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June 10, 2011

VIA ELECTRONIC AND U.S. MAIL

Honorable Christine Gregoire
Governor, State of Washington
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Gregoire:

We the undersigned respectfully request that you veto the following Sections of ESB 5931: Section 1010 and Section 104. The labor community, as a whole, is vehemently opposed to these anti-labor provisions and the attack on collective bargaining rights they represent.

The notion that collective bargaining rights must be taken away from employees of the Department Of Enterprise Services in order for government to be efficient is not only extremely damaging rhetorically, it's also wrong.

ESB 5931 purports to take rights away from workers by force of law, rather than working out differences at the bargaining table. If a Governor and a Legislature can pass a law taking away some rights from some workers, we believe that pushes our state down a dangerous path.

If changes to a collective bargaining agreement are needed to improve efficiency and flexibility, then those issues should be brought to the bargaining table – not taken forcibly. No such changes have been proposed at the bargaining table. If services need to be privatized, then those proposals should be made using the competitive contracting process. Your administration has never attempted to follow that process. If changes to the rules are needed, then those proposals should be brought forward publicly, following the appropriate rule-making process. Such rules have not been proposed since the 2008 court ruling invalidating the previous rules.

Taking rights away from workers in the name of flexibility and efficiency is the identical rationale used by Governors attempting to decimate the public sector all across the nation. We urge you to not follow that path.

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On behalf of the 40,000 members of the Washington Federation of State Employees, working families, and the unions in Washington State we ask you to veto Section 1010 and Section 104 of ESB 5931.

Sincerely,



Greg Devereux, Executive Director

DE:dw

The following labor organizations are included as signatories to this letter:

American Federation of Teachers – Washington
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers
Certified Electrical Workers of Washington
Communication Workers of America, Local 7818
Graphic Communication Union, Local 767M
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, Local 751
M. L. King County Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Musicians Association of Seattle, Local 76-493 AFM
Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 8
Puget Sound Alliance for Retired Americans
Seattle Building Trades .
SEIU Healthcare 775NW
SEIU Healthcare 1199NW
Southwest Washington Central Labor Council
Thurston-Lewis-Mason Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO
UNITEHERE, Local 8
United Farm Workers
United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 21
United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 367
Washington Education Association
Washington Public Employees Association
Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council
Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Washington State Nurses' Association
Washington State Plumbers and Pipefitters