

July 20th, 2007

Chief Sherman George  
St. Louis Fire Department  
Headquarters Complex  
1421 N. Jefferson Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63106

Dear Chief George:

I very much respect the job you have done and are doing as Fire Chief. I know you have heard from many people on the issue regarding the promotions for Captain and Battalion Chief. I would like to take a moment to weigh in on the issue.

I understand the dilemma you face. It is my understanding that within your own department there is strong pressure to promote, as well as, to not promote. I believe it is in the best interest of the City that the promotions take place as soon as possible.

Here are my thoughts. After a trial with a great deal of evidence, a Federal judge has ruled that the test does not violate anyone's constitutional rights and that it does test the skills and knowledge needed for a Captain and Battalion Chief. Further, as a matter of fairness, the men and women who worked diligently, prepared for and did well on the test deserve to be promoted. If we now tell them a judge has ruled in favor of the test, but the Department refuses to promote, morale within the Department will plummet. I am concerned that under these circumstances, a great many firefighters would give up trying to advance themselves because they will see it as a waste of time.

I am very proud of the work being done by the men and women of your Department to protect our families and our property. We owe it to them to do the right thing and promote the deserving candidates.

Respectfully yours,

Lewis Reed  
President, Board of Aldermen

LR/mc