



Executive Chamber, City of Providence, Rhode Island

Vincent A. Cianci, Jr.
MAYOR

May 15, 1980

To The Honorable
The City Council
City of Providence
City Hall
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Honorable Members:

We meet again to follow the prescribed official task of presenting the annual budget message by the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Providence to the Legislative Branch of Government. I begin with this underlining of the shared responsibility that is ours in order to reaffirm the real nature of our governmental process, and also to note for you once again that this budget that I submit to you is but a guideline for our fiscal responsibility for the coming year, and it is now up to you and your Finance Committee to begin deliberation, to ensure that our community continues to be on sound fiscal footing, with continuing commitment to serve our fellow citizens as fully as we can.

Were these ordinary times, without a severe economic recession already beginning to grip our nation and our state, and exorbitant interest rates and severe inflationary rises continuing to tax our citizens beyond their capacities, in

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many cases, we might act differently. But it has been clear for some time now that despite all that we have accomplished here in the City of Providence in increasing our tax base, in revitalizing both our commercial and business centers and our residential neighborhoods, all around us there are serious economic problems that have an impact on our budgeting process here in the City of Providence, whether it be staggering fuel and energy costs, substantive increases in the products that we buy for our community, and the daily costs of doing the City's business with all facets of society.

We have faced these issues squarely, with the courage to continue to serve our citizens in a host of ways through the sound investment of our tax dollars and aggressively sought federal grant monies toward the present and the future of this community. Hundreds of families have watched their homes renewed, their streets paved, their parks rebuilt and rejuvenated, their neighborhoods enriched by the presence of community centers. And with the substantial change in the quality of life in our neighborhoods continuing, so, too, has the investment in our business and commercial centers undergone transformation through a public-private partnership. Indeed, at a time in our nation when others have looked with trepidation at our rising costs in every area of life, we have boldly and wisely continued to change our city for the better.

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Thus, I am extremely proud to announce to you this evening that this budget that I am proposing for fiscal 1980-1981 is a balanced budget once again, with no increase in taxes for our fellow citizens, for the second year in a row; a sound basis for substantial increases in our revenues; as well as highly responsible and thoughtful proposals for increases in expenditures, that will increase our services to our fellow citizens, continue our planned elimination of our deficit, and continue to provide for all who are employed by this capital city, a reasonable increase in wages and benefits, that continue to fall within the guidelines which we were required to adhere to by the President. This budget reaffirms our commitment to the sound fiscal management of our City's resources and to the maximum use of each tax dollar to enhance the quality of life within our community, and it does so without raising taxes once again. With prudent use of our resources and with continuing concern for maintaining our expenditures at appropriate levels, I am confident that we can continue to act in service to our fellow citizens with reason and responsibility.

Specifically, in order to meet the needs of the City of Providence for this next fiscal year of 1980-1981, I present to you a budget totalling \$139,367,077 in revenues, a substantial increase based upon the significant achievement we

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have realized in increasing our tax base, as well as our more aggressive collection of taxes due our community. Our expenditures for this fiscal year will total \$139,365,775. This increase of \$15 million dollars underlines our continuing concern for providing the best possible municipal services in education, in public works, and in all facets of the maintenance and the improvements of our total community's resources. This plan of expenditures includes, as well, a substantial increase in our line item to totally eliminate our inherited deficit over a five year period, and in increasing this line item from \$500,000 to \$1.2 million dollars, we continue to accept the responsibility that we have for ensuring the fiscal soundness of our community.

In serving the young people of our City through significant increases in our budget for education, we again reaffirm our support for our City's public schools and for the need for additional funding to provide the best quality of education that we can for our children. No other department in the City has grown in expenditures as has the School Department, and yet in providing this substantial increase of some 9 per cent over the previous year, we continue to be mindful that an adopted budget by this municipality is a legal act that must be adhered to by all department heads as they administer these funds.

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Nor have we forgotten those career employees of this capital city who have contributed their talent and their years in service to their fellow citizens. With one of the finest pension systems in the region now available to these dedicated citizens, we shall continue to fund it with fiscal responsibility, and we add to it again this year the appropriate sums of money to keep it on sound footing. The increase in this line item underlines our awareness of our commitment to those who each day provide the finest professional services to their fellow citizens. The City of Providence is rich in the unusually high quality of its municipal employees, and we continue to have the deepest respect and admiration for our many colleagues in city government and for their dedication to excellence.

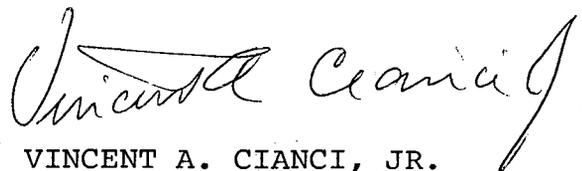
I might note for you in passing that the increase in our revenues for this coming year is dependent upon the achievements of past years in increasing our tax base, with the growth in quality and number of commercial and residential properties, now bearing fruit. Add as well the aggressive method of collecting taxes and revenues due the City of Providence, and our thoughtful decision to sell surplus municipal properties in order to return them to the tax rolls to reduce the burden on our fellow citizens, and we can now see how we have been able to have an increase in our municipal budget of such proportion, and yet be able to keep taxes at the same level that they have been for the past two years.

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This budget that I present to you is fiscally sound and highly responsible, reflecting thoughtful decisions and prudent use of our city's fiscal resources in a time of both national and regional economic difficulties of major proportions. But it is an outline, a guideline for the legislative branch of government to follow in its deliberations and in its shared responsibility to our fellow citizens. I urge you to study it well; to accept your task in serving this community with thoughtfulness and full regard for the use of each tax dollar; and to act with courage and concern as you review each line item most judiciously. It is your responsibility to raise or lower it, or to leave it as it is. Accept your role in this process as I have mine.

I respectfully submit this budget to you, ladies and gentlemen of the Providence City Council, for your review and approval.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Vincent A. Cianci, Jr.", written in dark ink.

VINCENT A. CIANCI, JR.
Mayor of Providence