



April 28, 2009

**CITY OF HARTFORD
COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL
550 Main Street, Room 208
Hartford, CT 06103**

Re: Statement on Proposed City Budget for FY 2009 - 2010

President Torres and Council Members;

My name is Richard Rodriguez. I am a Hartford Police Officer and President of the Hartford Police Union. Tonight I present this statement to you on behalf of the Hartford Public Services Coalition, with the support and solidarity of the Coalition's members and union leaders.

We are a new and growing coalition of public service workers that wants to work with elected officials, community leaders and the private sector to turn things around in Hartford by making sure we have the highest quality public services.

Our coalition wants to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. Hartford public service workers have sacrificed before to protect public services and if we are to shoulder and share sacrifice, that sacrifice will only be made if we are part of a comprehensive solution that creates a menu of options that makes laying off workers the last option, not the first; to make things better, not worse, for the people of Hartford.

The Hartford Public Services coalition believes it is irresponsible to continue balancing the city budget by cutting vital services without regard for the impact on residents, property owners, renters and businesses. It is equally irresponsible to lay off public service workers as the only option to achieve savings.

Our goal is to sit and work with elected leaders, along with small businesses, community advocates, and other stakeholders to:

- Identify waste and inefficiencies before cutting services that impact residents and businesses at the neighborhood and community level;
- Create a menu of options that would ensure that layoffs are the last option, not the first;
- Make sure the City budget utilizes long-term revenues for long-term costs and short-term revenues for short-term costs;
- Ensure the city's public service workers have a voice in their future that would allow for labor peace; and

Hartford Public Services Coalition

- Lobby jointly with our elected officials at every level of our government for desperately needed municipal aid, improved healthcare options, and our fair share of federal stimulus dollars.

We respectfully ask our city government to allow us the opportunity to exchange, examine and explore ideas for saving money with you. We have ideas for cutting waste, improving efficiency and improving the revenue stream.

In these tough economic times the people and businesses of Hartford need the public services our members supply the most. Let's work together in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

Thank you for hearing our voice on this critical matter.

Richard Rodriguez

President, Hartford Police Union

The Hartford Public Services coalition's member unions are:

- *City of Hartford Professional Employees Association, CSEA SEIU Local 2001*
- *Council 4 AFSCME Local 1716*
- *Hartford Municipal Employees Association*
- *Hartford Police Union*
- *Hartford School Crossing Guards Association*