



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL

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November 7, 2008

Mayor Michael A. Nutter
215 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Mayor Nutter:

In 2004, Mayor John Street proposed closing a number of fire companies throughout the City. As you recall, the majority of the proposed closures were located within my Councilmanic District. With your help and the help of my other colleagues, we were able to raise a number of serious questions about the proposal and succeeded in saving every company in the City.

Throughout those public hearings, I always recognized that I was not a public safety expert. Indeed, I admitted that it might be appropriate to close some fire companies, but it was impossible for the public to judge without independent data. I believed then as I do now that it would be irresponsible for me to simply accept the word of any Administration that their plan maintained the health and welfare of my constituents. Therefore, I requested that the Administration hire an independent consultant to review the Department's recommendations.

Today, I repeat that request.

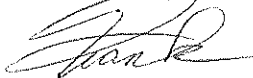
As I expressed to you, yesterday, I recognize that the situation the City faces today is far different than what we faced in 2004. I know that the City faces dire financial circumstances and understand that difficult decisions must be made. I do not and will not question the need for serious service reductions.

However, the reasons behind those service reductions must be based on empirical evidence and should only be accepted after a full review. The need for that review is even more vital when public safety may be affected. To date, very little evidence has been provided to Council or to the public on any recommended cut.

In addition, it is my understanding that in the Firefighters' 2005 arbitration award, there was a provision that provides for this type of independent review prior to the closure of any fire company. This provision is currently before the Supreme Court. At the least, I'd ask that you allow the Court to rule on the matter before moving forward on the latest closures.

In conclusion, I want to work as your partner in this crisis. I stood with you yesterday because you are my friend and because I respect you as my Mayor. I sincerely believe that our fiscal crisis is as much Council's problem as it is yours. Working together, I'm confident we can reach a resolution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank DiCicco', written in a cursive style.

Frank DiCicco
1st District Councilman

cc: All Members of Council