



CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF CHICAGO
COUNCIL CHAMBER
SECOND FLOOR, CITY HALL
TELEPHONE 312-744-6800

October 31, 2011

Mayor Rahm Emanuel
City of Chicago

Dear Mayor Emanuel,

We members of the Chicago City Council, are requesting a meeting with Budget Director Holt and your IGA staff to discuss major concerns we have with the proposed FY2012 budget for the City. We are appreciative of the efforts you and your staff have made to address the dire fiscal situation that we face as a city.

However, some of the proposed budget calls for cuts to essential services that the residents of the City of Chicago rely upon including Libraries, Health Care, and Public Safety. These cuts will have a negative effect on the safety and quality of life of our residents and must be averted.

Library Cuts: Currently, the Chicago Public Library accounts for only three percent of the city's budget however, under the proposed budget more than half of the city layoffs would come from the library system. About 11.6 million people utilized Chicago libraries in the past year. Libraries provide valuable programming for childhood literacy and Internet access for job searches. These drastic cuts would eliminate jobs and services in our communities and undermine the efforts taken to enhance the library system.

Public Health Cuts: Under the current proposal, the City would consolidate 12 mental health clinics into six facilities and transfer duties of closed facilities to privately-operated clinics. Our public clinics offer vital, safety-net services for Chicago's neediest and must be protected. We would like to discuss alternatives to the elimination of these services.

Graffiti Removal: Graffiti removal efforts would be severely impacted by further cuts in this budget. Requests to remove graffiti have increased, and both residents and businesses see graffiti removal as necessity of maintaining a quality of life and a pro-business approach that cannot withstand further reductions.

OEMC Cuts: The OEMC would see a \$10 million reduction in the FY2012 budget. This would eliminate fire and police dispatcher positions, exacerbating public safety operations. A "degradation of service" may not be foreseen by some, but we are concerned that this will have an immediate and negative effect on public safety. The 911 tax for 2012 is projected to generate \$94 million, which should cover the current OEMC funding level of \$61 million, and avert any further cuts to safety personnel and their ability to provide excellent services to the residents and businesses in our city.



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Finally, we also have reservations about the proposed amendments for vehicle sticker pricing. As the proposal exists now, a near doubling of the fee for residents driving vehicles between 4,000 and 4,500 pounds. This would affect many families that rely upon such vehicles to transport their children. We would like to discuss an alternate proposal that would affect drivers more equally. Additionally, we suggest that you consider City Clerk Mendoza's idea to increase the fines for vehicles lacking a city sticker, and encourage more people to come into compliance.

We look forward to discussing the details of these and other issues before the budget is considered for passage. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rob My 22d
J. J. 45 2nd
John Jones 7
Demetrius McClinton 38th
John D. 15th
John Jones 18th
Joseph A. Moore 49th
Robert W. 2nd

Scott Lequy 32
Nickolas Lopez 36th
Mary D'Annunzio 41st
Debra J. 29th
John James 44
James Cappleman 46
John 30

- cc: City Clerk Susana Mendoza
Thomas Byrne, Commissioner, Department of Streets and Sanitation
Dr. Bechara Choucair, Commissioner, Department of Public Health
Mary Dempsey, Commissioner, Chicago Public Library
Alexandra Holt, Director, Office of Budget and Management
Gary Schenkel, Executive Director, Office of Emergency Management and Communications
Matthew Hynes, Director of Legal and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mayor's Office

Ernest H. H. 37th

Ann Thompson 16th

John A. Pope 10th

John J. Thurston 5th

Ray Jessay 31st

Willi J. P. (4)

Bob 20

W. B. 48

Murcell Lewis

Pat Jowell 3rd

Robt J. (6)

Sal Moreno 1st