

February 22, 2023

My name is Rebecca Grooms, I have been employed with the State of Maine for 21 ½ years, and I am writing on my own time to share my thoughts on the biennial budget and the need to close the state employee pay gap.

For the past 10 years, the State of Maine has offered new employees the opportunity to start out at step 3 or 4 depending on the office. However, there has not been any compensation for those employees who have been loyal to the State. We have weathered years of pay raise and hiring freezes, shut down days and retirement incentives payouts of \$10,000.

I have heard that employees do not care to show up. In reality, we are tired. Tired of fighting for equitable pay, tired of being set aside, after giving our loyalty to State of Maine, and receiving little to no loyalty (compensation) in return.

I am asking for equitable pay increases. Whereas, the new employees are starting at step 4, the starting pay (step 1) and additional steps should be added to each pay grade. All employees should receive a raise. If we want to retain dedicated workers, we need to work to close the pay gap and ensure everyone is paid fairly for the important work they do.

Thank you for your consideration.