

Poll Finds California Public Supports Restoring State Pay

A public opinion poll indicates Californians disagree with Gov. Ronald Reagan's veto of state employee pay increases by a more than 2 to 1 margin.

Vacation Leave Hit by Freeze

Increases in state employee vacation leave will not be granted during President Nixon's freeze of wages and prices, Cleighton L. Penwell, director of the Executive Department, said in a letter to all agencies recently.

The President's Cost of Living Council has ruled that increases in paid vacations are the same as longevity pay hikes and may not be granted as long as the freeze is in effect, Penwell said.

"While this may appear to be an unnecessary requirement to carry out the intent of the freeze," Penwell said, "Governor McCall has pledged full support of the President's program and we have no choice but to comply with this federal interpretation."

State employees get two weeks of vacation leave a year from the 1st to the 5th year of employment. It goes up on the 5th, 10th, 15th and 20th years of employment after that.

Due to the federal interpretation, state employees who would begin accumulating increased vacation credits because of reaching 5, 10, 15 and 20 years of service on August 15 or after cannot begin to accumulate an increased rate of vacation leave credit until the freeze expires or is modified, Penwell told the agencies.

"Vacation leave accumulation rates must remain at the rate effective on August 14 until further notice," he said.

Penwell directed the agencies to immediately recheck all records to ensure compliance with the presidential freeze order. "Adjustments will be necessary in those cases where increased rates were already put into effect," he said.

Penwell also directed the agencies to give notice of the rate freeze to all affected employees.

The poll, commissioned by the California State Employees Association, also indicates the public favors collective bargaining rights for state employees by a more than 2 to 1 margin, and that a majority believe some state employees should have the right to strike.

Gov. Reagan vetoed a five per cent pay increase for state employees approved by the state legislature earlier this year. The CSEA is attempting to get the lawmakers to override Reagan's veto.

The Association also has been attempting to get the legislature to adopt a collective bargaining law for state workers.

The poll, conducted by Field Research Corporation of San Francisco, shows 58.6 per cent of the Californians questioned agree with the legislature that state employees should get a cost-of-living pay increase. Some 25.7 per cent said they agree with Reagan that the wage hike should not be given, and 15.7 per cent were undecided.

According to the poll, 51.7 per cent favor collective bargaining for state employees, even though the poll question noted that "opponents say the system would mean higher taxes and take away power from the governor and legislature."

A total of 34.6 per cent of the respondents agreed that all state employees should have the same legal right to strike as workers in private industry. Some 32 per cent indicated state workers should not be permitted to strike, while 24.6 per cent said it depends upon what they do—some should have the right to strike, some should not.

Police, highway patrolmen and law enforcement employees were listed by 75 per cent of the respondents as employees they believe should not be allowed to strike.

Bischof to Head State Bargaining

A former attorney for the National Labor Relations Board has been hired by the Personnel Division to advise and assist state agencies in collective bargaining.

Bruce P. Bischof, 31, was a trial attorney for the NLRB in Los Angeles for two years. The agency enforced the Taft-Hartley Act in Southern California.

He also was in business as a labor relations consultant in Los Angeles for one year prior to beginning his new job with the Personnel Division.

Bischof is a member of the American Arbitration Association and has been named to the panel of labor arbitrators for the AAA. The panel is composed of persons whose background and experience qualify them to arbitrate labor disputes.



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Employee Retirement Accounts Valued

Editor's Note: To keep OSEA members informed of the value of their accounts in the Public Employees' Retirement System, the OSEA News will publish the following table each month. Both the "variable annuity" portion of the account (which is invested in common stocks and short term notes) and the "fixed" portion of the account (which is invested in long term bonds and mortgages) are listed. The table shows the value of each \$100 invested in either the "variable annuity" account or the "fixed" account on the date listed.

	VARIABLE ACCOUNT	FIXED ACCOUNT
January 31, 1971	\$102.67	\$100.42
February 28, 1971	\$103.51	\$100.85
March 31, 1971	\$108.71	\$101.27
April 30, 1971	\$112.52	\$101.70
May 31, 1971	\$107.61	\$102.12
June 30, 1971	\$106.98	\$102.54
July 31, 1971	\$104.55	\$102.96
August 31, 1971	\$107.50	\$103.39

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