

State offers pay hikes

ALBANY, N.Y. AP—New York's 107,000 low-ranking unionized employees would receive pay raises ranging from 32 to 50 percent over three years under a tentative contract agreement reached Saturday with the Civil Service Employees Association.

At a news conference, the union president, William McGowan, and the director of the governor's Office of Employee Relations, Meyer Frucher, said the deal would cost the state an extra \$48 million in the fiscal year that begins April 1.

Workers are to receive raises of 10 percent in each of the next three years, a compound total of 32 percent. In addition, the system of merit pay raises in the contract that expires March 31 is

replaced by longevity raises which will give some employees a substantially bigger increase of up to 50 percent, union officials said.

But the union — in a bargaining session that ended at 4:30 a.m. Saturday — made a substantial concession by allowing the state to "lag" paychecks. Pay days will be pushed back one day every two weeks during the first year of the contract, meaning that in the first year, employees can expect to receive only 5 percent more money.

Union officials said the average CSEA worker now makes \$11,300 a year. The union represents clerical workers, workers in state institutions and "operational" employees such as maintenance workers.