

June 14, 2022

Dear Speaker Mariano and Senate President Spilka:

As the crush of inflation continues to drive up the cost of everyday items, including gas and groceries, creating instability for Massachusetts families, we write to you collectively as union leaders who represent the vast majority of public employees serving the Commonwealth each day to ask you to provide relief.

Recently, we approached the Baker Administration with a request to re-open the wage portion of the recently ratified contracts, in order to address the growing economic insecurity that our members have experienced during Governor Bakers tenure. A steadily growing gap between our members' salaries and the CPI has accelerated in recent months, given world circumstances. On average, public employee wages have failed to keep pace with inflation under Governor Bakers watch, to the tune of 7%. This is no longer just an unfortunate circumstance of a Governor with little regard for his workforce but is impacting our members and their families in a tangible way.

Although the Baker Administration has recently taken steps to address two of the more egregious salary inequities for some direct care workers and engineers, the overwhelming number of state employees fall further behind every day and their jobs become less and less competitive.

The steps that the Administration recently took focused primarily on addressing a longstanding staff shortage and recruitment/retention problems, as opposed to helping these workers cope with record inflation and, of course, left the majority of state workers behind.

Unfortunately, the Governor's failure to respond to the needs of the large majority of his workforce persists and have once again forced us to appeal to you and the legislature directly. Most of our members still need economic relief, and we ask your consideration in providing that relief. We estimate that a 7% wage adjustment across the board would go a long way in making our state workforce whole and would cost roughly \$300 million. This amount may seem like a sizable request, however, given the Commonwealth's revenue picture combined with the global impacts on commodities and markets, we feel it to be very reasonable. A general wage adjustment will also serve our local economy because these resources will go directly back into the community in the form of groceries, transportation, and housing, and not into stocks and off-shore bank accounts.

Our members and their families need relief, and we appeal directly to you to provide it. We have attached draft supplemental budget language that could be included in a supplemental budget before the close of the formal session on July 31<sup>st</sup>. We stand ready to work with you in a capacity

to ensure that our workforce is compensated fairly for their work during this time of growing economic difficulty.

In solidarity,

David J. Holway  
President, National Association of Government Employees

Patrick Russell  
President, MOSES

Mark Bernard  
Executive Director, AFSCME Council 93

Thomas McKeever  
President, SEIU Local 888

Peter MacKinnon  
President, SEIU Local 509

Gloria Bardsley  
RN Unit Executive Chair, Massachusetts Nurses Association

George Noel  
Business Manager, OPEIU Local 6

CC: Aaron Michlewitz, House Ways and Means Chairperson  
Michael Rodrigues, Senate Ways and Means Chairperson