



Committee of Seventy

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March 10, 2010

The Honorable Bill Green
Chair, Labor and Civil Service Committee
Philadelphia City Council
Room 599, City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Bill:

The Committee of Seventy strongly endorses the legislation that will bar elected officials from participating in the city's Deferred Retirement Option Plan. I hope you will accept this letter of support and enter it into the public record.

The Committee of Seventy was the only organization to testify at a May 13, 2008 hearing in favor of a bill you proposed to exclude elected officials from DROP. We argued at that time that the DROP program – which was enacted in 1999 as an incentive to keep experienced employees on the job so the city could cultivate good successors – was not intended to apply to elected officials.

With the passage of the current legislation, the original goal will be accomplished. We commend you for sponsoring the earlier bill and for joining with your colleagues, Maria Quiñones-Sánchez, Curtis Jones, Jr. and Jim Kenney, to spearhead the legislation being considered today. Under the circumstances, there seems no need to appear in person to testify today.

Although this DROP-related issue is about to be resolved, there remains a significant DROP issue to be considered.

The city continues to face enormous budget deficits. According to a just-released actuarial report, the pension board has only 45% of the funds it needs to meet its obligations to retired and current city workers. It will take considerable political courage, but we hope City Council will closely examine the cost and value of the entire DROP program.

Thank you for your work and for allowing the Committee of Seventy to submit this letter.

Sincerely,
Zachary Stalberg
President and CEO