

Court of Common Council



CITY OF HARTFORD

550 Main Street
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06103

January 30, 2009

Hon. rJo Winch
Hon. James Boucher
Hon. Larry Deutch
Hon. Veronica Airey Wilson
Hon. Luis E. Cotto
Hon. Kenneth Kennedy
Hon. Matthew Ritter
Hon. Pedro Segarra

Council Chambers
Court of Common Council
550 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut
06103

RE: Council President

Dear Council Members:

Since I began my two-year term as Council President in January of 2008, I have worked hard to ensure that all members of council have the opportunity to have their ideas and issues addressed through Council and committee meetings. As you know, the time for debate and comment in Council meetings has increased substantially beyond the time that was allotted in previous terms. Further, the time devoted to questioning of officials and information gathering from the administration has increased considerably. Accountability has increased and I believe we are playing a more active role in governing than any previous council. Not all members get everything they want, but all have the right to speak their mind.

In this context, I was deeply troubled by the action by three Council members to call for a special meeting to discuss my possible replacement as Council President before the end of my two-year term. I was particularly concerned that there were implications by some that this might be necessary as a result of the disappointing news of the Mayor's arrest. As you know, in no way have I been connected with the criminal proceedings surrounding the investigation of the administration.

I have never been asked to appear before the Grand Juror investigating city government nor was there any reference to me in the recently released documents by the Chief State's Attorney's Office. This makes the claim of need for change based on the investigation particularly offensive.

In my decades of public service as a teacher, a city government manager and non-profit executive, I have led with integrity and concern for the public good. My peers have recognized me as a leader in city management, electing me a regional vice president for the International City and County Management Association. During this time of uncertainty in city government administration, I believe my experience is particularly relevant to the challenges ahead.

I will continue to serve as Council President until the end of my term. I will also continue to work with all members of the Council who are willing to put the needs of the people of Hartford ahead of personal and political agendas. However, if there are those who would like to convene a special meeting to conduct a hearing on my leadership, I stand ready to have a public and robust discussion based on facts and the real needs of the people of Hartford.

Thank You for your support.

Sincerely,


Calixto Torres
Council President