

# CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

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## LETTERS

### Reform for all, not just unions

Editor:

This is in response to Mary Kramer's Feb. 15 column, "Public-sector unions must sacrifice too."

Budget reform can't mean "reform everyone but me." Unfortunately, that's how some Lansing politicians and CEOs play the game. Whenever Michigan is in a budget hole, politicians protect themselves and their perks and instead target public employees.

Every year, public employees are on the frontlines, supporting reforms that save taxpayer dollars. They have taken furlough days without pay and pay more for health care.

From layoffs to pay cuts, state workers and their families have saved Michigan \$3.7 billion between 2001 and 2008. And the size of the state workforce is the smallest in recent history, according to

#### **Crain's Detroit Business**

welcomes letters to the editor. All letters will be considered for publication, provided they are signed and do not defame individuals or organizations. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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a study by MSU economics professor Charles Ballard.

Singling out public workers is not only unfair to them and their families, it endangers our quality of life, safety and ability to attract businesses. Michigan has laid off people who do important jobs, such as fighting crime and keeping our roads and bridges safe. At

the same time, the Legislature has refused to end lifetime health benefits for current state politicians or investigate the \$15 billion in state contracts and \$32 billion in tax giveaways doled out each year with little transparency or accountability.

Real reforms mean all of us — politicians, banks, CEOs — must share in the sacrifice, not just Michigan's public employees.

**Phil Thompson**

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