

Get the facts about **Public** **Employees**

Myth: Public employees make more than their counterparts in the private sector.

FACT: Ohio public employees actually make the same or less than their counterparts in the private sector. One national study showed, on average, total compensation is 6.8 percent lower for state employees than for public sector employees. In addition, government workers are better educated and trained, accounting for an increased wage. In fact, half of state and local public employees have a college degree. Less than 30 percent of private sector workers do.

Myth: Public workers have done nothing to help states achieve savings or bring their costs in line.

FACT: State of Ohio employees have saved \$250 million dollars in their current contract alone. They agreed to pay cuts, furloughs and freezes in step and personal leave as well as increases in their share of health care costs. In fact, over the last 9 years (or three state contracts) state workers have taken 5 years of pay freezes. They've also saved millions of dollars with numerous labor/management partnerships.

Myth: Public employee benefits are draining local and state budget coffers.

FACT: The rhetoric about public worker compensation bankrupting state budgets does not support the facts. Recent national statistics prove that public employee pay and benefits are not contributing to this country's economic crisis. According to Policy Matters Ohio, budget gaps are, in fact, on average slightly higher for those states that DO NOT allow collective bargaining at 16.7 percent. For those states that DO have unionized state workers—the gap is 16.2 percent.

State lawmakers should stay focused on their promise to create jobs and to grow the economy, not scapegoat public workers who live paycheck to paycheck.

Myth: Collective bargaining contracts are holding government budgets hostage and have created these budget gaps states are now facing.

FACT: OCSEA has never gone on strike, and has gone to binding arbitration or "conciliation" just once in 27 years. When that happened, the arbitrator sided with the state and the union lost. Rather, state workers have a long track record of settling disputes amicably with the state. But the strike provision *has* ensured that one party cannot bring forward over-the-top political or philosophical proposals. It forces everybody to the middle.

Myth: In order to balance the state budget, lawmakers must consider drastic measures to cut services and employee pay and benefits and/or eliminate or change collective bargaining.

FACT: State employee payroll in Ohio makes up just 9 percent of the state budget. Even if you laid off every state employee, you couldn't balance a \$8 billion deficit. A balanced approach to solving the state's budget crisis is what is needed, not political posturing, or further reductions to already strapped state agencies. This means providing the resources and revenue streams that help Ohioans get back on their feet and help grow the economy.