

## FROM THE BLOGS

# Unions Make Stunning Statement, And Not A Good One

**W**atching Gov. Dannel P. Malloy's union concession plan fall into a death spiral, I keep wondering what decade some state employees think they live in.

These folks are behaving like it's 1965, when nobody was too worried where the money was coming from. The rest of us can only watch in amazement.

The minority of employees who appear to have torpedoed this \$1.6 billion budget-balancing deal evidently think they shouldn't have to worry about things like colonoscopies, quitting smoking, paying for any small portion of a visit to a doctor, or what it costs all of us to allow state workers to retire at 55.

Offered the unbelievable opportunity to save jobs, keep most of their benefits and avoid the kind of chaos governors have inflicted upon other states, these workers made a simple, stunning statement to Connecticut as well as their union brothers and sisters who supported the compromise.

We don't care.

Union officials tried to say otherwise Wednesday, lobbing unsubstantiated charges of mysterious sabotage from Republicans and a small libertarian think tank.

"Attacks on unions all over this country have made it difficult for any constructive dialog to take place," union spokesman Matt O'Connor valiantly told reporters at the Capitol on Wednesday afternoon.

Not here. Gov. Malloy, at considerable risk, sought a deal with unions that would avoid layoffs, preserve services and cut the state deficit.

The deal will die unless at least 80 percent of unionized state employees and 14 of 15 unions endorse it. With voting on the plan ending Friday, prospects for a positive vote were in deep doubt Wednesday. If it all fails, Malloy and the legislature must make \$1.6 billion in cuts.

Perhaps none of us should be surprised at this when the kind of prominent state employee we expect to set an example, the chancellor of the community college system, is shamefully feeding at the public trough. We learned just this week that Chancellor Marc Herzog "retired" last month — collecting a \$168,000 pension — only to be rehired as a temporary worker for the bargain-basement price of \$14,000 a month.

With warped values like this, it's no wonder the union deal is crumbling.

Layoffs are a horrible idea. But it's people like Herzog or the selfish minority of state workers who indignantly reject concessions that make me wonder whether eliminating jobs really is the only solution here.