

Dear Mayor and All Alders,

In December 2006 I was a stay-home mom and in-home family child care provider. By January 2007 life would change dramatically...for me, my two young children (ages 1 & 4) and husband.

I was offered a job with the City of Madison as the Child Care Program Coordinator. I like to think I was offered the job because I was the most qualified candidate. Isn't that how it normally works? It was not until I was offered the position that I was made aware of a "residency requirement" – to live in *Dane Co.* It was never disclosed to me prior to accepting the job that my benefits would be different because I did not live *in the City*. I first learned of this in my HR orientation and subsequent inquiry with a MEPSA representative.

I lived in Cambridge, in Jefferson County, one mile over the Dane County line. I was informed that if I accepted the position, I would need to move into Dane County within 6 months of hire or my employment would be terminated. The opportunity was incredible. How could I pass it up? We were willing to take the risk...not realizing the true cost.

Starting a new job is stressful enough for anyone. Add to that, selling one's home, securing and relocating to a temporary home, and building a new home. This transition did not come without a price for our entire family– financial and emotional. As I reflect back on my first year of employment I can say with confidence, that I would have been a better employee for the City, as well as better wife and mother, had I not been forced to make this transition while, simultaneously, learning a new job.

We chose *not* to leave Cambridge but instead move to the Dane County side. We have roots in Cambridge. We have family in Cambridge. My husband is an EMT in Cambridge and on the Board of Directors. We've established strong and meaningful relationships with our neighbors. Our Church is in Cambridge. Our child care is in Cambridge. I have a 1st grader in Cambridge Elementary School. Cambridge is centrally located between my children's grandparents. Our personal preference is to reside in a small town – near family and friends.

I can tell you that I feel privileged and honored to work for such an incredible and unique program. Although I'm not familiar with residency requirements for

County employment or municipal employment in other cities, I can tell you that as a tax-payer I don't much care. I would expect my tax dollars to be spent wisely - on the most qualified candidates chosen for their experience and expertise. Should any municipality compromise the quality of its service by settling for 2nd or even 3rd choice candidates?

Most of my neighbors travel to Janesville for their shopping and entertainment b/c of its proximity. I, however, do my shopping and other business in Madison. It only makes sense, with my daily commute to Madison and my need for efficiency wherever I can find it.

I'm committed to my job, to the City and the children & families we serve together. Not offering me the same compensation as my fellow co-workers or team members does feel personal, unfair and unequal.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jolene Ibeling