

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 13, 2009

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor  
State of California  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

As the State of California confronts the challenges of a beleaguered economy, we write to ask that you do not further jeopardize the well-being of millions of disabled Californians by enforcing the statewide furlough on California's Department of Social Services Disability Determination Services (DDS) employees.

As Members of the California Congressional Delegation, we oppose your plan to force hard-working public employees to take unpaid leave two days a month because it hurts families and reduces incomes during a time in which we need to stimulate, not decrease demand. However, we write today regarding one specific group of State employees whose furlough is especially egregious: DDS employees.

We believe that mandating a monthly two-day unpaid leave on employees whose salary is paid exclusively by federal funds does little to reduce State costs and will only further worsen the difficult financial predicament that people with disabilities find themselves in as they wait for a final determination. We therefore ask that you exempt DDS employees from the statewide furlough.

Each month DDS employees are responsible for distributing \$1.1 billion in Disability and Supplemental Security Income benefits to over 1.3 million Californians – these figures are expected to grow. As you know, the federal government is responsible for 100 percent of DDS operating costs and any money saved by forcing unpaid leave cannot be used to shore up the state's budget deficit. Enforcing a furlough on DDS employees will limit their ability to manage their already considerable workload. By increasing case processing times, your furlough would exacerbate the existing claims backlog, needlessly leaving some of California's most vulnerable residents without vital assistance.

California's economy is already in dire straits. Its unemployment rate is quickly approaching double-digits and a record number of foreclosures have forced families out of their homes. During these tough economic times, we cannot afford a plan that impedes assistance to the disabled, especially when that plan fails to achieve its stated goal of cost savings to the State.

We urge you to grant an immediate furlough exemption to the State's Disability Determination Services employees, ensuring that Californian's disability safety net continues to provide uninterrupted service. Thank you for your timely consideration of our request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Rinda J. Perry

Mad G. Jones

Barbara Lee

Alance E. Watson

Arcan H. Davis

Ed Mill

Sam Lee

Henry A. Wayman

Bluff

Yvonne B. Baker

Lucille Royal-Allard

Orlando

Ellen Nauscher

Ed

Bob Filmer

Joe L. G.

