

Sample letters-to-the editor for AFSCME retirees

Sample #1

As a retired Illinois state employee, I am very concerned about the Governor Rauner's veto of legislation that would help avoid a disruption of state services during contract negotiations. This common-sense bill (SB 1229) would allow the Governor and state employees to negotiate on terms that are standard for negotiations with public safety employees.

Since there are also reports that the Governor has been trying to get retirees to work for the state if there is a strike and that he is thinking about getting the National Guard involved during a strike, it seems pretty clear that he really wants a strike.

I hope legislators feel differently. They should override his veto and pave the way for peaceful resolution of differences.

Sample #2

For decades, through difficult and sometimes contentious negotiations, Illinois state employees have always been able to reach contract settlements without a work stoppage. But this time it looks bad. And Governor Rauner seems to want to make it worse. He just vetoed a bill that would have meant that an outside arbitrator could be called in during negotiations to sort out differences.

I worked for the state as (job title and/or department) for ____ years and I never saw anything like this. Since the Governor isn't yet willing to settle down and bargain a fair contract then state legislators should override the veto and make sure state services aren't disrupted while both sides continue to negotiate.

Sample #3

The only reason I can think of for Governor Rauner vetoing a bill (SB1229) which would prevent a strike or lockout during contract negotiations with state employees is that he wants a knock down drag out fight. As a retired state employee I can tell you that kind of fight would hurt millions of Illinois residents for no good reason.

Every legislator that cares about the future of Illinois should vote to override the Governor's veto. Under SB1229, if there's no progress and both sides are far apart then an outside arbitrator would be brought in. It is the same procedure they now use for police, fire fighters and other public safety employees. It's a fair and sensible approach to avoid more battles.

Sample #4

As a retired state employee I worked many years under governors from both parties but our current governor is a world apart. His number one priority is getting rid of unions never mind the cost to Illinois residents. His veto of Senate Bill 1229 is the most recent evidence of his true priorities. This bill would let either side bring in an impartial arbitrator if the sides remain far apart and there is no progress. If he really wanted to reach a fair agreement he would have signed this legislation right away. But he wants confrontation so he can force state employees out on strike. I urge my legislators to vote to override the Governor's veto and bring a little sanity back to Illinois.

Sample #5

As a former state employee, I know that a strike or lockout could hurt millions of Illinois residents. That's why I thought it made sense that state employee unions supported a bill that would prevent disruption of state services even if negotiations were not going well. The bill – Senate Bill 1229 – would require bringing in an impartial arbitrator if both sides remain far apart. And while the issues get sorted out, state employees would continue to provide vital public services —protecting public safety, safeguarding children, aiding families in need, monitoring air and water quality, caring for people with disabilities and for elderly veterans, responding to natural disasters and public health crises, maintaining our highways, ensuring that nursing homes meet quality standards and much more.

I was sorry the Governor vetoed the bill but I hope state lawmakers override the veto so we can focus on the real problems the state faces.

Sample #6

Governor Rauner came into office making clear his dislike of unions, especially public employee unions. Then in contract negotiations with over a dozen unions, the Rauner administration pressed extreme demands and showed more interest in strike preparation than serious bargaining.

Given this dire situation, unions decided to support a bill that requires arbitration from an independent arbitrator if the parties can't come to an agreement, ensuring continued state services during contract negotiations. Unfortunately, the Governor vetoed the bill.

Does this mean the Governor wants to push state employees out on strike? And if so, who benefits? Not Illinois residents, who all one way or the other rely on state services. Or maybe just one – a governor who wants to build a national reputation as a tough, union-busting leader. Our state legislators should side with the people of Illinois and override his veto.

Sample #7

Give peace a chance! I'm not talking about around the world, I mean right here in Illinois. The Governor just rejected a chance to make sure that state services – like taking care of our veterans, dealing with the aftermath of tornados, protecting at-risk children and so much more – aren't disrupted while he negotiates a contract with state employees. He vetoed a bill that would prevent a strike or lockout by providing for an outside arbitrator. So now I urge lawmakers to give peace a chance. Override that veto now and let's focus on the serious challenges Illinois faces.