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CITY COUNCIL

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November 14, 2008

The Honorable Michael A. Nutter  
Mayor  
City of Philadelphia  
City Hall, Room 215  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

**SUBJECT: Budget Deficit**

Dear Mayor Nutter,

The current economic contraction is the worst we've experienced in decades. However, Philadelphia—over centuries—has demonstrated remarkable strength and resilience in difficult times. We have done so by knowing who we are—and who we want to be—staying true to our values and moving forward with our long-term ambitions, by shepherding our resources and thoughtfully exploiting change.

We will do so again, with vision, commitment, and leadership—transformational leadership.

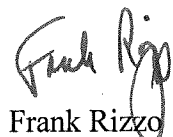
Your response to the budget deficit includes cuts to important services that save lives, shape lives, and ensure our future. If we want to be a green, growing, great city, then it's fine to promote sustainability and bikes. That's what strategic decision-making is about. But, not while cutting important services.

Even "non-discretionary" departments, such as the Department of Human Services, should be subject to review for management efficiencies that can produce cost savings. A \$1 Billion shortfall over 5 years for a City with a \$4 Billion annual budget is a gap of 5%. That's not insurmountable. And, certainly a City department like DHS, with an annual budget of \$616 Million, which is 15.28% of the City budget, cannot be "off the table." Efficiencies can be found everywhere. Before we cut fire companies, library branches, pools, snow removal, and leaf collection, we must exhaust the search for such efficiencies.

The economy will rebound; it always does. Let's not take unnecessary measures that will have lasting negative consequences. I ask that you re-double your efforts to find management efficiencies in lieu of cuts to important services that affect the quality of life in our communities.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Frank Rizzo