

April 3, 2016

Dear Fellow East Siders:

As baseball returns today, this week's letter discusses two national issues that affect our City, namely equity and diversity in City employment, and water quality in public schools.

Measuring Equity and Diversity in the City's Workforce

Over the past year, the Providence Journal published the [Race in Rhode Island](#) series, noting gaps in opportunities for members of different racial and ethnic communities. The reports also highlighted disparities in the composition of public employees and the people they serve, beginning with the police force and classrooms. In other cities such as Boston, the government produces [workforce reports](#) presenting the composition of the workforce in City departments. Based on these data, other cities develop employment equity plans containing long-term goals and action steps to reach those goals. Here in Providence, we lack the data to assess progress or set goals. With that in mind, I introduced a resolution for this Thursday's City Council meeting to establish a study commission that will prepare a baseline report regarding racial and gender equity in the City's workforce.



Please join me on **this Wednesday, April 6, 2016 at 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Ristorante Pizzico, 782 Hope Street** to support my work and to discuss our City's future. For more information, [click here](#).

Measuring Water Quality In Our Public Schools

The recent public water crisis in Flint, Michigan, reminded us that children face the greatest risks from lead poisoning. Last week, [the New York Times](#) reported unsafe lead levels in the drinking water in public school districts from Newark to Los Angeles. We know that the Providence Water Supply Board regularly tests for lead and other contaminants in its water mains; however, the Water Supply Board does not test the water inside buildings, which can be affected by indoor plumbing. In Providence, several school buildings were built before the recent awareness of this issue. The City does not have any data indicating that there is a problem inside any school; however, it is not clear when the most recent test was conducted. As a result, I introduced a resolution as part of this Thursday's docket requesting the Education Committee investigate the question of water quality inside the Providence Public Schools, collect data and make any appropriate recommendations. Our children are too valuable a resource to do anything less.

Sincerely,