

PE INFORMER



Professional Engineers in California Government

#7, October 2015



PECG MEMBERS VOTED

YES!

ON THE NEW MOU

97%

PECG members have overwhelmingly **approved** (ratified) the new three-year Unit 9 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by a margin of **97.2%** to 2.8%.

Only four of the State's 21 Bargaining Units were in negotiations this year, with most of the others scheduled to resume bargaining next spring. As their contracts run through July 1, 2016 or beyond, PECG members are the only state employees currently scheduled to receive a salary increase next July.

The basic provisions of the new contract include a **5% salary increase** on July 1, 2016, and **another 2% increase** on July 1, 2017. Employees and management will each begin contributing 0.5% of salary on that date to start prefunding retiree health benefit premiums.



Employees will be allowed to **cash out** up to 80 hours of vacation or annual leave next spring if departments have unspent funds near the end of the fiscal year. The **shift differential** will double next July, reimbursement for **moving and relocation expenses** will improve, so-called **"split shifts"** and involuntary reduced work days will be prohibited, protection is provided against **furloughs**, and **lodging reimbursement** in some counties will be increased.

Specific wording for the new contract provisions are on the PECG website. PECG will prepare printed versions of the MOU which will be available to PECG members and fee payers.

As always, your PECG Bargaining Team appreciates the ongoing support and confidence of the members throughout the contract negotiations process.

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The **PENSION-BASHERS** Are Still At It

Former Mayor Chuck Reed and former radio talk show host (and unsuccessful Congressional candidate) Carl DeMaio have been writing proposed ballot measures for years which would weaken or destroy public employee pensions in California. They recently proposed an initiative (reported in the late August *Informer*) which targeted future hires but raised a constitutional question regarding its application to existing employees.

Attorney General Kamala Harris wrote an accurate Title and Summary for the measure (which they didn't like because it was accurate). Reed and DeMaio were unable to get any financial or other support, so they have now dropped it.

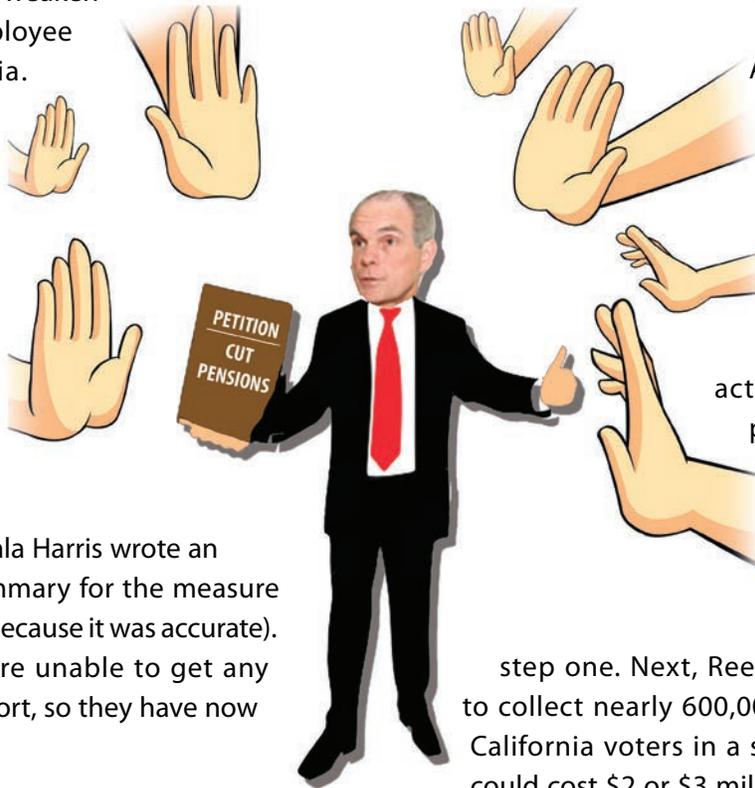
However, as sometimes occurs with visiting relatives, they refuse to go away. They have now submitted not one, but two new proposed initiatives to the Attorney General. One would prohibit any "benefit enhancement" that "increases the value" of public employees' pensions. New employees would be excluded from a defined benefit plan (such as CalPERS), and the measure would prohibit the employer from paying more than half the cost of retirement benefits, including health care. The other measure would prohibit the state

or other government employers from paying more than 11% of compensation for a new employee's retirement benefits, including pensions, Social Security, and health care plans.

