

## PEF URGES UNION MEMBERS TO VOTE YES



The leaders of the Public Employees Federation, the union for the state workers of New York, are urging their members to vote in favor of the new contract that they have negotiated with the governor. For those of you still not familiar with the situation that state of New York employees are facing at the current moment here is a short summary of the events. It all began in late September when the union members failed to ratify the governor's proposed contract, primarily because it allowed the state to dip into their health care fund for monies. When the union did not approve it, the governor began the process of what can only be termed as massive layoffs. After several re-negotiations and the actual issuance of pink slips, the governor and the union leadership were able to come to a tentative agreement. In order to give the union members enough time to vote on the new contract a stay of layoffs were given. That stay lasts until November 4th. It is now up to the union members to vote and decide if their colleagues stay on, or if they go so that the remaining workers can keep their current terms. As you can probably understand after all of this drama the union really wants its members to vote yes on the new contract, and they are willing to go to some interesting lengths in order to get their way. Union leaders have bought space on a billboard near the entrance to the Empire State Plaza in downtown Albany. This location was chosen because thousands of the state workers must pass through it daily to get to their jobs. The billboard is not the only method the union is using. They are also aggressively passing out flyers, hosted two conference calls about the contract for workers, and set up an 800 number that unions workers can call into to find out about the new contract and what it would mean for them. While the union tried to lobby their hardest to get the members to vote yes, it has not been shy about reminding them that the fate of almost 3500 union members, their colleagues and friends, hang in the balance. Usually, those kinds of odds would encourage the majority of members to vote yes, but this case is different. Since the layoff notices have already gone out the majority of the members know that, for the current moment at least, their heads will not be on the chopping block. This gives the majority of the 50,000 members of the union no particular reason to vote in favor of the changes to the contract. Public Employees Federation President, Ken Brynien, was quick to remind workers that if no agreement is reached they may still be on the layoff list when next year rolls around, as well as morally chastising members who are considering voting no. In a statement to a local reporter he said, "I don't know how you could be a human being, sharing an office with people for decades and then deciding well 'what's good for me I don't care what happens to you, that's how I'm voting',"

<https://blog.granted.com/>