



News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security Administration Praises Court Ruling on "Illegal" Furloughs in California

Asks Governor Schwarzenegger to Accept Ruling and Congress to Increase Oversight

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, issued the following statement regarding two recent decisions of the California Superior Court for the County of Alameda:

"When it comes to the furlough of state employees whose jobs are paid for by federal funds, California Superior Court Judge Frank Roesch ruled state officials have 'abused their discretion' and that 'such a policy is arbitrary, capricious and unlawful.' I could not agree more.

For more than a year, I have made the case that these furloughs cost states money, hurt their most vulnerable citizens, and harm hard-working civil servants. California's furlough of Disability Determination Service (DDS) employees costs the state \$849,000 per furlough day in administrative funding. More importantly, each furlough day results in a delay costing California's disabled citizens over \$420,000 in much-needed Social Security benefits. For the sake of the citizens of California, I call on Governor Schwarzenegger to reject his own failed policy and not appeal the court's ruling.

Social Security funds 100 percent of DDS employees' salaries as well as all overhead costs -- about \$2 billion nationwide this year. These funds cannot be used by the states for any other purpose, so states do not save a single penny by furloughing employees in the DDSs -- they only slow getting benefits to the disabled, unduly harm its civil servants, and cost the state needed tax revenue. Nevertheless, about a dozen governors are imposing similar across-the-board hiring freezes or furloughs that also affect DDS employees. I sincerely hope Congress will use its oversight authority to investigate not just California, but the other states that are using -- or have used -- furloughs and hiring freezes for positions that are fully funded by the Social Security Administration and other federal agencies."

To read the entire decision in *Service Employees International Union Local 1000, and Yvonne Walker v. Arnold Schwarzenegger, et al.*, [click here](#).

To read the entire decision in *Union of American Physicians and Dentists v. Arnold Schwarzenegger, et al.*, [click here](#).

To read the California Senate Office of Oversight and Outcomes report on Furloughs in Federally-Funded Benefit Programs, [click here](#).

To read a letter from Vice President Biden to the Governors, [click here](#).

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