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CHARTER REVIEW BOARD

October 18, 2010

St. Petersburg Times Editorial Board
St. Petersburg Times
1000 N Ashley Dr., Suite 104
Tampa, FL 33602

Re: County Mayor Veto Referendum

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Hillsborough County Charter Review Board voted to ask me to write a letter in response to the October 5, 2010 editorial regarding the County Mayor Veto Referendum. The editorial states, "Supporters of the question on the November ballot claim they are merely cleaning up the charter. But the real goal is to take the steam out of any future vote on creating a county mayor". This simply was not the case.

The Charter Review Board began discussion of the mayor veto provision after they were advised that the portion of the provision giving the mayor veto power over the budget was inconsistent with state law and most likely invalid. Some members expressed a concern about having a potentially invalid provision in the County Charter. Another reason expressed by Charter Review Board members to propose the repeal was that it was confusing to have a reference in the Charter to a county mayor although there is no county mayor. A further concern was that the mayor plan that was proposed in 2006, to which this veto power would have applied, was a nonpartisan mayor. The mayor plan that was proposed in 2010 was a partisan mayor. Some Charter Review Board members felt that voters may not want a partisan mayor to have such veto power. For all of these reasons, the Charter Review Board voted to place the referendum on the ballot so that the voters could decide whether or not to keep this provision in the County Charter.

The Charter Review Board spent several meetings discussing and debating this issue where public input was heard. All CRB meetings are publicly noticed and welcome public participation. Furthermore, the minutes of all meetings are available on the County's website at www.Hillsboroughcounty.org/charterreviewboard.

I appreciate you printing this letter in the editorial section of the St. Petersburg Times in the near future to clarify the Board's position and vote.

Sincerely,

Mitchell M. Thrower III, Chairman
Hillsborough County Charter Review Board

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www.hillsboroughcounty.org/charterreviewboard