



Alaskans Working For Alaska!

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July 1, 2013

Ms. Becky Hultberg, Commissioner
Department of Administration
P.O. Box 110200
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0200

Dear Commissioner Hultberg:

I am writing to request that you immediately cease implementation of the State of Alaska's Universal Space Standards Plan.

I believe a plan of this magnitude and with this level of detail changes the working conditions of our union members. Article 37 C of the ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 Collective Bargaining Agreement with the State of Alaska provides that prior to enacting a change in conditions of employment; the Administration shall obtain the agreement of the Union in the form of a letter of understanding or agreement.

The Administration has failed to have any discussion with the Union prior to beginning the enactment of the Universal Space Standards Plan. I urge you to stop any changes in working conditions based on this study until you have complied with Article 37 C.

I have reviewed the Universal Space Management Standards Manual that is posted on the Division of General Services webpage and the comments made by Deputy Commissioner Thayer in press stories justifying the implementation of the new space standards as a cost savings measure. I have the following specific concerns based on this review:

- Neither in the study nor in Mr. Thayer's comments is there any consideration given to the detrimental effect of the new standards on working conditions of employees and the negative impact on employee morale. This should be just as important a consideration as any "perceived" savings over the next 10 to 20 years
- Under the new space standards, the work area for many of our members will be a 6 ft. by 8 ft. cubicle. According to Wikipedia the standard prison cell is about 6 feet by 8 feet in size. It seems the major difference at this point is you have not yet decided to have steel or solid doors on the work cubicles.

- Mr. Thayer states that new office furnishings for each cubicle will cost an average of \$6,500. While this is an immediate increase in cost to the State, there is no assurance that the “perceived savings” of \$125 million over the next 10 to 20 years will materialize.
- The study is serious micro-managing and is negatively affecting employee morale by not allowing personal items such as a coffee maker in the individual cubes. I can understand not allowing refrigerators and other non-office related appliances but to not allow a small coffee maker is, to put it bluntly, ridiculous and short sighted on the part of the State.
- There are numerous other areas of the new policy, such as the “clean desk policy,” which states that “papers, post-it-notes, pictures, draped cloth, or any other items which are posted, taped, pinned or hung from the ceiling or the outside of cubicles, wall panels or offices is discouraged” that seem to be designed to discourage employees from having a relaxing and comfortable working environment.

Again, I request you immediately suspend implementation of the Universal Space Standards Plan and enter into discussions with the Union as required under Article 37 C of our Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Duncan", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jim Duncan

Executive Director

ASEA/AFSCME Local 52

cc: Honorable Sean Parnell, Governor
Curtis Thayer, Deputy Commissioner Dept. of Administration