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Friday, September 28, 2018

Supervisor Dan Gjerde

Mendocino County

851 Low Gap Road

Ukiah, CA 95482

Dear Supervisor Gjerde,

We are writing to ask you to place a moratorium on management salary increases pending the completion of the Classification and Compensation Study that you have contracted for with Koff & Associates. We were disappointed that you chose to delay the study's release to June 2019 and took no steps to address the serious wage deficiencies experienced by so many County employees.

In reviewing the Tuesday, October 2 Board of Supervisor Agenda we were surprised to find on the consent calendar a 21% increase for the CEO, a 21.5% increase for the Assistant Agriculture Commissioner and an 8.7% increase for the newly hired Public Defender. For County employees who have been waiting patiently for the release of the Compensation Study this feels like a slap in the face.

We are worried that you do not recognize the level of discontent among County employees. There is a general feeling that frontline employees are ignored while managers can get massive salary increases approved on the consent calendar without a single Supervisor blinking an eye or asking a question.

For these large salary increases to be on the Board's agenda one week after the Compensation and Classification study has once again been delayed is particularly galling. As you know the County has experienced a serious problem with recruitment and retention and has been hemorrhaging experienced employees to higher paying neighboring counties. From our own review we have found Mendocino County employee wage rates to be on average 15% below other comparable jurisdictions.

Placing a moratorium on salary increases until all adjustments can be addressed at the same time would go a long way toward showing County staff that you are sympathetic to their situation and that you are committed to treating everyone

who works for the County evenhandedly. Thank you for considering our proposal.

Sincerely,

Kort Pettersen, Patrick Sullivan, Lois Pitman and Nick Wharff
Mendocino County Chapter Executive Board, SEIU Local 1021