



## UIS, unions reach agreement over employee furlough days

By **CHRIS DETTRO**  
**THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER**

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The University of Illinois Springfield has reached tentative agreement on unpaid leaves of absence with five of seven bargaining units representing campus civil service employees.

Most University of Illinois academic employees, including more than 460 at UIS, were ordered to take furlough days this spring as part of the university's response to a growing backlog of unpaid state appropriations to the U of I.

Civil service employees weren't included in the furlough order. But U of I President Stanley Ikenberry asked the campuses in a Jan. 5 letter announcing the furloughs to seek "comparable cost reductions" from civil service staff.

UIS public relations director Derek Schnapp said Tuesday that UIS had reached tentative agreements with unions representing operating engineers, painters, carpenters, electricians and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

He said the university has had "a number of conversations and formal bargaining meetings with the other units."

Lacking agreements, however, three members of the University Professionals of Illinois Local 4100 and one police officer in the Fraternal Order of Police bargaining unit have been served notices that they will be laid off for periods ranging from 20 days to 62 days. The layoffs would be effective in 30 days if agreements aren't reached with those unions, Schnapp said.

"We remain hopeful that continuing discussions and negotiations with our bargaining units may negate the actual implementation of these lay offs," Schnapp said.

UIS also has imposed a hiring freeze, is holding vacant more than a dozen positions, and is negotiating separation agreements with several employees whose vacated positions won't be filled.

Schnapp said the university has issued notices of non-reappointment to four academic professionals. Those could be rescinded if the university's financial picture improves, he said.

"There are currently no plans for additional layoffs or to issue any more notices of non-reappointment," he said.

Faculty and academic professional staff earning more than \$30,000 annually must take four furlough days — a temporary leave of absence without pay — between the four pay dates of Feb. 16 and May 16. One of those dates has already passed.

The president, chancellors and other senior administrators will take 10 furlough days between February and June pay dates.

Chris Dettro can be reached at 788-1510.

### Organized furlough days

Some University of Illinois Springfield faculty members took the same furlough day on Feb. 4 to call attention to the state funding crisis, and many have plans to repeat the tactic in coming months.

Other dates on which a large group of faculty members are expected to take furloughs are March 10, March 30 and April 19.

"We don't know exactly how many took Feb. 4 as a furlough day because we didn't track it," UIS spokesman Derek Schnapp said Tuesday.

Campus observers said the number was significant, but certainly didn't include all faculty members.



Comments (28)

Porchiaknows

1 day ago

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What they haven't mentioned is the strong arm tactics the university's HR department is using to try to force civil service workers to take furlough days. They would rather threatened them with lay-offs.

Peevedoff  
23 hours ago  
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UPI Local 4100 at UIS has tried everything to reach a fair and equitable agreement with the administration for this campus. This story mentions that 'Civil Service employees are covered by layoff provisions and therefore were not included in the furlough order'. The truth of the matter is that those Civil Service employees who are not members of a union were offered the opportunity to voluntarily take furlough days, with no repercussions for refusal. When the UPI negotiating team went to the bargaining table and offered for its members to take up to 6 voluntary furlough days, when only 4 were asked of others, they were turned down flat. From the beginnings of negotiations in January, UPI offered several counter-proposals, all of which were, once again, flatly refused. Administration pure and simply wanted it THEIR way or NOWAY. UPI members are still at a loss to understand why other civil service members were offered the opportunity to take furlough days at will, but union members were not. Many on campus are confused and frustrated by the lack of fairness, equity and respect shown to card carrying union employees comparative to non-union civil service employees. It seems like being treated fairly would not be too much to ask from the administration at UIS during this time of extreme budgetary shortfalls.

PAM  
23 hours ago  
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Peeved,  
That one is pretty easy. If you are non-union and don't take your voluntary days, you get layed off or your salary next year is reduced by whatever amount was supposed to be saved from your salary. If you are union and you don't take your voluntary days, no money was saved. The unions require a no-layoff guarantee in exchange for furlough days, even voluntary furlough days. If no one takes furlough days and there is no other option to save money, the place closes and everyone loses, especially the students that the place is supposed to be all about.

No Unions  
22 hours ago  
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Every business, industry, or employer that has a Union presence is going down the tubes. Look at Pittsburgh,, Detroit and all the employees of state, federal and county and schools around here. Dump them all.....but I digress.

No Unions  
22 hours ago  
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How about cancelling all the furlough days and also doing away with all the ridiculous paid days off these people get. NO one in their right mind should be expected to be paid for not showing up for work. If you had any work ethics at all you would be ashamed.

22 hours ago  
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No Unions, are you arguing against vacation time or sick leave? I'm confused.

