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MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2005

DAILY HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE

## Community college faculty left out of pay raise bill

**BOSTON (AP)** — Community college faculty were stunned to learn they weren't included in a \$29 million package of retroactive pay raises for higher-education employees.

On Wednesday, the state Legislature voted unanimously to fund pay hikes for thousands of clerical workers at state colleges and universities.

But lawmakers didn't act on Gov. Mitt Romney's veto of \$3.78 million for contracts covering faculty at community colleges.

Romney spokesman Felix Browne said the governor vetoed the money because the state human resources division failed to present him with the contract.

State Rep. Robert DeLeo, D-Winthrop, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said it would have been illegal to fund the contracts because Romney "correctly pointed out that there was no signed contract relative to community colleges."

The Massachusetts Community College Council, which represents about 2,000 faculty members, hopes it can persuade lawmakers to set aside funding for the raises.

"There is a lot of frustration after so much work and effort," said Marilyn Yeo, vice president of the Middlesex Community College Faculty Association. "This has basically fallen through the cracks. People were pretty optimistic going into it, and it hit some people pretty hard."

Some legislators had assumed the pay raises for community college faculty, which date back to April 2003, were included in the measure they approved.

"When we left that building, we were pretty much sure that we had overridden the governor," said state Rep. John J. Binienda, D-Worcester.

James Eisenberg, DeLeo's chief of staff, said the Ways and Means chairman supports the raises.

"We would urge the governor to sign those contracts, and then we would go ahead and fund them," Eisenberg said. "This is something that we want to do. This is something that we feel is deserved."