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NAGE Calls on Governor Baker to Halt Plan to Tax State Workers for Leave Program

After months of fruitless negotiations over the implementation of the new Paid Family Medical Leave Act (PFML), NAGE National President David Holway has called on Governor Baker to cease and desist with his administrations' plan to tax state employees for a program that they may never be able to utilize.

"The Legislature took steps to meet a critical need for working families in the state and I commend them for the work they did", said Holway. "However, the Governors interpretation of the program and the states obligation to fund it have taken a drastic departure from the laws original intent."

In anticipation of the new PFML program and the states obligation to bargain over it with NAGE, the Union filed a demand to bargain in order to begin addressing any potential impact on NAGE members. Since the law specifically exempts employers who provide leave benefits equal to the law, NAGE's firm position is that our members should be exempt from the program and potential tax implications.

According to Governor Bakers Office of Employee Relations, the Baker Administration is planning to bill the new program for Family and Medical Leave that his employees take, which in effect is fleecing the fund and probably will mean that the Administrations contribution to the fund will be returned if not more.

"Our 'no taxes' Governor has refused to negotiate in good faith and seems hell bent on unilaterally implementing his plan to begin collecting .3788% from his employees' paychecks on October 1, which in some cases amounts to over \$300 per year. With a surplus of \$1.9 billion in fiscal year 2019 and revenue up 6% this July over last July, it's unconscionable that the Governor would squeeze his employees further for a program they will never use," states Holway.

Governor Baker's actions here are outrageous and further illustrate that when it comes to his ability to manage State Government, "...the Emperor has no clothes.' Take your pick, from the RMV to the MBTA to the state police overtime scandal, and now the botched rollout of this new leave law, Governor Baker has gone from one disaster to another. It is now crystal clear that Governor Baker is more interested in taking selfies with voters and winning a popularity contest than actually doing the hard job of governing the Commonwealth. I'm here to tell the Governor that his time is up, and we will do everything we can to hold him and his team accountable to his employees and the tax payers of the Commonwealth."

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