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# Staffordshire Branch

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Press Release – For Immediate Release

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## **Staffordshire Branch of UNISON Joins the March for the Alternative on 26th March 2010**

Two coaches of Staffordshire Branch of UNISON members and their families will be joining over 100,000 protestors at March for the alternative which will take place in London on Saturday 26th March.

The march is being co-ordinated by the TUC as a response to the government's drastic austerity measures which are resulting in the demolition of the UK's public services.

In Staffordshire the government's measures are resulting in Staffordshire County Council making savings of £75m by 2013. UNISON reports that they are seeing this being played out in a constant stream of restructures and redundancies, with members having to continually apply for their jobs. Consequently we are seeing changes in the range of services delivered to the public and the method of that delivery, moving away from Local Authority provision to services commissioned from private companies answerable to their shareholders and not to local elected representatives (the system we currently have). Private Companies who will be answerable to shareholders for the profit they make from services, all funded by the tax payer.

However our members concerns are much wider than their own workplace, our members are concerned over the effects on the lives of their relatives, friends and communities.

Steve Eley, Staffordshire Branch of UNISON Representative for Local Government workers said: - "Our members have grave concerns over the governments' plans to dismantle the NHS, reduce Policing capacity, Cripple the Connexions Service and dismantle local authorities, selling it to the taxpayer as a financial necessity rather than the ideological Conservative aspiration it is."

Jane Heath, Staffordshire Branch of UNISON said "these cuts are socially unjust and continue to impact on the most vulnerable in our society. We are seeing unprecedented speed of change which does not allow any time to consider what the true impact will be for individuals, their families or their local community. With so many job losses, where will the new jobs come from? How will this impact on our local economy? These are real concerns for our members and their families. Trying to balance the country's economy through high unemployment is not the answer, but with unemployment figures heading for a 17 year high, this appears to be the approach being taken".

The alternative to such severe austerity measures include:-

- Fair taxation including tackling tax avoidance by some of the UK's best known companies
- A "Robin Hood Tax" on the banks
- Policies and Time to let economic growth and full employment raise the tax that will close the deficit.

ENDS.

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**Notes to editors.**

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Coaches will be leaving Stafford White Eagle Club, Riverway, Stafford at 6.30am on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March and a photo call will be taking place from 6.15am – 6.25am

March for the Alternative is organised by the TUC more details available at [www.marchforthealternative.org.uk](http://www.marchforthealternative.org.uk)

Further information on UNISON's alternative budget to tackle the deficit can be found here: [http://www.unison.org.uk/asppresspack/pressrelease\\_view.asp?id=1890](http://www.unison.org.uk/asppresspack/pressrelease_view.asp?id=1890)

Staffordshire Branch of UNISON represents over 7,000 members working in a range of services in Local Government.