release:
Wednesday, May 11, 2016

Contact:

Bill Hamilton, (202) 641-0350

**If Budget Deal Before Legislators Passes
Services, Communities, Private Sector Will Suffer**

Hartford - Workers who provide services to Connecticut citizens are urging legislators to vote their consciences rather than accept the budget deal which may this week be brought before the General Assembly. They warn that Governor Malloy and the leadership's \$820 million in program cuts and employee layoffs would be responsible for substantially damaging the quality of life for millions of residents.

"In this proposed budget, criminal justice services in the Judicial Branch suffer nearly \$50 million in cuts," said Carmen Roda, an adult probation officer with 14 years experience with the branch. "What we don't know is how many courthouses that will close — or how the Second Chance society initiative will work without enough probation officers to supervise clients. Simply put, this budget threatens our state's quality of life by jeopardizing community safety," added Roda, who serves as president of the Judicial Professional Employees (JPE) Union, AFT Local 4200-B.

The package likely to be voted on this week cuts municipal aid, which, along with state public service cuts, will likely lead to layoffs in schools and to local property tax increases. The proposed measure could also lead to layoffs for up to 5,000 state workers who provide essential services to working families, as well as seniors, the disabled and veterans.

"We're calling on legislators to pass a fair budget that protects the public services and structures we all rely on," said Taffy Womack, an administrative assistant at the Secretary of State's Office and president of Council 4 AFSCME, Local 704. "Connecticut's communities, families, and economy will suffer beyond imagination if the governor's austerity plan becomes reality," added Womack, who saw 40 of her union members laid off at agencies that serve some of Connecticut's most vulnerable citizens, including the social services and mental health and addiction services departments.

Those likely to be laid off include rape crisis counselors, probation officers, corrections officers, nurses and mental health workers and others who work with schools, youth and the disabled. Virtually everyone in Connecticut is likely to be indirectly negatively impacted by these job cuts.

"Instead of bringing taxes up to a fair level for the wealthiest, the governor and legislative leadership are proposing deep cuts that will damage local governments, school districts and small businesses at the heart of our economy," said Roland Bishop, a state school teacher in the Department of Correction. "We know that taxing the very wealthy at a fair level — as in New York, Massachusetts, and New Jersey — will produce the revenue that is needed to keep middle-class people from bearing the burden of these proposed cuts. This budget is a poorly thought-out response by politicians unwilling to tax their most affluent constituents," added Bishop, who serves as secretary-treasurer for CSEA SEIU Local 2001.

###

The State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) unites all 16 unions representing 45,000 Connecticut state public service workers together to address important issues to all its members and the people they serve.

- > Administrative & Residual Union Local 4200/AFT
- > 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 Police and Fire Union/IAFF-IUPA
- > Connecticut State Police Union
- > CSEA SEIU Local 2001
- > International Brotherhood of Police Officers/SEIU Local 731
- > Judicial Professional Employees Union, AFT Local 4200-B
- > New England Healthcare Employees Union, District 1199/SEIU
- > UCHC – American Association of University Professors