No Unions  
21 hours ago  
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Sick time (if you are a cutally sick) and vacation is fine. But personal days, days to go to the fair A lot of government employees have those, time off to vote (go before or after work like most hardworking people do) A few years ago AFSCME tried to get mebers BIRTHDAY 'S off with pay for God's sake.

imasurvivor  
21 hours ago  
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Can't even get a door fixed in the townhouses on campus. So, my room has to stay unlocked cuz no one thinks it's important. And the theft rate on campus is high. Trust me. I've already had one laptop stolen when my door was busted into.

Porchiaknows  
20 hours ago  
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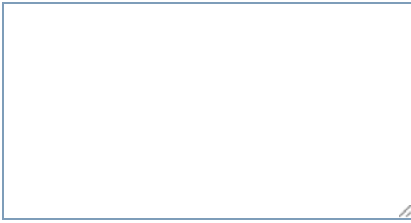
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QUOTE  
No Unions 2 hours ago

'How about cancelling all the furlough days and also doing away with all the ridiculous paid days off these people get. NO one in their right mind should be expected to be paid for not showing up for work. If you had any work ethics at all you would be ashamed.'

Oh you little person. How little you know about the union at U of I. We EARN or ACCRUE out sick/vacation days each pay period. They are NOT given to us. Now, Academic Professionals, they get 4 weeks a year of vacation and 2 weeks of sick time. THEY are the overpaid/overrated employees in this situation, NOT the lowly civil service who make less than \$30k a year if even that. Civil service is your WORKING CLASS not the ELITE CLASS.

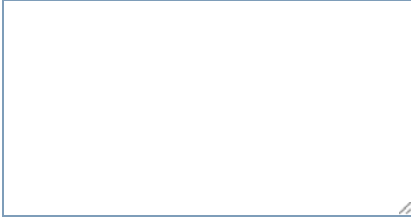
Do your research.  
No Unions  
20 hours ago  
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I know a lot of state workers and UIS workers. I often run into them at the mall or a restaurant.....I aksed them why they weren't at work....you know what they tell me??????????

They were taking 'Sick Days'. LOL  
Peevedoff  
19 hours ago  
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QUOTE  
No Unions 2 hours ago

'How about cancelling all the furlough days and also doing away with all the ridiculous paid days off these people get. NO one in their right mind should be expected to be paid for not showing up for work. If you had any work ethics at all you would be ashamed.'

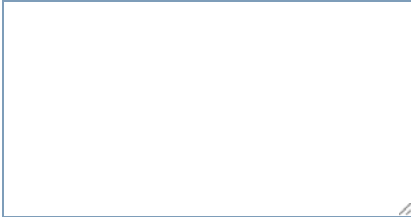
Porchia handled the sick time and vacation time quite well. I'll address the other paid time off we receive.

We do not receive pay for our birthday, we do not receive 'personal days'. We do not receive the same number of paid holidays that other state employees receive. I have actually had more paid holidays in the private sector (as well as a higher wage) than I do now as an employee of UIS.

As far as our work ethic goes, that is not yours to question. You have no idea the number of people who are extremely devoted to their jobs and rarely miss a day. By the way, if we don't use the vacation days we have EARNED we lose them after a time, therefore are forced to take time off so as to not lose that time. Basically, we are penalized for not taking more time off.

I'm sorry if you are stuck in a dead end job with no benefits to speak of. As I see it that is your choice and it does not give you the right to judge others just because they get more paid leave than you do.

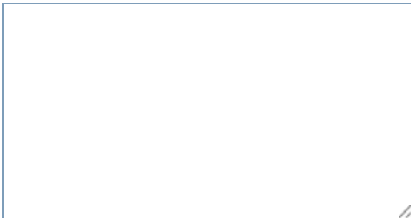
Peevedoff  
18 hours ago  
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By the way No Unions, what kind of work ethic do you have that you are OFTEN running into all these state and UIS people that you know who just happen to always be taking sick days?? Why aren't you at work earning a wage? It sounds to me like you must spend an awful lot of time at the mall and in restaurants. It must be nice to be able to afford to be off work all the time eating at resaurants and shopping at a mall full of overpriced stores.

-  
18 hours ago  
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I know a lot of state workers and UIS workers. I often run into them at the mall or a restaurant.....I asked them why they weren't at work....you know what they tell me??????????

They were taking 'Sick Days'. LOL'

Why weren't you at work?

This issue is not limited to union workers, so I'm not sure what you're arguing. I work at a private company, and this happens as well. I also get 2 personal days a year. Does that make me a lazy employee?

