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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: All House Members**

**FROM: Representative Mike Tobash**

**DATE: June 15, 2011**

**SUBJECT: Co-Sponsorship - Housing Authorities Law: employment contracts and PHA board appointment.**

In the near future, I will introduce legislation to amend the Pennsylvania Housing Authorities Act to limit the use of employment contracts by public housing authorities in Pennsylvania and to provide for housing authority board appointments in Philadelphia. The Pennsylvania Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies supports my bill. Act 145 of 2006 gave public housing authorities the power to enter into employment agreements. Under the law, housing authorities may enter into employment contracts so long as the position is not one covered by a bargaining representative pursuant to Act 195 of 1970 known as the Public Employee Relations Act or part of a bargaining unit created by an order of the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board.

Act 145 has created a situation whereby all housing authorities may enter into employment contracts for professional employees and thereby bypass the Civil Service Commission process. As you know, the Civil Service process is a merit-based employment system that hires, retains and promotes people based on qualifications and ability to perform the job. It ensures that candidates seeking employment and advancement have the skills and qualifications necessary to perform the job required by the public housing authorities. My legislation corrects this oversight by allowing only all non-civil service housing authorities to use the employment contracts.

My bill also requires the mayor of a first class city (Philadelphia) to appoint a nine-member board that serves concurrently with the appointing mayor. Philadelphia is the only municipality in the Commonwealth where the Mayor does not appoint all or a majority of the members of its local housing authority board. Currently, the mayor appoints two of the five members, the Controller appoints two, and these four select the fifth member. Centralization of appointments will promote accountability. Because the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development has taken control of PHA, and the most recent board members have resigned, there is no issue regarding succession of members.

If you would like to co-sponsor the bill, please contact Tya L. Bostwick at 260-6148 or email at [tbostwic@pahousegop.com](mailto:tbostwic@pahousegop.com).