

Dear Committee Chair Calley and the Local Government Committee –

I understand there will be discussion in the House Local Government Committee tomorrow regarding the above proposed bill to amend Public Act 317 of 1968. This amendment has the potential to impact the City of Mt. Pleasant because we have a population of just over 26,000.

Even though first responders who serve on the elected Commission would not be able to participate in matters related to their collective bargaining agreement, I foresee potential problems if this amendment is passed. In our city, confidential conversations regarding strategy for collective bargaining agreements often have a ripple effect through multiple unions over time. Just because an individual did not participate in the agreement that is covered by their employed position, there is the potential that they could still have information and/or influence strategy for other collective bargaining agreements that eventually may also affect their own bargaining agreement. Additionally, collective bargaining agreements are not the only issues that an elected City Commission would deal with that would directly impact a department that an employee works in. Lastly, since the City Manager is responsible under our City Charter for the hiring, oversight, and termination of all employees; there could be an inherent conflict wherein the employee impacted by a City Manager personnel decision is also one of the elected bosses of the City Manager. That does not make for a good situation.

It seems as if the potential problems created by allowing certain employees to also serve as elected officials for their employer has far greater downsides than any potential benefits and I hope that you do not support this bill.

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