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Ald. Cavalier Johnson
(414) 286-3591
Ald. Milele A. Coggs
(414) 286-2994

Council approves legislation exploring use of ARPA funding to provide retroactive hazardous duty pay to certain city employees

On Tuesday (July 27th) the full Common Council adopted legislation directing the Department of Employee Relations to study the feasibility of retroactively providing hazard pay using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to city employees in essential critical infrastructure sectors who did not receive C.A.R.E.S. Act-funded hazard pay during a portion of the COVID-19 pandemic.

File #**210537** - co-sponsored by **Alderman Cavalier Johnson** and **Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs** - directs the Department of Employee Relations (DER) to study whether ARPA funds may be used to provide premium pay to eligible workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency. According to the file, workers eligible for premium pay are described as workers who have been and continue to be relied upon to maintain operations of essential critical infrastructure sectors, including those who are critical to protecting the health and wellbeing of their communities.

The resolution requires the DER to submit its findings to the Common Council within 45 days.

Alderman Johnson and Alderwoman Coggs agree that the legislation is needed to examine the important question of whether ARPA funds can be used to help compensate certain city employees. “Many essential city workers faced increased risk in the performance of their duties and were excluded from the additional compensation which was available for public safety and health workers, and it remains imperative that they are compensated for their work,” they said. “We thank our colleagues for their support on this important item.”