



State of Connecticut

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April 23, 2020

Attorney Daniel E. Livingston
Chief Negotiator and General Counsel
State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC)
Livingston, Adler, Pulda, Meiklejohn & Kelly PC
557 Prospect Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105-2922

Dear Attorney Livingston:

I am writing to ask for your support of a proposal to help Connecticut's struggling nonprofits and social safety net during the coronavirus pandemic.

I have asked Governor Lamont to consider delaying the state employee pay increases scheduled to go into effect July 1, 2020 that were approved under the 2017 SEBAC deal and the state budget. These pay increases include a 3.5 % general wage increase and an annual step increase of 2%. These raises are estimated to cost the state \$119 million in the General Fund and \$15.3 million in the Special Transportation Fund.

I am asking that the governor consider delaying these raises and instead directing those funds to support the state's nonprofit providers who make up our safety net services that help the most vulnerable populations. As chief negotiator for the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition I am asking for your support of this proposal that asks state employees to make a small sacrifice in delaying a pay increase to make a big difference in the lives of the workers and clients of nonprofit providers.

Nonprofits have sounded the alarm that many are on the brink of financial disaster. Nonprofits have reported that they are struggling to get access to protective equipment and their revenues are eroding. They have furloughed employees and are considering further action to control the costs of staffing. The president and CEO of the CT Community Nonprofit Alliance has recently raised concerns about the governor's administration not being able to make any commitments to further support nonprofits during this difficult time. Sen. Cathy Osten, D-Sprague, co-chair of the Appropriations Committee, has raised concerns that our social safety net is becoming tattered at this time. She recently explained, "We have moved a lot of services from state government into the nonprofit world...I just think this is a group of people that nobody wants to pay attention to."¹

¹ <https://ctmirror.org/2020/04/22/nonprofit-agencies-say-they-are-on-brink-of-financial-disaster/>

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Delaying state employee pay increases and directing funds to instead bolster Connecticut's struggling nonprofits will better help them support their workers and vulnerable clients. At a time when everyone is sacrificing so much, when jobs are disappearing around us, a small sacrifice of temporarily pausing a pay increase can go a long way. Delaying these raises for state employees can mean someone else who works at a nonprofit can go back to work and provide needed care for someone who is physically, mentally, or emotionally struggling. It means more funding can be directed to lifesaving PPE supplies. It could give our nonprofits the boost they need to help thousands of residents survive the various crises they now face.

Thank you for considering this proposal.

Sincerely,



Len Fasano
Senate Republican Leader