

Good afternoon! I am Vince Canales, President of Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 89. I stand before you in opposition of CR-047-2009, the Employee Furlough Plan. I have spoken with a few of you regarding possible alternatives and concerns about this year's proposed furloughs.

One alternative to furloughing our members that was presented is:

- Salary lapses as a result of more officers retiring. The County budgeted for approximately seven officers a month to retire. For the month of June, the police department lost approximately 25 officers. We expect this trend to continue over the next several months. This is based on the fact that we currently have over 200 members who can retire by the end of FY2010.

We are concerned that the Council would even take this matter into consideration at this time knowing that we have a case pending in Federal Court and an Unfair Labor Practice filed against the County regarding this year's furloughs. The County has suggested that by starting the furloughs on August 1st it would provide the least negative impact on our collective memberships; but, I would suggest that the sense of urgency by the County is not based on the welfare of its employees.

Another concern is that the Council is looking at a measure such as CR-048-2009, which would transfer \$5.5 million dollars of surplus FY2009 money from the police department to another agency. That \$5.5 million dollars if left within the police department would minimally prevent the laying off of personnel as requested by the County and either eliminate or reduce the number of furlough hours for the police department. Our staffing issues are about to reach critical levels. Retirements, layoffs and furloughs place my members and your constituencies at greater risk of become a victim of crime.

Another matter before the Council that affects other county employees and makes one wonder the logic behind it is CB-004-2009. This bill relates to the proposed move of the Housing Authority to New Carrollton. It would obligate the County to a ten year, one million dollar lease. That one million dollar first year lease provision contains an escalator clause within it that in the final year would require a lease payment of over \$1.2 million dollars. The first year costs do not include moving expenses, build out, and infrastructure, such as telephone and cable. All of these items then make the first year costs well over a million dollars. This is not a necessity when you consider that those dollars could be better utilized to prevent laying off or furloughing any of those employees within Housing.

What are our priorities? I can go on and on! We, within labor, have identified a number of things that should be taken into consideration by the Council before thinking about furloughs. There is no reason that this measure cannot be addressed after the Council's summer recess. The Council should be afforded all the facts and as many alternatives as possible when considering another round of furloughs. You are looking at adversely affecting your employees again with no real end in sight. And, one point that remains the same is that the County is sitting on a Fund Balance of over \$200 million dollars. A portion of which is contained within the Undesignated Fund Balance of over \$20 to \$60 million dollars depending on how the Budget Director chooses to present these numbers.

This Council represents the citizens of the County, of which I am one, and not the Executive. There are so many things that should be discussed but would take much longer than the time I have allotted before you today. I would hope that the Council is interested in knowing all of the facts and open to considering other alternatives. That is why I respectfully ask that today you vote NO on CR-047-2009.