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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY QUESTION CHANCELLOR'S LEADERSHIP, HALF-BAKED BUDGET PLAN

CSU Chancellor Reed & his administration have focused for years on their own perks, spent millions on labor consultants and done little to advocate for adequate CSU funding; now their incomplete CSU budget proposal would address less than half the projected shortfall, leaving a \$300 million deficit with no plan to close it; tens of thousands of students are at risk of losing out on a college education.

Would you buy a "pig in a poke" — in this case, a pay cut deal composed of vague promises about what is inside the paper bag?

CFA won't.

The California Faculty Association is well aware of the massive budget collapse confronting the California State University and the entire state. This is the worst budget crisis ever.

And the coming year's state funding shortfall will be worse. Everyone realizes that.

"So we expected to see a creative, well-thought-out plan from our leadership. Chancellor Reed's administration has long been raising its own compensation and packing the ranks of managers because, they claimed, they need the best at the top. Well, this is their time to shine," says CFA President Lillian Taiz.

"Instead, they have come up with a half-baked plan to cut employee pay that ostensibly would address a little less than half the funding shortfall. And, when asked about the remaining \$300 million deficit, our Chancellor said he 'has no plan,'" Taiz says.

"On the last day of the fiscal year he has no plan! It's just hard to believe. There are one of two conclusions one can come to, and neither one is pretty," says Taiz.

Yesterday, the CSU Chancellor's Public Affairs Office chose to take the talks over the furlough of the CSU faculty to the media through a news statement that misrepresented discussions with CFA.

It omitted the most important questions asked about the Chancellor's proposal that basically asks for a blank check to deal with the crisis.

QUESTION #1: If the faculty agree to the furlough, will that prevent layoffs?

CHANCELLOR REED'S ANSWER: *No.*

In order for CFA to conduct a responsible and meaningful vote of the faculty, the organization needs an understanding of how a furlough would be an alternative to massive elimination of class sections that would result in students not getting the courses they need as well as layoffs of both Lecturer faculty working on temporary contracts — who teach about half of students' classes — and probationary and tenured faculty.

Initially, the Chancellor's Labor Relations staff and consultants told CFA the choice is between accepting a furlough or layoffs. But on further inspection, they would not guarantee there would be no layoffs or even give CFA a scenario in which the number of layoffs would be reduced.

"The Chancellor's expensive consultants could not tell us how accepting less pay through a furlough will save a single class or a single job or help a single additional student get into college," says Taiz.

Many CSU campuses already have threatened layoffs of Lecturer faculty and, possibly, probationary and tenured faculty in some programs. This year alone, the CSU has cut about 1000 faculty members due to funding reductions made during the academic year.

QUESTION #2: *What is the plan for cutting the other \$300 million?*

CHANCELLOR REED'S ANSWER: *I have no plan.*

Since, according to the Chancellor's labor consultants, the furlough plan addresses less than half of the funding shortfall, where will the other \$300 million or so be cut?

CFA must assume that the remaining cuts will involve faculty layoffs, probably enacted by campuses to deal with cuts assigned to them by the Chancellor.

"Without clear, competent answers, we must assume that we will get both – furloughs and layoffs — making a vote on a choice between them not a meaningful one," says Taiz.

"We have been warning about this moment for years, and urging CSU's executives and Trustees to act to protect the state's public university by taking a public stand to make policy-makers understand how necessary the CSU is.

"But these are managers who will not even give up their taxpayer provided cars, much less the free houses for executives who make more than \$300,000 a year.

"Instead, they want the students who just want an education, the staff who provide student services, and us, the faculty who teach the students, to give them a blank check to cut as they wish.

"We have to press them to do better," Taiz concludes.