Harley\_Lady1

18 hours ago

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Kudos to Peevedoff!!!! The union at UIS is only asking to be treated fairly. Is there a problem with that? The civil service employees at UIS do not get time off to go to the fair. No unions? That is what is wrong with this society today. No unions and they can do whatever they want to you. At least having a union, administration MUST abide by the contract. Oh and No Unions if you had a union then you would get paid more because you have a union behind you. Union means the members within the union. UNIONS ALL THE WAY!!!!

FlowerPower 2u

9 hours ago

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The faculty at UIS offered to take extra furlough days so civil service would not have to take any since they are the poorest paid group on campus with the majority of members making less than \$30,000. HR said NO. The union offered to open up their contract to allow for all union members to take 1-6 voluntary furlough days, HR said NO. HR wants union employees making about \$30,000 to take 4 mandatory days which will bring in a total of \$12,000. A whole \$12,000. What the article leaves out is they just promoted someone and gave him a \$12,000 a year raise. An administrator retired in December and they are bring him back to double dip at his former salary.

They are allowing faculty not to teach because they are on certain committees, boards, and groups and then hiring part time people to teach those classes. UIS is taking this out on the employees instead of cutting administrative fat, and high overhead costs. UIS supposedly has record enrollment and yet all of their employees have to take furlough days???

Time to vote off of work?? We are allowed to take our earned vacation time to go and vote. It is not free time, the concession is that your supervisor is encouraged to approve this use of vacation time. It is not allowed time off to vote, we use our time. UIS gets far less paid holidays off than the standard state government. No Lincoln's Birthday, No President's Day, No Veteran's Day, No Columbus Day.

And you are wrong that they will fire the non-union civil service workers or cut their pay. All civil service workers are covered by the State University Civil Service System. Which gives the administrative rules to civil service employees. This is a state agency. Currently this agency does not allow for civil service to take furlough days. UIS is trying to get around state policy and have the civil service take unpaid days off. This is their way to get the furlough days but by calling them a different name and making them voluntary they don't get into trouble.

Did we mention that the Urbana and Chicago campuses have not asked their civil service to take unpaid days??? What is going on that UIS is trying to force their civil service but Urbana and Chicago are not? How do those 2 campuses have more money management skills?

The public needs to ask for an accounting of the money, this is in fact a state university.

No Unions

7 hours ago

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Peevie:

Trust me dear. I am NOT stuck in a dead end job. I own my own business and proudly employ 23 NON-UNION dedicated well paid workers. You said you had a private esctor job where you made more money....but now you work for UIS. Couldn't make it in the real workplace? WHEN I add new employees I NEVER hire someone who has worked for the state. Because their work ethics are ridiculous. When interviewing them one of the first things out of their mouths are 'How much vacation do i get and how many days off.....No thank you

springfieldil

6 hours ago

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The US against THEM, civil service vs. AP mentality on this message board is really disturbing, especially the hate being spewed by Porchia knows:

Read the article, four APs were given non-reappointment notices; that is in addition to the furloughs they and their fellow APs are forced to take. APs are not GIVEN vacation time, they EARN it same as everyone else; the only difference is that they receive time up-front whereas civil service receives theirs as they go. You forgot to mention Porcia that Civil Service can continue to accrue higher leave compensation than their AP counterparts (i.e. civil service will often times earn more time off per month than their evil APs counterparts). Porchia, since you are so close to this situation, I am sure you already know that APs dont earn overtime; my spouse puts in 60+ hours a week for the sheer love of serving UIS students. He does not make time and a half for working on a Saturday. He is not overpaid. And I dont appreciate your trying to through APs under the bus.

This divisive talk diverts attention from the real issue, the state's ineptitude to pays its bills. In the real world, when our bills are due we pay them, or else; but such rules dont apply to our state government? Rather than tearing each other down why not band together? I would think pro-union people would realize that there is strength in numbers.

No Unions, get a clue. You are not better than anyone. Public higher-ed is a service. The workers at UIS are there to ensure the leaders of tomorrow, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have a chance to earn an education and replace small-minded people like yourself in the workforce. Out of curiosity, do any of your 23 non-union employees have a degree from a public university? If so one may argue that you're a hypocrite; without the state workers in higher-ed those student may well not have graduated... See Porchia/all, we need to stick together against small-mindedness.

real2

6 hours ago

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Well said springfieldil! APs no longer get their vacation time up front...it is accrued at a monthly rate just like civil service.

This is all our government's fault. The state is in ruins and they have done nothing but tried to get themselves re-elected. Remember this at election time and don't vote for those not doing their job!

nashes

6 hours ago

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'Campus observers said the number was significant, but certainly didnt include all faculty members.'

