

**Council 4 AFSCME Testimony – February 22, 2012 – Planning and Development Committee**

**HB 5035, AN ACT REDUCING MANDATES FOR MUNICIPALITIES.**

Good morning Chairman Gentile, Chairman Cassano and members of the Planning and Development Committee. My name is Brian Anderson. I am a legislative representative of Council 4 AFSCME. Our union represents nearly 16,000 state employees. I am here to speak against section 1 of HB5035.

This bill revokes much of the shielding protection of the home addresses of correction employees, state police officers, judicial employees, DCF employees and others. We support leaving the current law as it is. However, we do recognize that a recent state supreme court decision and its perceived economic impact has had the result of frightening the banking, real estate and mortgage industries and municipal government associations into seeking revocation or a severe weakening of the shielding law. We also recognize that there are better and worse versions of a language change under consideration and that one offers more protection to our members than the other. It is our duty to indicate to you the preferred language.

The preferred language:

- 1) states that the public agency employer is prohibited from releasing home addresses of its employees or their personnel, medical or similar files
- 2) states that protected employee must "opt in," i.e., give written notice to public agencies that residential address should not be disclosed.
  - a. If public agency receives FOI request that specifically identifies a protected employee who has opted in, then the agency must redact residential address before disclosing requested document.
  - b. If an agency receives an FOI request to prepare a list, and the agency chooses to compile that list, the agency will make a reasonable effort to redact residential addresses of opted in employees before releasing such a request.

- c. If an agency receives an FOI request for an existing list that is derived from a readily accessible electronic database, the agency will make a reasonable effort to redact residential addresses of opted in employees before releasing.
- 3) The Department of Labor will create a guide that informs protected employees how to exercise their rights under the law and otherwise protect their addresses from disclosure.
- 4) A legislative task force will consider whether and how to protect addresses from disclosure when they are part of land records, grand lists and voter registry lists.

Another of our speakers can tell in greater detail why such protection is vital to correction and other public employees. I would be happy to answer any questions.