

PS COMMITTEE #2
July 21, 2011
Update

MEMORANDUM

July 19, 2011

TO: Public Safety Committee

FROM: Essie McGuire, Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Update – 2011 Fill the Boot Campaign**

Today the Public Safety Committee will have a discussion with Fire Chief Richard Bowers on the planning and implementation process for the 2011 Fill the Boot Campaign. This charitable campaign has traditionally been conducted annually by Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) employees and has been approved by County Executive Order.

Recent Council discussions of Bill 12-11, Ethics – Gifts – County Employees – Roadside Solicitation, raised questions related to implementing the MCFRS Fill the Boot Campaign under current State law. On June 21, the Fire Chief sent a letter to the Council President and each Councilmember confirming his intent that the charitable campaign be conducted consistent with State law. This letter is attached at circles 1-2. The letter also indicates that additional steps will be taken to ensure public awareness and safety.

The 2011 Fill the Boot campaign is scheduled for August 31-September 2, 2011. Council staff understands that the Fire Chief typically issues his General Order regarding the campaign two weeks prior to the event, and anticipates a similar timeframe for doing so again this year. The Committee may want to request that the Council be provided a copy of the order and any other available implementation guidelines when they are finalized prior to the 2011 campaign.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Richard R. Bowers
Fire Chief

June 21, 2011

Honorable Valerie Ervin, President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Sixth Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Re: Bill 12-11

Dear Council President Ervin:

During the discussion on Bill 12-11, I have heard the concerns that you and other Councilmembers have raised in connection with the annual Fill the Boot campaign conducted by our fire fighters, paramedics and EMTs through roadside solicitations. I am writing to inform the Council of some additional steps that I will take in order to address these concerns.

First, I want to emphasize that I do not condone actions by County employees that violate State law. I agree with those on the Council who believe that our public safety employees are role models and should strive to set a good example for our residents.

In order to promote that goal, I will issue a Fire Chief's General Order in connection with the Fill the Boot campaign that includes a clear mandate that roadside solicitations must be undertaken only as permitted by State law.

As with any violation of policy by DFRS personnel, those who violate my General Order would be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

In addition, we will enhance our public relations efforts both prior to and during the Fill the Boot campaign. These efforts will be geared towards providing motorists with additional advance notice of the upcoming campaign and, on the actual days of this effort, better identifying for motorists locations at which fire fighters will be collecting.

Office of the Fire Chief

Honorable Valerie Ervin, President

June 21, 2011

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Lastly, I will intensify coordination with law enforcement to further promote the goals of pedestrian and vehicle safety during the Fill the Boot campaign.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard R. Bowers", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard R. Bowers
Fire Chief

cc: Councilmember Phil Andrews
Councilmember Roger Berliner
Councilmember Marc Elrich
Councilmember Nancy Floreen
Councilmember George Leventhal
Councilmember Nancy Navarro
Councilmember Craig Rice
Councilmember Hans Riemer