

COUNCILMAN  
SAMUEL D. ZURIER  
55 DORRANCE STREET, SUITE 400  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903  
EMAIL: sdz@om-rilaw.com  
Office: (401) 861-2900 ext. 105



#### COMMITTEES

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## City of Providence, Rhode Island

September 30, 2011

Stephen M. Pare  
Commissioner, Public Safety  
City of Providence  
325 Washington Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Commissioner Pare:

Last evening, parents across the City were informed that school on Monday would be delayed for two hours to accommodate traffic safety concerns related to the "Get Motivated" event taking place at the Convention Center. While I hope this event is successful, we will pay a price by depriving our children of two hours of school. Based on the fiscal notes attached to the recently approved teachers' contract, we can calculate that Monday's event will cost us more than a quarter of a million dollars of instruction time we paid for. More generally, our children need every minute of instruction time they can get, given the challenges our schools face in training our children to reach a level of proficiency as measured by the State's assessment system. Our schools already provide essentially the minimum amount of instruction time permitted under State regulations; therefore, the late start of school next Monday may have consequences with the State.

Parents have contacted me to question the wisdom of scheduling this event to conflict with normal school operations in the first place. I do not know if this is something the Public Safety office can control, but I believe that if we had begun planning for this event sooner, the School Department could have found a better alternative such as, for example, designating next Monday for one of its "professional development days" when children do not attend school. With that in mind, I would appreciate your answering the following questions:

- (1) What was the City's role in approving and/or regulating this event?
- (2) When did the City first review the issues raised by this event with the School Department?
- (3) What procedures (if any) can the City implement to avoid this from re-occurring?

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,  
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sam D. Zurier", is written over the word "Sincerely".