

Dear Fellow County Employees, Union Representatives and BOS,

I think that we are all becoming more and more aware of the serious nature of the budget crisis for the County. It is not a problem of any one Department but is a County wide concern. Our Administrators continue to look for ways to cut costs and I respect and appreciate the Director of DHS, Rita Scardaci's willingness to meet with us last week to discuss ideas. All the ideas that were gathered at the meeting I attended with Rita were valuable and certainly, sound Best Practices, however, it is becoming clear that without some drastic County wide measures (that go beyond turning the heat down) we, as a County face the potential loss of a significant number of permanent positions and possibly whole units, with more cuts expected in the next fiscal year. It is important that we "get" that no one's job is secure in this current situation. Even those who have seniority are at risk of being bumped by a person getting laid off in another unit who has more seniority. (Many of you have already seen this happen or read about lay-offs in the newspaper.)

To remedy such an enormous Short Fall requires that ALL OF US share in the cut, from the BOS across all County employees. For example, following the State's lead by reducing the work week to 36 hours would be a 10% time/pay cut which would significantly reduce the current deficit. Additionally, if the county offices were closed one day per week this would also save in building maintenance costs. As much as this pay cut would be a hardship for everyone, working 4 hours less per week is better than not having a job at all or watching our co-workers be laid off and our programs and services to the community suffer or disappear.

Rita expressed concern that this would translate into a 10% cut in County services. It seems in this climate no service is guaranteed. However there is much to commend the 4 hour cut which will "protect" many services AND jobs. And as one man at the meeting suggested, we *can* find more effective and more efficient ways to deliver our services which would mitigate much of the loss to the community.

I am hoping we will all seriously consider this and that the BOS and our Unions will make sure that all of the following are included in the plan:

- All Sonoma County Employees, whose job does not require 40 hours coverage per week, take as much as a 10% time cut across the board—from the BOS on down.
- The above 10% time cut to be implemented by creating a work week from Monday through Thursday at 9 hours per day.
- All County offices to be closed on Fridays.
- For those whose jobs require 40 hours of coverage per week and/or 24 hour facility operation, a 2.5 to 5% cut in salary so that they too would be part of the solution.
- The 10% (or 2.5-5%) time/pay cut to have NO impact on current employee or future retirement benefits which will continue as though the employee is working at 100% time/pay.

- Retirement to be based on an employee's highest month's wages X 12 in career.

Thank you for your consideration. If you see any merit in these ideas, (at least in principle) please forward this on to your Union and to the BOS with your statement of support, questions, concerns, etc.

PS If you do not want to read replies to this email, please simply delete them when/if they come in to your mailbox. (There are many who want to be a part of this conversation.)