



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

DAVID A. PATERSON
GOVERNOR

April 7, 2009

Dear New York State Employee:

First, I want to thank you for your hard work, dedication and commitment to New York. Every day, you deliver important services to the people of this state. I am proud to lead such an outstanding workforce. That is why I wanted to write to you personally about the issue of employee layoffs.

From your work, you know firsthand that the world has changed. We are in a severe recession, one that has devastated everyday New Yorkers and created the worst fiscal crisis in our state's history.

In the budget we just passed, we have taken a major step toward restoring our state's fiscal and economic strength. To do so, however, we have asked all New Yorkers to make modest sacrifices. Last November, I asked our state's public employee unions to make modest concessions. I did not make this request lightly.

Regrettably, however, our state's public employee unions refused to consider any concessions at all. As a result, in the face of the worst fiscal crisis in our history, I was left with no alternative but to implement a workforce reduction plan. Today, I have directed each agency commissioner to develop a workforce reduction plan for their agency. These plans are to be implemented by July 1. In developing their Workforce Reduction Plans, I have asked agency commissioners to find ways to achieve the necessary savings while protecting the health and safety of our citizens.

This decision is one of the most difficult I have ever had to make. I do not want to see anyone lose their job, particularly in this economic climate. But the savings from this workforce reduction plan is part of the budget I enacted with the Legislature, and in the absence of equivalent workforce savings, we cannot eliminate our state's deficit without layoffs.

On Friday, consistent with my overall goal of minimizing layoffs in a difficult economy, I rescinded a proposed 3 percent salary increase for non-unionized and management/confidential employees. I was able to do this because I have the authority to do so for this group of workers. This will produce savings of \$32 million over two years, which will reduce the number of layoffs that are necessary from 8,900 to 8,700. As such, these employees will be exempted from layoffs wherever legally permissible; however, positions filled by these individuals may be eliminated through attrition.

Under state law, however, I have no similar power to rescind raises or execute other similar workforce savings for employees represented by public employee unions through the collective bargaining process.

If you believe, as I do, that implementing modest workforce concessions is a preferable path to significant layoffs, I urge you to voice this opinion to your union representatives.

I know that we face challenges; but we do so together. New Yorkers are no strangers to challenge, nor do we run from or ignore reality. Throughout our history, we have successfully met every challenge we have faced by working together. I am committed to doing exactly that, and I know that you share this commitment with me.

Thank you again for your hard work on behalf of New York State and its citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David A. Paterson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent "D" and "P".

David A. Paterson