

# INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

Craft-Maintenance Division State of California Unit 12  
Locals 3, 39 & 501, AFL-CIO

## **Negotiations Kickoff and Essential Worker Bonuses – March 23, 2021**

We meet this week to kick off negotiations with the State and we are feeling optimistic as some positive news has given us cause for hope. This time last year in what had started off as positive negotiations quickly fell apart when massive budget woes hit the state due to Corona Virus lock downs that through our world into chaos. The Department of Finance sadly derailed our hopes for a great 2020 and left us fighting to lessen the impact of an across the board 10% pay cut. The hopes of a prosperous 2020 quickly faded into a year of PLP leave and a struggle to survive a deadly virus.

Thankfully, hope for 2021 is on the horizon. Corona Virus numbers are down, and many counties are moving to less restrictive public health tiers. News on the state budget is equally good for Unit 12 members, as the budget projections which lead to the PLP program turned out to be way off the mark leading to an unanticipated surplus. We are confident that we will be able to end the PLP program and the 9.23% reduction Unit 12 members have been suffering through this past year.

In other positive news, the feds recently passed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 which will be sending healthy sums of money to the state. While the state has largely ignored our repeated requests for some type of recognition of essential workers, probably in part out of budgetary concerns, these requests may get a better reception if there is federal money to back them up. While this legislation is still being evaluated, it at least adds a glimmer of hope to our fight for the recognition Unit 12 essential workers deserve.

But even with positive fiscal hopes looking up, the time for rest is still far off in the future. The time for solidarity is NOW. None of these benefits will be given and if there is a way for the funding to get funneled to some political pet project, you can bet it will be. However, with the power of the Union, the power we have together, and the force we bring to the bargaining table will help us receive what we are due. Now is the time for us to come together, to encourage each other to band together to demonstrate the energy we have as a unit.

We rise together or fall apart. Encourage your brothers and sisters to recommit themselves to our cause, your cause, the cause of Unit 12. Now more than ever the need to be a Union member is of extreme importance. Remember, the state knows who is and is not a member. If they view a unit as apathetic or disinterested, they assume the same level of political participation and our concerns are more likely to be ignored.

It is time for Unit 12 to stand up and make our voices heard at the bargaining table by making sure everyone is a Union member. Please contact the Union hall at 916-928-0399 to verify your membership.

## **UNION STRONG!**

Brandy Johnson  
District Representative, State of California Unit 12 & Unit 13 Coordinator