

March 6, 2009

VIA FACSIMILE & FIRST CLASS MAIL

Robert Doar
Commissioner
Department of Social Services/Human Resources Administration
180 Water Street
New York, NY 10038

Dear Commissioner Doar:

Thank you for testifying at the hearing of the General Welfare Committee on February 25, 2009, regarding proposals to assist Job Training Participants (JTPs) with finding permanent employment. We write to follow up on a number of issues raised at the hearing about which we would appreciate additional information.

Please provide the Committee with your response and evaluation of the portion of DC 37's White Paper, "Massive Waste: An Examination of New York City's Contracting Out of Public Services with Recommendations for Savings," that refers to JTPs (page 16 of the report). Please respond to the union's suggestion that the City would save \$14.3 million by terminating custodial and cleaning contracts and replacing those workers with JTPs.

- Do you agree with DC 37's analysis? If not, why not?
- In your view, what are the barriers to their proposal?
- Do you agree that contracting out these services to private vendors is more expensive than placing JTPs in these positions? If not, why not?

How much does each JTP position cost the city (including associated administrative costs, equipment, etc.)?

How much does the City spend on an individual who receives public assistance, including food stamps and Medicaid?

Could any of the federal stimulus funding be utilized to expand the JTP program or locate permanent jobs for public assistance recipients? If so, how much and how specifically would it be utilized?

In your testimony, you said you did not know how many JTPs who cannot find permanent employment revert to welfare, and you offered to find out either through existing figures or some type of study. Please provide the Committee with any data you currently have and your efforts to find out this information if it does not currently exist.

According to figures from the Parks Department, approximately 42% of JTPs found permanent job placements.

- Of this percentage, how many were seasonal placements?

According to your testimony, over 80,000 public assistance recipients were placed into jobs in 2008.

- How many of those have returned to welfare after 6 months?
- How many of those still receive public assistance?
- How many of those found jobs through searches they did independent of any HRA programs?

How many JTPs in the Department of Sanitation find permanent jobs after completing the six-month JTP training?

Are there any permanent positions available for JTPs within the Parks Department or Sanitation?

Of the current cash assistance population, how many are eligible to participate in the JTP program?

Please provide the Committee with a list of custodial contracts within HRA and when they will be up for renewal.

As discussed in the hearing, the Mayor's November 2008 Financial Plan indicates that DCAS will terminate building management contracts at 100 Gold Street and 80 Centre Street and will hire staff to clean and maintain the buildings. I reiterate my requests 1) that you contact DCAS about these contracts to determine whether there are positions that can be used for JTPs, and 2) that the contracts not be otherwise renewed or those positions filled while this possibility is under consideration. Please update the

Committee on these efforts. I am also writing a letter to you and Commissioner Hirst under separate cover.

As discussed at the hearing, we would like to continue discussions with you about the matters raised at the hearing, and would like to arrange an initial meeting to include Councilmember James, Chair of the Contracts Committee, in the next few weeks. Specifically, we wish to examine ways to achieve cost savings while helping public assistance recipients find permanent jobs, and the broader issue of when contracting out is or is not advisable. Please provide dates that you are available in March, so we can schedule a meeting to begin this process and to determine a more formal process for addressing these issues in the future.

You may address your responses to these questions to Molly Murphy, Counsel, New York City Council, Governmental Affairs Division, 250 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10007. If you have any questions, Ms. Murphy may be reached by phone at (212) 788-9111. Thank you for your anticipated prompt response to these questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill de Blasio". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bill de Blasio
Chair, Committee on General Welfare
New York City Council

cc: Councilmember Letitia James, Chair, Contracts Committee, New York City
Council
Committee on General Welfare
Rob Newman, Legislative Director, New York City Council
Massiel Garcia, Legislative Representative, Office of the Mayor