



GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
August 31, 2009

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510


Dear Senator Feinstein,

I appreciated your sharing your concerns about the impact state worker furloughs will have on the Department of Social Services Disability Determination Service Division (DDSD). Thank you also for passing along the letter you received from Social Security Commissioner Astrue. Believe me when I say I very much recognize the important role DDSD employees play in serving our fellow Californians, and I appreciate your insight and feedback.

To solve a budget and cash crisis that reached monumental proportions, I was forced to make some tough choices, including implementing state employee furloughs. Sacramento Superior Court Judge Patrick Marlette upheld my furlough order, confirming that it applies to all state employees covered under the Dills Act, including those at DDSD. This is not a decision I made lightly, and I have no doubt it will seriously impact life in California, but it is imperative that the state joins California's families and businesses in tightening our belt so that we can address the real, immediate financial challenges we're facing. However, some units in state government, including the DDSD, have sought and been granted flexibility to keep their workers on the job five days a week and use the furlough days as days off for two years after the furloughs end. This allows DDSD to help manage its workload during these times of severe fiscal crisis, which in turn has helped ensure that processing time remains within one day of its pre-furlough length. In fact, I am pleased to report that it remains below the national average of days for claim processing time.

These are difficult times, but we continue to work to stimulate our economy and build a healthy budget even as we keep California moving forward. In the meantime, thank you again to you and Commissioner Astrue for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

  
Arnold Schwarzenegger

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