

PEINFORMER



Professional Engineers in California Government

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PECG REPRESENTATION CAN **SAVE** YOUR JOB!

Last month, 22 Associate Safety Engineers were informed by the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), their employer, that they were unlawfully appointed to their positions due to discrepancies in their civil service exams. These employees were told that, **through no fault of their own, they were subject to dismissal from their jobs**, and may be required to pay back the wages they earned during their so-called unlawful appointment to state service.

**These employees did nothing wrong...
Yet, their jobs were at risk.**

This, obviously, is terrifying for people who depend on their job and paycheck to provide for themselves and their families. Keep in mind, these employees did absolutely nothing wrong. It was never even suggested that they had personally violated any state law or policy. Yet, their jobs were at risk.

In response, PECG did what PECG does best. Working with the impacted employees, the State Personnel Board, DIR, and the Labor and Workforce Development Agency that oversees DIR, PECG attorneys and labor relations professionals advised, advocated, and employed every tool available to make sure the employees would keep their jobs and pay.

After having their jobs threatened, PECG is happy to report that the “unlawful appointment” letters have been rescinded and these 22 engineers are still on the job – providing for their families and protecting Californians in their workplaces. Moreover, they will not have to pay back the wages they rightfully earned.

In emails to PECG headquarters over the last few weeks, some former fee payers have stated adamantly that they won’t ever need representation or protection for dismissals, adverse actions, unlawful appointment letters, and countless other workplace hazards that arise in state employment. The DIR engineers likely never expected to either – nor do the dozens of members who call PECG every month for help.

**That’s the thing about workplace
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need it until you do.**

That’s the thing about workplace representation – you don’t think you need it until you do. And when you need it, you need it desperately. PECG has seen its membership numbers increase following the recent Supreme Court decision, as employees realize the value of membership in the face of unexpected threats to their livelihood.

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THE MISPLACED CONFIDENCE OF PROPOSITION 6 PROPONENTS

As you know, SB 1 now provides \$5.2 billion annually to state and local transportation projects in our state. While supporters of repealing SB 1 – which is now Proposition 6 on November’s ballot – repeatedly point to polling that shows that about half of California voters favor repeal, there are a lot of reasons to suggest they should not be so confident. Here are a few:

Proposition 6 starts from a weak position. To be successful on Election Day, ballot measures need to start with two-thirds or more support of voters in polling at this stage in the process. That is the only way to overcome the campaign urging a “no” vote on the measure. That is not the case here. Public polling to date has shown that only 50% or so of voters support repeal at this time.

There is plenty of time to urge a “NO” vote. With nearly four months until Election Day, there is ample time for the broad coalition led by Governor Brown that includes PECG, labor, business, environmental, and local government interests to raise and spend millions of dollars educating voters about SB 1’s value and convince them that voting “no” is the right thing to do.

Governor Brown is California’s most powerful and trusted political voice. In his final State of the State address, the Governor said, “The funds that SB 1 makes available are absolutely necessary if we are going to maintain our roads and transit systems in good repair. I will do everything in my power to defeat any repeal effort that may make it to the ballot.” Since his return to the governorship in 2011, the Governor has not lost a ballot-measure fight.

Prop. 6 supporters will not have big business on their side. Traditionally, business interests are against taxes. Not this time. The California Chamber of Commerce and business leaders in all sectors understand that maintaining our transportation infrastructure is essential to keeping the



5th largest economy in the world humming. They’re not going to invest in Prop. 6. Instead, they will be funding the campaign to defeat it.

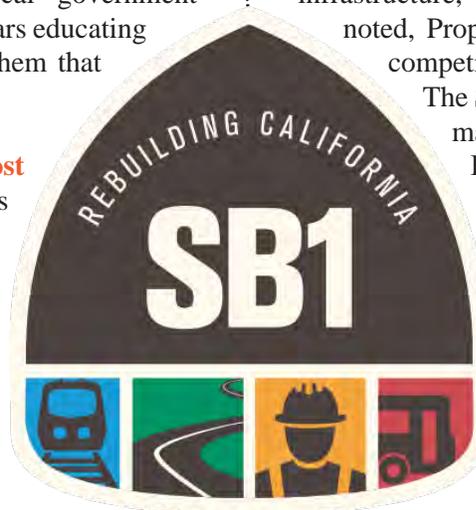
Media outlets are reporting on the many local benefits of SB 1.

Here’s a small sample of recent headlines: “California’s gas tax increase has fast-tracked road repair projects as supporters hope to stave off a repeal” (*Los Angeles Times*), “Caltrans to begin Route 78 repairs Monday” (*San Diego Union Tribune*), “Central Valley’s busiest highway finally getting some much needed repairs” (*Fresno Bee*), “City details proposed road projects using gas tax money” (*Bakersfield Californian*). Local stories help voters see what they’re getting for their money.

