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Democratic Local Officials Agree... “...(The Arbitration Bill)... Does Not Go Far Enough To Protect Municipalities.”

Monday, October 25, 2010 • Tags: [Bill Action](#)

Democratic Elizabeth Mayor Christian Bollwage, “The Democrats’ Attempt At Reform Does Not Go Far Enough”:

“Democratic Elizabeth Mayor Christian Bollwage is pushing the governor to **veto the arbitration reform bill set to be voted on by the assembly Monday**. The Democrats’ attempt at reform does not go far enough, Bollwage said. **“The problem with (the arbitration bill) is it does not go far enough to protect municipalities,”** Bollwage said in a release. “Instead of asking an arbitrator to consider the cap, they should be required to cap the full economic impact of the award to the same 2% limit.” Bollwage, a frequent critic of the governor, nevertheless finds himself on Christie’s team as the legislature contemplates tax reform. “When Trenton agreed to impose the new 2% cap on local property tax levies, **they committed themselves to enacting serious management reforms and mandate relief initiatives,**” Bollwage said. **“To date they have not done so...”** (Darryl R. Isherwood, “Bollwage urges veto of arbitration bill,” PolitickerNJ, 10/22/2010)

Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., “Assembly Bill 3393 Is Weak And Offers Nothing To Reform This Broken System”:

“Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. said the arbitration reform bill introduced on Thursday, October 21st by the NJ State Assembly was **“weak” and did not go far enough in changing the system to help Counties and Municipalities control costs**. The Executive said binding arbitration is one of the factors that has caused public safety salaries to soar and called upon State lawmakers to strengthen the proposed legislation so that the financial impact and statutory restrictions imposed on local governments have more weight in the decision-making process. In addition, **he asked the Assembly Budget Committee to edit the bill before the full Assembly votes on Monday or scrap the legislation while something meaningful is authored**. “The binding arbitration process is bankrupting New Jersey’s counties and municipalities through the excessive salary increases awarded to the unions by arbitrators. The process has to be eliminated or changed dramatically so a government’s ability to pay without overburdening the taxpayers is the highest priority,” DiVincenzo said. “Assembly Bill 3393 is weak and offers nothing to reform this broken system. **Stronger language is necessary so arbitrators are bound by the 2 percent cap** on property tax levy increases all governments will operate under come January 1st. For true reform, there has to be a clear message of what the priorities are,” he noted...**“Reforming the binding arbitration system is part of Governor Christie’s ‘Tool Kit,’ which I support**. These are important initiatives that counties and municipalities must have to control costs,” DiVincenzo said...“We are going to be in a serious situation if the Tool Kit reforms, especially changes in binding arbitration, are not approved. Labor costs are our most significant expense and we need to have the ability to manage that more efficiently,” he added.” (“Essex County Executive DiVincenzo Proposed Assembly Legislation Does Nothing To Reform Binding Arbitration Process,” The County of Essex, NJ Press Release, 10/22/2010)

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