



# CITY OF PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL

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March 9, 2010

Council President Anna Verna  
City Hall, Room 490  
Philadelphia PA 19107

Dear President Verna,

I am writing to inform you that this Thursday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, I will introduce legislation to protect Philadelphia's ethnic Parades and Festivals, from the excessive charges they are being sent for City services.

Starting in 2009, the administration began charging these non-profit community events for services that for decades had previously been provided at little or no cost. The fees charged by the City are routinely in the **tens of thousands of dollars**. Frequently, these City service costs eclipse the entire budget of the event. The result is that many of these events are deeply in debt to the City, and without relief many of these important Philadelphia traditions will not be able to continue.

In spite of the best efforts of Council, frequent meetings on the subject, and repeated promises by the administration to address this issue and lower costs, the **St. Patricks Day Parade was recently sent a bill for \$40,000 for this year's parade. An \$8,000 increase from last year.** They have been informed that unless they make a \$30,000 payment to the City this week, they will not be issued a permit and this important and economically significant event may face cancellation.

I believe that Council must take action to ensure these great events continue and that the economic activity they generate is preserved. Given the failure of the administration to address this I feel we have no choice but to take legislative action. I will circulate legislation tomorrow setting reasonable limits on the amount the City can charge these organizations for services. I ask that you consider co-sponsorship of this bill, and I hope we can move it quickly through the legislative process.

Respectfully,

Maria D. Quinones Sanchez  
Councilwoman, 7<sup>th</sup> district