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Media Contact

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RIVERSIDE, CA – The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 721 sent the following letter to the Riverside County Board of Supervisors regarding two items on the Tuesday, June 5, agenda which would result in increases in pay and benefits for elected officials and upper management.

SEIU 721 believes this is an outrageous proposal made either for completely political antics prior to election day or a lack of good judgment by management during a time of layoffs, furloughs, and pay cuts to front line workers who provide essential public services. The hard working residents of Riverside county are struggling everyday to make ends meet for their families. If the Board of Supervisors approves these recommendations it will send a strong message that they are not concerned with maintaining any fiscal discipline with top management and elected officials.

Dear Riverside County Board of Supervisors,

June 2, 2012

“We are writing to express our concern and opposition of two agenda items for the June 5, 2012, Board of Supervisors meeting:

- Ordinance 781.14 - establishing compensation and benefits for elected officials other than members of the Board of Supervisors.
- Resolution No. 2012-137 - Exempt Management, Management, Confidential and other unrepresented salaries and benefits recommendation.

“At a time when the County of Riverside is laying off front line workers and continues to face a major deficit, it is deeply concerning that the County would consider additional wage increases exceeding 5.5% for compaction, back pay for a lost year of supplemental pension in the form of 401a contribution, and the highest contribution increase for medical benefits for upper management employees.

“This proposal would also bring the Assessor/County Clerk/Recorder, County Auditor-Controller, District Attorney, Sheriff/Coroner/Public Administrator, and the Treasurer/Tax Collector over \$200,000 in salary by 2014. These elected officials would have a higher salary than the Governor of the state of California. This is an outrageous proposal during a time of layoffs, furloughs and calls for fiscal discipline.

“Just this week the Citizens Compensation Commission, created by California voters to set salaries and benefits for certain elected officials, approved a 5.5% pay reduction for 132 elected state officers to be in line with state worker cuts. We believe the County should follow the state’s lead and match as closely as possible to the contracts negotiated with County unions.

“When the Board of Supervisors stated in November 2011 that management and elected officials should share the pain, we took them at their word. Last December SEIU 721 members faced a 3% reduction in pay and will have another cut this month, while upper management will see an immediate increase that will more than cover their EPMC contribution. Where is the leadership now?

“We strongly encourage the Board to reconsider this divisive and costly proposal.”

Sincerely,

Jason Klumb, SEIU 721 Inland Area Regional Director
Wendy Thomas, SEIU 721 Inland Area Regional Vice President
Barbara Cayon, SEIU 721 Inland Area Regional Vice President
Glenn Sanders, SEIU 721 Executive Board member
Kevin Luke, SEIU 721 Executive Board member

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The Inland Empire is home to nearly 8,000 public service workers represented by SEIU 721 in Riverside County and cities extending into the desert such as Hemet, Indio and Cathedral City. SEIU 721 members serve in hospitals and clinics, protect children, strengthen families and ensure the maintenance of our local parks and facilities in a region that continues to grow with more than two million county residents.

