

**APRIL 27,
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**Send a Letter
to the Editor**

The Platte Institute

PLATTE CHAT

UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC SECTOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES IN TRYING ECONOMIC TIMES

By David J. Kramer

To read the full 10-page commentary, please [CLICK HERE](#). The following is the lead paragraph and statistics from the full commentary:

How times have changed for the State of Nebraska and its political subdivisions. After years of enjoying increased revenue without having to adjust the tax levy, political subdivisions are coming face to face with a new reality: shrinking revenue and rising costs. If there was any doubt about the widespread impact of this situation, the Associated Press named the state government's financial problems "caused by Nebraska's economic headaches" as the top Nebraska story of 2009. Many political subdivisions have already taken initial tightening measures. The State of Nebraska ("State") cut \$334.3 million in its November special session. Even with these cuts, the State is faced with the prospect of an additional \$128 million shortfall by July of 2011. The gap jumps to \$679 million for the entire next biennium budget.

AVERAGE COMPENSATION, 2009

strongly believes in the importance of citizens participating in the public dialogue on issues important to Nebraska. Writing a letter to the editor is an outstanding way to partake in the discussion and have your voice heard by thousands of people. To make the process easier, the Platte Institute has assembled a list of links which allow you to submit a letter to the editor to nearly all Nebraska newspapers. Simply [CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of the newspapers and follow the appropriate link to submit your letter.

Contact Us

If you would like to contact someone at the Platte Institute, you are always welcome to give us a call, drop us an email or stop by the office. Our telephone number is 402.452.3737. We are located at 10050 Regency Circle – Suite 120 – in Omaha. Below is a list of staff email address:

John S. McCollister
Executive Director
john.mccollister@platteinstitute.org

Anne Duda
Senior Policy Analyst

Dollars per Hour Worked			
	State & Local	Private Sector	Ratio
Total Compensation	\$39.66	\$27.42	1.45
Wages & Salaries	\$26.01	\$19.39	1.34
Benefits	\$13.65	\$8.02	1.70
Paid Leave	\$3.27	\$1.85	1.77
Supplemental Pay	\$0.34	\$0.83	0.41
Health Insurance	\$4.34	\$1.99	2.18
Defined-Benefit Pension	\$2.85	\$0.41	6.95
Defined-Contribution Pension	\$0.31	\$0.53	0.58
Other Benefits	\$2.53	\$2.40	1.05

SHARE OF EMPLOYEES OFFERED BENEFITS, 2009

	State & Local Governments	Private Sector
Health Insurance	88%	71%
Retirement Benefits	90%	67%
Life Insurance	80%	59%
Paid Sick Leave	89%	61%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data for June, 2009.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data for March, 2009.

Editor's Note: In 2009, the Platte Institute released a pair of commentaries calling for either the overhaul of the Commission of Industrial Relations or the complete elimination of the CIR. The Platte Institute's still stands by its position that reformation or elimination of the CIR is an important step for the future economic prosperity of Nebraska. You can download a copy of the commentary calling for [CIR reform HERE](#) or a copy of the commentary calling for the [elimination of the CIR HERE](#).

[anne.duda](mailto:anne.duda@platteinstitute.org)
[@platteinstitute.org](mailto:anne.duda@platteinstitute.org)

Kimberly Stephenson
Development Director
[kims](mailto:kims@platteinstitute.org)
[@platteinstitute.org](mailto:kims@platteinstitute.org)

Berk Brown
Director of
Communications
[berk.brown](mailto:berk.brown@platteinstitute.org)
[@platteinstitute.org](mailto:berk.brown@platteinstitute.org)

www.platteinstitute.org

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