



From: NJLM - Municipal Clerks [mailto:njlm-clerks@cityconnections.com]
Sent: Friday, November 14, 2008 4:13 PM
To: Lashway, Lisa
Subject: Municipal Clerks from NJLM

LEAGUE ALERT

Municipal Clerk: Please forward to Mayor and Governing Body.

November 14, 2008

**Re: I Volunteers Needed for Community
Emergency Response Teams**

**Re: II A-2243 (Time Limits on Mediation and
Fact Finding)**

Re: I Volunteers Needed for Community Emergency Response Teams

Dear Mayor:

Across the nation and here in New Jersey, our communities are giving top priority to the tasks of planning and preparing for potential threats from acts of terrorism. In any emergency, whether resulting from a natural disaster, crime, or terrorist-related act, local government resources will be the first responders as well as the first line of defense.

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide emergency services will not be able to meet every demand placed on them. Factors such as the number of victims, communication failures and roadblocks may prevent people from accessing the types of service they have come to expect at a moments notice through the 911 service. People will have to rely on each other for help to meet their immediate needs until professional emergency responders can reach them.

In his 2002 State of the Union address, President George W. Bush placed renewed emphasis on the Citizen Corps initiative, a component of the USA Freedom Corps, and asked that Americans volunteer their services to help safeguard our country, our communities, their families, and themselves. Citizen Corps is managed at the state and local level by Citizen Corps Councils that are in various stages of development at this time. As such, the New Jersey Citizen Corps Council has been established to coordinate the activities of the Citizen Corps Program in New Jersey with current emphasis on the creation of Local Citizen Corps Councils and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT).

CERT is a program designed to produce organized teams that will be capable of assisting their communities in times of disaster. Every county has assigned a member of their Office of Emergency Management as their CERT Coordinator. At present, New Jersey has over 15,000 CERT volunteers, more than any other state in the country.

As proactive first responders and public servants, New Jersey Citizen Corps is respectfully requesting your municipalities support the enhancement of CERT membership and boost public awareness. With that said, New Jersey Citizen Corps would like to take this opportunity to create an open call to CERT service. If you, or anyone in your municipality is interested in becoming a CERT Team member, please contact the New Jersey Citizen Corps Council at: 609-963-6900 ext. 6995 for further information and or CERT training registration.

Thank you for your time regarding this matter. Together, we can and will make a difference.

Sincerely,

Lieutenant Colonel Jerome Hatfield
Dressel, Jr.
Deputy Superintendent
New Jersey State Police
Homeland Security Branch

William G.
Executive Director

Re: II A-2243 (Time Limits on Mediation and Fact Finding)

Dear Mayor:

We have learned that the Assembly plans to vote on A-2243 on Monday. We oppose this legislation, which would place 60 day limits on the mediation and fact-finding phases of police and fire contract arbitration. It would also require an arbitrator or panel of arbitrators to issue an award within 120 days of selection or assignment, which limit could only be extended by 90 days, by mutual consent of the parties.

Though we can see a benefit in enforcing the time limit on the arbitrator at the end of the process, we cannot support the proposed limits on mediation and fact-finding at the beginning. Those limits place an emphasis on timely resolution of disputes, at the possible expense of the interests of our property taxpayers. They would limit the ability of an arbitrator to use time as a tool to encourage negotiation and compromise on important aspects of a settlement. And they could compromise the fact-finding process, limit the ability of both parties to digest the results of that process, and lead to the inclusion of

mutually disagreeable provisions in the final settlement.

Given the low percentage of cases that are ultimately resolved by a binding interest arbitration award, we see no need to advance these changes at this time. Accordingly, we oppose A-2243.

We urge you to contact your Representatives in the General Assembly. Ask that they consider your opinion of this legislation.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

William G. Dressel, Jr.
Executive Director

NJLM

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