

Governor Balancing Budget On the Backs of State Workers



One of the largest groups within Working Rhode Island is state workers. It is important for every working Rhode Islander to know what these workers are up against. Governor Carcieri is attempting to balance the state budget on the backs of state workers. These are the same workers that have been without a pay raise since July 1, 2002. The Governor's proposed 2005 budget calls for a minimal pay increase that in many cases would be less than the cost of his proposed health insurance premium co-share by state workers. Not to mention offering an inferior network in his new health care plan and proposing changes to the pension system that will decrease benefits. It's time the Governor realized - you can't get blood from a 'brick'.

970 days without a pay raise for Rhode Island's unionized state workers.

Welcome!

Welcome to the premiere issue of *The Working Rhode Islander*. This newsletter will become a regular feature of Working Rhode Island and will be distributed by your local union as well as online at www.workingri.com. If you would like to share information or have suggestions for a future issue please send an email to info@workingri.com or contact John Killoy at 825-2990. Thank you and welcome aboard.

Media Watch

The Story: Recently *The Providence Journal* editorialized on a report released by the 'Education Partnership' regarding teacher contracts. In the *Journal's* usual union-bashing style they totally agreed with the 'Education Partnership' in placing the blame for mediocre education solely on teacher contracts.

Behind the Story: The so-called 'Education Partnership' is sponsored in part by corporate contributions from the Providence Journal Co. (Independent?) But wait, there's more! The executive director of the 'Education Partnership' is the significant other of *Journal* editorial writer Ed Achorn (Unbiased?) and the report was authored by the leader of a neighborhood coalition opposed to property tax increases. (Credible?) And they have the nerve to editorialize about what is in the best interests of RI's school children: Now you know *the real story!*

Can you trust the Governor?



Last week, Governor Carcieri misled state employees about ongoing negotiations with OUR labor unions.



Here's What He Wrote...

Here's The Truth!

"State employees have gone without across the board pay increases for two years. That is too long."



Too Long? The last raise was July 1, 2002, yet the Governor's salary proposal is not retroactive.

"...the State offered a number of generous proposals..."



Generous? The Governor proposed reducing health care benefits AND insisted on a 15% premium share by the end of the contract (almost \$100 per pay period)

"Even with health insurance co-shares, every state employee would receive substantial year on year increases in take-home pay..."



Substantial? The Governor's own negotiators admit that their proposal is below the rate of inflation!

"The state believes that voluntary arbitration...will make it possible to more quickly deliver pay raises to its employees."



Quickly? By law, arbitration is not even binding on wages. Shouldn't the Governor know that?

Source: Governor Carcieri's email to State employees, March 24, 2005

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