



**Massachusetts
Municipal
Association**

60 Temple Place

Boston, Massachusetts 02111 - (617) 426-7272

CAMBRIDGE MA.

February 18, 1987

Dear Local Official:

The Public Service Committee has reported out favorably H-1745, which would reinstate a form of binding arbitration for public safety contracts.

Under the terms of this bill the Joint Labor Management Committee would be empowered to employ binding arbitration to settle police and fire contract disputes under their jurisdiction. The award made by the JLMC would be binding on the executive branch of government but would require town meeting or city council approval before going into effect.

One of the most serious flaws in this bill is the fact that the local executive (mayor, city or town manager, board of selectmen) who best understands the effects a binding arbitration award will have on the community, is prohibited from speaking against the binding arbitration settlement. This means that the executive would not be able to explain to the city council or town meeting what the actual impact of a binding award will have on the community.

The Association has argued that a return to binding arbitration is unnecessary because salaries of public safety officials are above the national average. It is unnecessary because the vast majority of contracts are settled on a timely basis, and finally we have argued that to reimpose binding arbitration would only poison the current collective bargaining atmosphere in Massachusetts and that rather than bringing the parties closer together it would only drive them farther apart.

I urge you to contact your representative and senator at your earliest convenience and inform them of your opposition to this bill.

House Chairman Kevin Blanchette has indicated that this bill is on the "fast track." Please act as soon as you can.

Sincerely,

James W. Segel
Executive Director

JWS/rr

Comm. from James W. Segel, Exec. Dir., Mass.
Municipal Assoc. Re: H-1745, which would re-
instate a form of binding arbitration for
public safety contracts; said comm. in op-
position to the Bill.

In City Council,

March 9, 1987

Placed on File w/
Copy to the City Manager

Copy sent to the City Manager 3/11/87 mch