Who the heck are these 'observers'? Scary language.

Peevedoff

5 hours ago

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Pam,

Since you didn't seem to understand it the first time let me break it down in simpler terms for you.  
(Am I going to have this post removed for using the term simple as well? I didn't realize simple was considered an abusive term?)

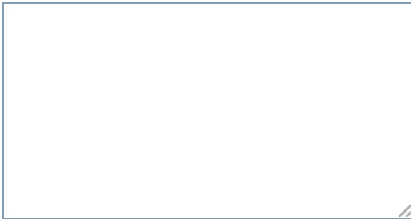
In my first post I stated that the NON union civil service employees were offered by administration the opportunity to take VOLUNTARY furlough days with NO REPERCUSSIONS for choosing not to take any. Only 49% of that group actually agreed to take any days at all and no layoffs or any repercussions whatsoever in their ranks have been announced. That negates your first comment that if you are non union and don't take the days you will be laid off.

Secondly, you stated that unions require a no lay off guarantee in exchange for agreeing to take furlough days. Wrong again. When the negotiating team went to the table the first time out they OFFERED to take up to 6 voluntary furlough days (2 more than had been requested of the others) as long as they would guarantee there would be no layoffs. They said they could NOT do so and turned down our proposal.

The administration is only going to save a mere \$12,000 on the backs of our members out of the millions it needs. That is not even a drop in the bucket. All other universities across this state have refused to even consider furlough days for it's civil service employees, because as they put it 'It would cost more to implement the processes necessary' than it would save. All of this while I have money taken from my check every pay for medical insurance premiums that I can't even use because the state won't pay their bills. At this point if I want medical care I have to pay for it up front and wait for the state to pay my providers (they still haven't paid for services provided in October) so that the providers can reimburse me, People should quit acting like it's the responsibility of the university employees to cover the budgetary shortfalls we have and put the blame square on the backs of those where it belongs, the elected officials who have mishandled our funds for years and put our state in the fiscal mess we now find ourselves.

BTW Well said FlowerPower!

Peevedoff  
5 hours ago  
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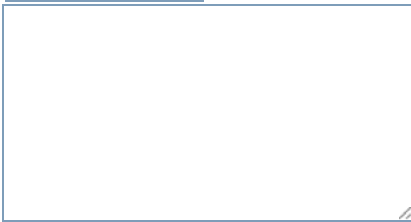
No Unions,

I made it in the real world quite well. As a matter of fact if it wasn't for my work ethic the company I worked for would have lost their contract at least a year sooner than they did. I was proud to represent my company in the workplace and often worked 16 hours a day, 6-7 days a week for weeks on end (at a Monday through Friday 9-5 job) just to keep our workload manageable. But the owner of the company made poor choices with management hiring and the company we contracted with went with a different provider. I received excellent references not only from the company I was employed by, but the company we provided services for as well. The department that hired me here is and has been thankful to have me.

I'm rather suprised that you are a successful business owner. It usually takes an open mind that is willing to accept new ideas to be innovative enough to succeed, and you are obviously small minded and judgemental.

I do want to thank you though. After hearing you spew forth your judgemental blithering I realize how thankful I should be to be employed where I am, problems and all, rather than being employed by someone like you.

Peevedoff  
5 hours ago  
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Springfield,

Well stated! Both of my supervisors are AP's and they are excellent to work for and with. I am thankful to have them as supervisors. (even more so after the wake up call provided by No Unions!!!!) They are very dedicated to their positions and fellow employees. They make UIS a better place to be.

Reader4  
4 hours ago  
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How about a reality check? Just wait for the real downsizing that will be necessary, no matter who wins the election. I would not want to be an associate dean, administrative secretary, employee in the provost's office, recently-hired union member, or other highly-vulnerable ('unneeded') employee. You will all be gone by year end, and there is no way around it. There will be no tax increase this spring, and there is simply no way the campus can operate without the state paying the bills -- which it absolutely cannot. Significant personnel cuts are the only way to strip-down the budget by the 10%-plus that will be necessary. This is only a very small, simple taste of what is to come. Now is the time to focus on eliminating the College and University structures that are so unnecessary, and curtailing the lower-quality programs on campus. How about cancelling a couple of weeks of classes, and summer school?

