

**MOTION OF THE COUNCIL OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY**

Requesting that the President of Allegheny County Council appoint a Special Committee, pursuant to Article I, § E2 of the Rules of Council, to address the recent blocking of constituent e-mail to Council by determining if policies and procedures are in place to govern such incidents and to recommend safeguards to ensure that each citizen's right to free speech and right to petition the government is not infringed upon unnecessarily.

**WHEREAS**, earlier this week it was discovered that the e-mail of a constituent was blocked from delivery to any County e-mail address, including those of County Council Members, without any notice or discussion with County Council; and

**WHEREAS**, this resulted in an infringement upon that constituent's ability to communicate freely with his elected officials as well as an infringement upon the right of County Council, an independent body of County government, to receive communications from its constituents; and

**WHEREAS**, County Council was created to represent the diversity of the County's citizens and provide better access to County government; no elected official can provide better access to government or enhance public trust in County government without the ability to communicate with those citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, such serious violations of a citizen's right to petition his or her government is alarming, as is the infringement upon the independence of County Council; these actions require a full inquiry into the circumstances that caused this infringement and answers to additional questions that arise regarding this issue; and

**WHEREAS**, therefore, we recommend the formation of a Special Committee by Council President Fitzgerald to study the concerns and issues raised in this motion and any related items that may arise as part of that process;

**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS MOVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY**, That this Council requests that the President of Allegheny County Council appoint a Special Committee, pursuant to Article I, § E2 of the Rules of Council, to address the recent blocking of constituent e-mail to Council by determining if policies and procedures are in place to govern such incidents and to recommend safeguards to ensure that each citizen's right to free speech and right to petition the government is not infringed upon unnecessarily.

**SPONSORED BY COUNCIL MEMBERS REA, PRICE, GASTGEB, FAWCETT, FRANCIS, SHUMAKER, WATT & CLEARY**

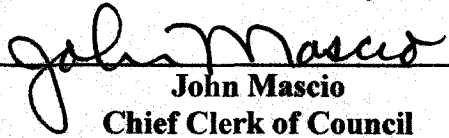
In Council February 15, 2005.

Read and Approved.



**Rich Fitzgerald**  
**President of Council**

Attest:

  
**John Mascio**  
**Chief Clerk of Council**