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## In Case You Missed It: Courier-Post - "Towns should be able to opt out [of the civil service system]."

Thursday, December 9, 2010 • Tags: [Other](#)

On civil service, let towns opt out  
Courier-Post  
December 9, 2010

Christie wants to give the 194 municipalities in New Jersey that adhere to the civil service system for hiring employees the ability to opt out of the system, if the governing body so chooses. Democratic lawmakers are lining up against such a move.

Towns should be able to opt out. What government decisions are there that, once made, can never be changed? Even judges appointed for life can be removed from the bench in certain circumstances. Even the Constitution can be amended.

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Starting Jan. 1, towns face a 2 percent cap on taxing and spending increases. It's a measure designed to put the brakes on property tax hikes that are suffocating homeowners across this state and forcing people to move away.

New Jersey mayors -- Democratic and Republican -- have gone to Trenton and have met with legislators begging them for help in the form of Christie's toolkit bills, including major civil service reform.

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State Senate President Stephen Sweeney, D-Gloucester, poses this argument against such reforms: "We're not going to do an opt-out where the guy on the back of the trash truck has to worry who the mayor is in order to keep his job."

Hmmm. So by that reasoning, there must be a lot of public works guys getting fired every time a new mayor is elected in the 372 New Jersey towns not in the civil service system.

That's not happening.

It's time to let towns make appropriate financial decisions and not be constrained by decisions made generations ago that don't serve the taxpaying public as well in this era.

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[View entire opinion here.](#)

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