

**2014-
RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE STATE SENATE TO DEFEAT
HOUSE BILL 5485 REGARDING
MINIMUM STAFFING OF LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

WHEREAS, the CITY OF PARK RIDGE (the “City”) is a municipality with over 100 years of self-governance with duly-elected officials and a professional staff charged with representing the best interests of the residents of the City; and

WHEREAS, the decisions regarding local police and fire protection have consistently and historically been solely a function of local governments who are best able to determine their municipalities’ needs and resources and how best to allocate those resources to address their needs; and

WHEREAS, under intense lobbying pressure from the firefighters’ labor union, whose mission is to increase membership and represent the best interests of firefighters, not the residents of the City or any other municipality, the Illinois House of Representatives recently passed House Bill 5485 which would take away from the City and other municipalities the right and responsibility to determine necessary staffing levels for their fire departments; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 5485 effectively usurps the traditional local authority of municipalities to determine the municipalities’ needs, resources and how best to allocate those resources to address those needs; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 5485 would place decisions regarding staffing levels in municipalities’ fire departments in the hands of unelected arbitrators who are not charged with acting in the best interests of the residents of the City or other municipalities; and

WHEREAS, in an era where local municipalities have been forced to tighten their budgets, cut spending and lay off personnel, a law which requires municipalities to hire employees which they have determined they either do not need or cannot afford would put additional strain on already-tight municipal budgets; and

WHEREAS, in the City of Park Ridge, an arbitrary decision to force the City to hire one additional fireman per shift would require, by itself, approximately a 2% increase or more in the City's property tax levy or, alternatively, corresponding spending cuts which could include laying off police and other city employees to the potential detriment of the City's public safety and public infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 5485 represents another unfunded mandate from the Illinois State Government.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Park Ridge, Cook County, Illinois, as follows:

Section 1: The City Council finds that all of the recitals contained above are true and correct, and that the same are hereby incorporated herein by reference.

Section 2: The City Council hereby calls upon the members of the Illinois Senate, including those Senators representing the City of Park Ridge, Senator John Mulroe and Senator Dan Kotowski, to vote NO on House Bill 5485 which would require the City's government to increase property taxes and/or lay off other City employees and reduce City services.

Section 3: All motions and resolutions or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions of this Resolution are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby repealed.

Section 4: If any section, paragraph, clause, or provision of this Resolution shall be held invalid, the invalidity of such section, paragraph, clause, or provision shall not affect any of the other sections, paragraphs, clauses, or provisions of this Resolution.

Section 5: This Resolution shall be in full force and effect upon its adoption.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Park Ridge, Illinois this 21st day of April, A.D., 2014.

VOTE
AYES:
NAYS
ABSENT:

Approved by me this 21st day of April, A.D., 2014

David F. Schmidt, Mayor

Attest:

Betty W. Henneman, City Clerk