

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I want to thank you all for your patience and solidarity during this economic crisis that has affected every country in the world. Due to the slowing of the U.S. economy, the revenues that every state collects through taxes and other sources have dropped significantly over the past year. **Throughout the country, state workers are being asked to make sacrifices to help reduce the massive deficits.** In California, the Governor demanded a 10% reduction in the state work force and two furlough days per month which created a 9% pay cut for all workers. In New Jersey, state employees are being asked to forgo a 3.5% pay raise and endure one furlough day per month over the next year. In New York, the Governor is looking at issuing 8,900 lay off notices to state employees and demanding they forgo a 3% pay raise in July. In Ohio, employees are being asked to take a 5% across the board pay cut, and unpaid holidays. In many cases, no job security is being offered to employees in exchange for these concessions.

Connecticut's economy is no better off than many of the states mentioned above. Current estimates put Connecticut's deficit for the next biennium at \$8 billion dollars. This creates a huge problem for State workers and the citizens of Connecticut who depend on the services we provide. In order to protect services and the financial security of our families, SEBAC (State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition) has been in discussions with the Rell administration in order to find solutions to this complex problem. **If we do not find a way to offer savings to the State, it is very likely that thousands of state workers would need to be given lay off notices.** Unlike the federal government, state governments can not print money. Rather, they have to meet their obligations and balance their budgets accordingly.

Over the last few months, I have talked with a large number of members. Some members, who have a high amount of seniority, believe that they are not in jeopardy of getting laid off and therefore do not want to make any sacrifices. Other members have said that they are afraid of what would happen to their family if they were laid off and would give up everything to keep their job. As a bargaining unit, we cannot take either of these positions and must find a balance that considers the needs of every member. CEUI was founded in 1967 by 300 members in Middletown who stood side by side working to improve the lives of working families. **In that tradition, this Agreement provides job security and financial security for every member of our Union at time when the future has never been more uncertain.** If this Agreement is rejected, the end result will likely be much worse.

In a recent news interview on NBC nightly news, a crew member of the Maersk Alabama (the ship that survived an attack by Somali pirates) was asked how the crew retained control of the ship. John Cronin, a Marine Engineer and AFL-CIO Union member replied: **"We are American seamen. We're Union members. We stuck together, and we did our jobs. And that's how we did it." That very game plan will get us through this crisis.**

As a member of this Union for over 30 years and your elected President, I believe that this Agreement is in the best interest of our membership and I urge you to support it.

Sincerely,  
Ron McLellan, President