



City of Boston, Massachusetts

Office of the Mayor

MICHELLE WU

July 17, 2023

Boston City Council
1 City Hall Square, Suite 550
Boston, MA 02201-2043

Dear City Councilors:

I am writing this letter in regard to the FY 2024 budget that has taken effect. Specifically, I am informing the Council that the funds intended in an override vote to increase salaries for one labor union through an intra-departmental shift will not be used for that purpose. That purpose violates the City Charter because it inserts the Council into collective bargaining negotiations.

Section 17G of the Boston City Charter prohibits the Council from participating in labor matters and the making of contracts. State law - M.G.L. ch. 150E - is equally clear that third parties are excluded from participating in that bargaining process.

The \$584,896 that the Council voted for in this veto override represents the exact sum that the Municipal Police Patrolmen's Association (MPPA) has requested in the salary benchmarking negotiations between the City and the Union. Both the City and the Union agree that MPPA salaries should be adjusted, but the parties have yet to reach agreement on the size of the increase.

There is no other interpretation of this override vote than as a directive from the City Council to the Administration to adopt the MPPA's specific salary increase demands in bargaining, which is a clear cut violation of the City Charter and state law. I am grateful for my colleagues' impulse to advocate for our City workers, but the Council cannot use the budget-making process to dictate collective bargaining, especially when it has a role in voting to appropriate funds for settled contracts after negotiations are completed.

My Administration is dedicated to reaching a fair deal with all our municipal unions. All of our labor partners deserve the fairness and respect that comes with a settled contract, and we must follow the proper processes to carry out collective bargaining to reach these contracts. I look forward to your support on any supplemental appropriations to fund future agreements.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston