

December 15, 2010

Hon. Todd Portune
Hamilton County Commissioner
138 East Court Street, Room 603
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Dear Commissioner Portune:

Your letter of December 9 in response to mine of December 3 seems to miss the point. My concern is that you and your Administration appeared ready to embark on what could charitably be described as an incredible waste of time and energy.

I do not and was not offering to "report" to your Board. I am offering to provide additional detail about our work to help you better understand the services Ohio law requires us to provide and which you are required to fund.

A recent performance audit of the Cuyahoga County Auditor's office by the State Auditor in which we participated as a peer county attests to the productivity of our Weights and Measures Division. In addition, data from all jurisdictions is compiled by the State Department of Agriculture and reflects favorably on our productivity. In other words, extensive information from independent outside sources already exists.

My letter also invited you or your aides to accompany our Chief Inspector in the field to observe and discuss his duties. I suggested this would be the best way to recognize the efficiency of our work and acquaint yourself with the important nature of our responsibilities.

This is pretty basic. We are charged by State law with checking devices to protect consumers and do so to the best of our ability. It is unclear what "other types of services, or manner of their delivery" you expect to discover. There are no "means to recoup" costs under current State law. It does not take a new "study" to learn that.

I appreciate your interest in this important consumer service. I continue to hope it will find a more appropriate place on the list of county budget priorities.

As you know, the reason the County Auditor's office has not had to impose recent layoffs is not the generosity of our annual appropriations but rather the efficiency of our management and staff. Their work and the aggressive use of cross-training when retirements occur have allowed attrition to help us run a very lean operation with next to no layoffs.

We have been able to manage through these meager appropriations for some years but such is no longer the case. In short, we do not have enough Weights and Measures Inspectors today because when they have resigned or retired in recent years they have not been replaced due to the systematic under funding of this office's General Fund supported functions.

Sincerely,



Dusty Rhodes

DR:dr

Cc: Commissioner David Pepper
Commissioner Greg Hartmann
Administrator Patrick Thompson