

Good afternoon. I'm Ginette Rivard, vice president of the Maine State Employees Association, Local 1989 of the Service Employees International Union. We represent over 15,000 workers and retired workers in Maine.

We're here to urge state legislators to **pass a budget that keeps people working.**

We all know that Maine workers and their families are hurting. Since December of 2007, over 8 million workers have lost their jobs. Thirty five thousand of these laid-off workers live in Maine. The latest figures show another 85,000 Americans lost their jobs in December.

And Mainers are learning of even more layoffs:

- ✓ Over the weekend, 17 workers at jet engine maker Pratt & Whitney in North Berwick were told they will lose their jobs this Friday;
- ✓ Symmetry Medical announced it will close its Auburn factory later this year;
- ✓ Sadly, the proposed supplemental state budget also calls for layoffs. In addition to recommending 15 layoffs of state workers, the proposed budget severely cuts funding for health-related services. We all know that cuts of this magnitude will result in further layoffs of people providing these services throughout our state.
- ✓ The proposed budget also calls for three additional shutdown days for state workers on top of the 20 already booked – that's more lost income for workers and reduced access to state services for all of us. And I read in the paper yesterday that furloughs might find their way into Maine classrooms, too!

It's bad enough to lock out the same state workers whose jobs are to help people get back on their feet after a layoff, but how is keeping teachers out of their classrooms going to keep people working?

It won't! These shortsighted budget gimmicks won't keep people working. They'll just make things worse.

Because we all understand that with each job loss, that's:

- one less paycheck to support a family;
- one less paycheck to circulate in our communities;
- and one less paycheck to pay the income and sales taxes that keep our communities safe and our schools open.

Most of us know a family member, friend or neighbor who needs help, and that's why we have safety nets. **Maine people** understand this. That's why they defeated TABOR for the third straight time last November. That's why they also defeated Question 2. **Maine people** understand that without budgeting to maintain our roads and bridges, Maine will **NOT** attract new employers and will **NOT** create new jobs.

Maine people did the right thing by defeating TABOR and Question 2. **Those decisions shows that Maine people understand everything should be on the table to address revenue shortfalls, not just cuts to crucial services people need right now.**

We call upon state legislators to do their part by passing a budget that keeps people working.

Thank you.