Newspapers are already editorializing against repeal. “Even as the Trump Administration is encouraging states to raise their gas taxes to fund infrastructure,” the Los Angeles Times editorial page noted, Proposition 6 would “make the state less competitive for federal transportation dollars.”

The Santa Rosa Press-Democrat opined, “It may be tempting to vote for the repeal... But that would undermine efforts to rehabilitate highways and add capacity to a transportation network that supports the fifth-largest economy in the world.” Expect to see more editorials and news stories supporting SB 1 in the days ahead.

Don’t misunderstand – Proposition 6 will not be easy to defeat. But it would be wrong to assume that its passage is a certainty. It is absolutely not. PECG will vigorously support the No on Proposition 6 campaign because its defeat is in the best interest of our state. PECG members should encourage their friends and families to do the same.



MEMBER APPRECIATION & RECRUITMENT DAY



PECG leaders in Sacramento recruiting new members.

PECG leaders and staff were at the Natural Resources Building in downtown Sacramento last month to meet members and to sign up new ones. The June 25 event was the second time in recent weeks that PECG set up a worksite table to explain the importance of membership and to hear about job concerns and challenges.

PECG MEETS WITH DEPARTMENT HEADS *Outsourcing and Workplace Issues on the Table*

PECG regularly meets with department leaders to emphasize the importance of state engineering and related work being performed by public servants and to discuss issues affecting PECG members in the workplace. In June, PECG leaders and professional staff met with directors for the **Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD)**, the **Department of Conservation (DOC)**, and the **Division of the State Architect (DSA)**.



*Robert David
OSHPD Director*

OSHPD reviews and inspects hospital and health facility construction projects throughout California, among other essential health care regulatory functions. With **OSHPD Director Robert David** and his leadership team from the Facilities Development Division (FDD), PECG discussed the relocation of OSHPD's Los Angeles facility (including parking

rates and other relocation concerns), employee recruitment and retention updates and challenges, and a potential split class for Senior Architects. PECG, always concerned with outsourcing of state work, also asked whether FDD contracts out any work. OSHPD officials said they do not.

PECG asked **DOC Director David Bunn** and his staff the same outsourcing question and received the same answer. The DOC administers a variety of programs vital to public safety, including regulating all oil, natural gas,



*David Bunn
DOC Director*

and geothermal wells. Other items discussed included on-call pay for Division of Oil, Gas, & Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) staff and new training and development opportunities for DOC engineers, geologists and related employees.

PECG and California State Architect Chester Widom

and division leaders met to discuss issues related to DSA's vital work overseeing the construction of K-12 schools, community colleges, and other state facilities. Meeting topics included workload and hiring, the relocation of DSA's Los Angeles office to the same building as OSHPD in downtown Los Angeles, the split class for Senior Architects, and new operational improvements at DSA, including implementation of all-electronic plan review. DSA is in the process of hiring eight plan reviewers and four supervising architects, and claims the significant school construction workload requires some outsourcing at this time. PECG requested specifics about how much work is being outsourced and at what cost.



*Chester Widom
State Architect*

PECG RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN PAYS DIVIDENDS

PECG's recruitment campaign to educate potential members about the many benefits of PECG membership and sign them up as full members is paying off. Since the *Janus* Supreme Court decision on June 27, PECG has received **280 new member applications**. Over the last three months, membership has increased by a **net total of 439**. Today, there are over 10,000 PECG members for the first time in over 5 years.

PECG thanks and appreciates the many corporate and section leaders and PECG members who have signed up new members in recent months. They, and the new members, recognize that PECG's strength is entirely dependent on the support of our membership. Please keep up the good work!

Right now, please take a minute to encourage non-members to join PECG. It has never been easier to join – the online PECG e-application allows users to sign up for membership in minutes. The e-application also contains a field to identify those who recruit new members – PECG pays a recruitment bonus of **\$50** for every new rank-and-file member and **\$200** for supervisors and managers.

The screenshot shows a website navigation bar with links: Home, Join PECG, For Members, Communications, Weekly Updates, Member Benefits, Major Issues, Media, and Legislative Issues. Below the navigation bar is a header that says "Please Join PECG Today!". There are two main buttons: "PECG E-Membership Application" with an external link icon, and "Learn More About PECG Membership Benefits". To the right of these buttons is a list of bullet points under the heading "Thanks to a strong and committed PECG membership:".

- Our salaries have gone up by more than 61% over the last 12 years, due to PECG's efforts at the bargaining table.
- Our defined-benefit pensions are protected because PECG has successfully blocked countless statewide ballot measures attacking our pensions.
- Our health care benefits are the best in state service, with 85% of our premiums and 80% of our dependents' premiums picked up by the state.
- Our work is overwhelmingly performed by state staff - public servants like you and me - and not outsourced, thanks to PECG's tireless work in the Legislature, in state departments, and in the courts.