



EDDIE A. PEREZ
MAYOR

May 4, 2009

Hon. Calixto Torres
President
Hartford Court of Common Council
550 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06103

RE: Union Concession Talks

Dear Council President Torres:

Enclosed, please find a copy of a letter I sent last week to the presidents of a number of our municipal unions taking them up on their offer to submit suggestions for cost savings to avoid tax increases and layoffs. I have asked the municipal unions to provide specific and detailed proposals that could generate actual savings in the coming fiscal year. I will certainly make you aware of any viable proposals that impact on our budget deliberations to insure any potential cost savings could be realized as we finalize the budget.

I would also like to caution the council that members meeting with representatives of municipal unions to engage in contract negotiations could potentially be violating the Municipal Employees Relations Act (MERA). As you know, I have designated the Human Resources Department as the city's contact for union negotiations. Council is not authorized by statute to conduct collective bargaining negotiations. Further, it has come to my attention that a quorum of the council or one of its committee may have met with union representatives in private to discuss potential contract negotiations. In addition, to the MERA implications the council should take care not violate the provisions of the Freedom of Information laws, which require meetings of the council to be properly noticed. If you need any further clarification of these matters, I urge you to contact the corporation counsel who can provide assistance.

As always, if the council has particular issues or suggestions concerning union negotiations, I would appreciate having those issues raised through you, so they can be discussed with leadership.

Sincerely,

Eddie A. Perez
Mayor

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