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February 24, 2011

**Via Hand Delivery**

Honorable Larry Suffredin  
Chair, Rules & Administration Committee  
Cook County Board Commissioners,  
118 N. Clark Street, Room 567  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Re: Proposed Amendment to the *Human Resources Ordinance*

Dear Commissioner Suffredin:

This letter is written to respectfully request your consideration for the following proposed amendment to the proposed ordinance Section 44-57, Prohibition on Employment, an ordinance establishing a prohibition on the hiring of any person who receives publicly funded pension payments in excess of \$39,999 per year. The proposed ordinance is scheduled to be considered by the Rules and Administration Committee on February 28, 2011.

The proposed ordinance states that:

Sec. 44-57. Prohibition on employment.

(a). Notwithstanding the provisions of section 44-53 of the Cook County Code with regards to "source of income," no person shall be employed by the County of Cook who is a current retiree of another unit of government and receiving publicly funded pension payments in excess of \$39,999 per year. The provisions of this section apply to retirees of all the following government agencies:

- (1) United States Federal Government;
- (2) Any State or territory of the United States; and
- (3) Any political sub-division of any State or territory of the United States.

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Please note that, as written, I believe that the proposed ordinance would have a negative impact on the ability of the Office of the Independent Inspector General (OIIG) and other similarly situated government departments to retain and attract certain employees who have developed a specialized work experience while



employed by other governmental agencies. In many cases, such as law enforcement positions, employees typically acquire relevant experience and an ability to develop that experience from prior governmental employment. Cook County government and the OIIG in particular has been very fortunate to have drawn from the ranks of former law enforcement officials who had the opportunity to develop their skills and specialized training during years of service in other agencies.

For example, the Deputy Inspector General of the OIIG was hired after 25 years of federal law enforcement service in the FBI and 5 additional years with Homeland Security. Another investigator recently hired by the OIIG served 30 years in federal law enforcement including 20 years in the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS). Both of these individuals served in supervisory roles and bring a remarkable level of expertise to the OIIG that is unique to former government service. Both of these individuals are also retirees of the Federal Government. Additionally, should the OIIG be restricted from considering applicants from similar backgrounds, the capacity of this office will be negatively affected and Cook County government will lose the benefits from the service of individuals possessing such credentials.

We appreciate the public policy rationale supporting the proposed ordinance and only recommend that circumstances as identified above be avoided for the benefit of the government and the people we serve. Accordingly, we respectfully propose the following for your consideration as an amendment to the proposed section 44-57.

Proposed Amendment Section (e) For purposes of the provisions of this section, a waiver may be granted for Cook County employment when specialized training and experience in government service is sought. Such a waiver may be granted by application to *{insert BHR Chief or Cook County Board of Commissioners}*

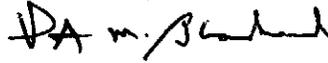
Alternatively, I respectfully request that the Committee and ultimately the Board of Commissioners exempt the OIIG entirely from section 44-57. Such an exemption is supported by the OIIG enabling ordinance, wherein it states:

Section 2-284(12) The Independent Inspector General shall have, subject to budgetary allocation by the County Board, *the sole power to appoint, employ, and remove such assistant, employees and personnel* and establish personnel procedures as deemed necessary for the efficient administration of the OIIG. (emphasis added).

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Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss these issues further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,



Patrick M. Blanchard  
Inspector General  
(312) 603-0364

cc: Honorable Toni Preckwinkle  
Honorable Elizabeth Doody Gorman  
Kurt Summers, Jr., Chief of Staff  
Laura Lechowicz Felicione, Legal Advisor to the President