



PSCOA Political Update

Pennsylvania State Corrections Officers Association

www.pscOA.org

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The below is information from the speech that Governor Rendell held today at 13:00. If there is no progress between today and Monday the Governor intends to approve only those funds within SB 850 that will allow the Commonwealth to continue doing business and begin paying employees. As soon as there are any further updates the Association will notify the membership.

GOVERNOR RENDELL TO SEEK 'BRIDGE' TO PAY EMPLOYEES WHILE BUDGET TALKS CONTINUE

HARRISBURG – Governor Edward G. Rendell announced today that if the General Assembly's conference committee does not reach a budget agreement by Monday, Aug. 3, he will ask the House of Representatives to send him Senate Bill 850, which has already passed the Senate.

"I intend to approve only the funds that are necessary for the operation of government services and for public safety. I will veto all other line item appropriations," Governor Rendell said. "I do not consider Senate Bill 850 to be a budget; it is simply a bridge to allow us to pay state workers and ensure the continued efficient operation of state government -- nothing more.

"I had resisted taking this step until now because I was hopeful that the administration and the four legislative caucuses would agree soon on a budget for the 2009-10 fiscal year that began July 1. But in the past few days, communication between legislative leaders and the administration has not been able to close the significant gap. This gap is due in large part to the continued belief on the part of the Senate Republicans that they feel no responsibility to negotiate, compromise or lead," the Governor added.

"I cannot approve Senate Bill 850 in its entirety because I strongly believe that the funding levels it contains are insufficient for the core state programs of public education and health care, and the crucial economic development program that help create and retain jobs, and much more.

"I remain resolute in my commitment to enact a final budget that adequately funds programs that educate and support the children of this state, and continues to protect our older and disabled citizens, but in doing so I will not allow state employees to suffer any longer. They've done nothing wrong. Since July 1, they have reported to work and performed their duties, and they deserve to be compensated without undue delay. They and their families should not have to undergo further financial stress.

"This is by no means a solution to our budget crisis. Our public schools, hospitals, county human service agencies and many other necessary institutions will run short of funds in the next few weeks or months. This would result in the elimination or the severe reduction of services to students, the elderly, the infirm, people with mental disabilities, at-risk children, and other vulnerable residents who rely upon state government.

"I call upon the General Assembly to engage in diligent, non-stop, good faith negotiations in a spirit of compromise, and a willingness to produce a budget that balances fairly the interests of all citizens of Pennsylvania," he concluded.

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The Rendell administration is committed to creating a first-rate public education system, protecting our most vulnerable citizens and continuing economic investment to support our communities and businesses. To find out more about Governor Rendell's initiatives and to sign up for his newsletter, visit www.governor.state.pa.us.