Plant closing legislation

Cities deserve an advance warning

The people of California, through state laws, already require advance notification for mortgage foreclosures and eviction of tenants. Protection against the sudden loss of a job is just as vital as protection against the sudden loss of a roof over one's head.

After a plant closure, most workers never regain their seniority, their former pay level, or their sense of self-esteem in their long and frequently unsuccessful search for new skilled jobs. It takes time to learn a new skill, and particularly those with families to support often cannot afford major retraining.

Corporations and government must cooperate in providing income maintenance and educational assistance for workers to retrain, as is done in Sweden, West Germany, and Japan, or along the lines of the GI Bill of Rights in our own country.

But the essential prerequisite to any kind of retraining initiative is advance notification; workers and communities need a long time to plan for their futures before the devastation of unemployment strikes. This crucial step can only be achieved by the passage of AB 2839.

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