finalofseem  
4 hours ago  
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As a former employee of this university, on two separate occasions--once as SSU, and then later when it became UIS--I've observed great both teaching and service, and poignant examples of admirable humanity. In every case of witnessing this inherent goodness, it originated from an individual, not a department or a division of said institution---although some departments/divisions were stacked more heavily than others in the inherent goodness department. Every division/department had at least ONE redeeming individual who justified the concept that SSU/UIS was here for the right reasons--for the students, the future, the better good, for a little personal peace in knowing they, themselves, put in a good, fair day's work. That said, even at this university I witnessed great waste, sloth, calculating office politics that served to do nothing but salve fragile egos and the illusion of power along with secure low morale. Recently, when a dean went under review whose effectiveness has been suspect (and turnover extremely high in this division) the provost requested the feedback of both current and former employees of this person's performance. My sources say it was dismal, considering there were many who didn't have to answer to this person any more as they could be honest about it. Ultimately, this administrator got to keep said position, and blame his/her department for said administrator's ineffectiveness---because of a more than professional relationship within the department of power. This has been the banal rule of this university within the administrative workings---I've seen hires at the a/p level happen so much like this it makes me numb--I got too tired to react. I've watched the nearly 30 year career of one friend/employee in particular, and although he has a great administrator now, he dealt with the regular abuse of a cruel and inept supervisor, at the expense of his health and his marriage(he is a better person than I am). The civil service sector of this institution---and most of its devoted faculty, who invest themselves in their work here-- is the only stability, hope, prayer, and valuable resource that will keep it worthy of its existence. The goal of the university administration appears to cull CS positions and have more administrative/professionals in their place---these positions allow more 'flexibility' in hire (read-more political hiring, which means more opportunity to pork spend, and they can let them go without incident more easily). As for the staff at large within UIS HR, I have always found them supportive, fair, helpful---wonderful people.

I would be curious to know which four non-reappointments have been issued. I think there is room for much more, from what I have observed. Before a recent dean left, he increased the payroll in his division with several unnecessary administrative positions (in retort to his being 'encouraged' to leave, perhaps-- he was given plenty of time to do so, and unlike many in this economy, got to leave with a good paying position before he did)---positions that had been left empty for YEARS and had either been overseen by part time employees, delegated to other departments piecemeal, or merely absent. I can think of one whose duties are redundant and superfluous for the university AND the community at large; what isn't could be divided among Housing, Center for First Year Students, EX-L/Service Learning, Student Activities, Athletics, and Student Affairs in general without any effort or pain to what these divisions currently do, as they are doing this work already, while this administrator's efforts revolve around giving positive publicity for self, having the university reimburse lunch expenses and trips for networking for that next employer.

I am confident UIS will weather this just fine---although HOW the folks with the peard/spending authority will behave is the problem. Some will get hurt...my experience suggests it won't be those who SHOULD get hurt in these instances...those who were poor planners, bad stewards, emotionally immature self promotors are due some bad karma this time around. I wish a soaking wet, 'Made in China' cardboard box for them to live in...and the indifference of all those people they think are their friends.

Reader4  
2 hours ago  
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Finaleofseem: Couldn't agree more with your thoughts. The downturn will allow us to trim positions that add little to the quality of teaching, and sometimes make people's lives difficult. Look at the Provost's office, for instance. A highly-paid staff of 16 that includes all sorts of dead wood, including people whose jobs are '...line officer intermediate between the College Deans and the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in areas of designated responsibility...'? Or look at a College, like CLAS, which has 2 assistants, a secretary, and which -- believe it or not -- recently added a highly-paid associate dean to the administrative staff. We are broke, and need to preserve teaching positions when the harsh cuts come.

Harley\_Lady1  
2 hours ago

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Yes CLAS has 2 assistants but it is the biggest college on campus. One person can not do that job. Also, as you call the highly-paid associate dean, since the CLAS is the largest college then probably all three colleges combined together there is more work to be done. I agree there is a lot of dead wood but we need to be realistic here. They need to stop giving raises of \$11,000 - 12,000. Morale is at a record low at UIS.

finaleofseem  
1 hour ago

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Reader4: you are spot on. I, too, remain concerned about the quality of teaching and those who engage in it (faculty) and those who support it most directly (the brunt of civil service, and professionals such as those within the UIS Center for Teaching and Learning). Rather than be blue about it, I see an opportunity to promote NGOs/nonprofit organizations that can qualify for grants/resources for specific campuses rather than depend on the UI Foundation/traditional alumni efforts/the grant writing that faculty and A/P regularly are active in. If Teach for America can be a successful independent movement, so can something like this.

BMUS  
51 minutes ago

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No unions- I'm still waiting for the name of your business. I doubt you really own one. But just in case you do, is it in some kind of magic bubble? What do you suppose will happen to Springfield's economy when wages tank? People with no insurance and low wages don't spend money on non-essentials. By the way, how many of your supposed employees get some sort of government assistance? How many of them don't get married so their kids get A DC. Doesn't that make you part of the problem?

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