



California Federation of Teachers
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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Contact: Steve Hopcraft, 916.457.5546; steve@hopcraft.com;

Fred Glass, 510.579.3343, fglasscft@gmail.com

Statement by CFT president Joshua Pechthalt on Governor Brown's veto of the state budget bills

The California Federation of Teachers applauds Governor Brown's veto of the budget he received yesterday. We know it was a difficult decision, but based on a commitment to clear principles we agree with: the people of California need a budget with more funding for education, health and human services, and public safety programs, after years of cuts. And we also need a budget that begins to seriously address the gap between revenues and needed social programs.

The budget Brown received largely shielded K-12 education from further cuts. But the \$300 million funding reductions to higher education would have meant a continuing erosion of access to the greatest job engine California possesses, and further financial difficulties for students from working families.

The Democrats in the Legislature deserve credit for meeting the constitutional budget deadline of June 15, as mandated by Proposition 25, supported by CFT last November. However, with the refusal of any Republicans to budge from their rigid rejection of taxes, new or old, anywhere and any time, the Democrats' options were extremely limited, and they resorted, as the Governor points out, to "solutions" that defer the problems to another day instead of a reasonable budget solution for the vast majority of Californians.

It is a shame that the people of California are being held hostage by a minority of the Legislature due to the two-thirds requirement for passing a budget with revenues. We look forward to the day when democracy, which means 50% plus one, is restored to our state Capitol.

The Republicans have largely abdicated their responsibility as elected officials to govern, choosing to protect the rich and corporations from fair tax levels instead of protecting children, the elderly, the infirm, and the disabled from harm.

The CFT urges legislators of both parties to put the interests of working women and men, students, seniors and the majority of Californians before narrow party interests. It is time to go back to the table to come up with a budget agreement that addresses the billions of dollars cut from education and vital social services over the last few years. The Legislature should send the Governor a budget that asks the millionaires and billionaires to pay their fair share.

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