

## LOUISVILLE SPENDING MILLIONS ON OVERTIME



The Louisville Government has spent close to \$14 million each year on overtime that was not scheduled. The Mayor, Greg Fischer, would like to greatly reduce this number and believes that the number can increase dramatically if the changes are made to the union and the contracts of employees. With Fischer's proposal, hours of vacation and sick days, along with family leave could not be counted toward overtime anymore. However, many of the city's leaders feel as though this proposal is ridiculous and simply unacceptable. James Thomason, the secretary treasurer for Teamsters Local 783, representing nearly 1,000 employees in the city of Louisville, says, "We will not participate in any discussions to reopen contracts." Fischer first released his ideas and recommendations on reducing the amount of overtime during a press conference that just took place on Tuesday. During the press conference, Fischer displayed an accurate study, showing that the city has been spending \$22.7 million for overtime alone during the fiscal year in 2010 through 2011. And, of that \$22.7 million, nearly \$14 million was unplanned overtime. The mayor would like a change to be made within the contracts of the union and has also made a number of other recommendations for dealing with this particular issue at hand. Fischer has set an optimistic goal to reduce the amount of unplanned overtime by at least 10 percent. This would help the city to save \$1.39 million during the next fiscal year. Fischer says, "We can't afford to continue paying this." He also says, "We believe we can reduce costs with better internal management and changes to union contracts." Shortly after the press conference, a number of leaders for the union immediately rejected his idea of editing contracts and making changes. Some leaders for the union agree to listen to his proposal but believe it will be hard for their memberships to agree on. Thomason says, "We're not interested in any amendments until we negotiate all agreements." Sick days, vacation, and family time being calculated into overtime are not actually mandated by Fair Labor Standards Act. However, it is has become quite common within the contracts of various unions. In the meantime, when Fischer was asked what would happen if the unions did not cooperate with his proposal, he said that in most cases, without the cooperation of the unions, a large amount of layoffs and cuts would be made. This could cause many employees to lose their current position. Fischer says, "We have to look at everything." He also says, "We don't have an option. I'm hopeful our union friends will ... look at the big picture and say, 'How can we pull together and make Louisville a healthy city.'"

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