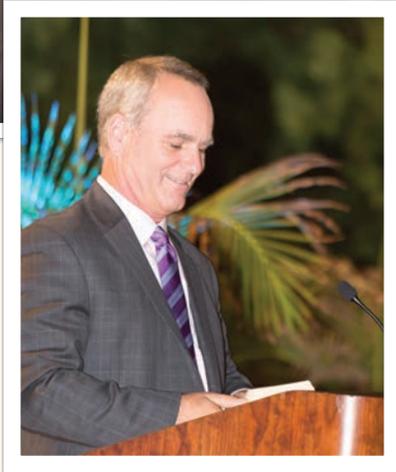
Although claiming not to damage pensions or benefits of existing employees when they retire, both measures could so weaken the financial base of CalPERS that the actuarial soundness of the plan could be adversely affected.

Drafting a Constitutional amendment is just step one. Next, Reed and DeMaio will have to collect nearly 600,000 valid signatures from California voters in a six month period, which could cost \$2 or \$3 million. Then, a campaign to gain voter approval in the November 2016 election would cost each side tens of millions of dollars.

PECG is an active member of Californians for Retirement Security (CRS), a coalition of organizations seeking to protect the pensions of California's active and retired public servants. Any attempts by Reed and DeMaio, or others, to qualify an anti-pension measure for the ballot will be vigorously opposed by PECG and other members of the coalition.



2016 PEG Section Directors

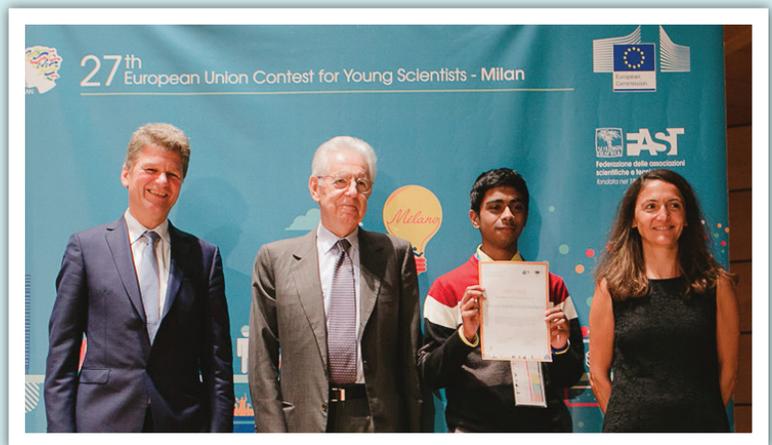


Past President **Roy Flores** administers the oath of office to the new Directors in PEG's 17 Sections at the Annual Meeting in September. The Directors, as well as eight Corporate Officers, will serve for the next twelve months. New President **Mark Sheahan** delivered his Incoming President's Message at the Installation Dinner following the Board of Directors Meeting.

LA Student Wins Top Prize in Europe

Each year, PEGC cosponsors County Engineering and Science Fairs throughout California, awarding prizes to top student projects. PEGC members serve on the Boards of Directors and volunteer as judges and mentors.

This year, a 15-year-old student was the top winner in the math category at the Los Angeles County Science and Engineering Fair. He then became the first American and the youngest ever to win first place at the European Union Contest for Young Scientists in Milan, Italy.



Sanath K. Devalapurkar, second from right, holds his First Place Award.

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Caltrans Safety Campaign Wins National Honor



Caltrans' "Be Work Zone Alert" campaign won the American Road & Transportation Builders Association's (ARTBA) Roadway Work Zone Safety Awareness Award in September. Featuring the children of Caltrans maintenance workers, the campaign serves as a reminder that highway workers are relied upon to do more than just fix the roadway; they are counted on to come home each day.