



PRESS RELEASE
ONE MUNDAY

COUNTY OF UNION

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COUNSEL
Robert E. Barry, Esq., County Counsel

August 7, 2009

**BOARD OF
CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS**

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*Deputy County Manager/
Director of Administrative
Services*

ROBERT E. BARRY, ESQ.
County Counsel

NICOLE L. DIRADO,
R.M.C., M.P.A.
Clerk of the Board

Bobby D. Conner, Staff Attorney
American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey
PO Box 32159
Newark, NJ 07102

**RE: Public Comments at Union County Board
of Chosen Freeholder Meetings**

Dear Mr. Conner:

Confirming our telephone conversations and in response to your letters dated July 30 and August 3, 2009, I can assure you that the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders takes seriously the right of free speech as guaranteed by the First Amendment and will continue to allow public comment on any issue during a portion of its meetings (but reserves the right to control the time, place and manner of such speech).

It is not the intention of the Board to restrict the free speech of Mr. Paterson or any other member of the public. Statements made at the June 25, 2009 meeting notwithstanding, comments regarding public employees regardless of their relation to Freeholders or other officials will be allowed, as they have been, at meetings.

As requested, the Chairman of the Board will correct any impression to the contrary at the next meeting of the Board. Prior to the opening of the public comment period, he will read the following announcement:

"The meeting is now open to the public to comment on any matter. Comments regarding public employees, whether or not they are related to Freeholders or others will be allowed at this and all future meetings, as protected by the First Amendment. The Board apologizes to any affected member of the public that was directed not to comment on employees at the June meeting. Kindly state your name and town of residence and please adhere to the five minute rule."

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Elizabethtown Plaza

Elizabeth, NJ 07207

(908)527-4250

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COUNTY OF UNION

Thank you for your assistance in amicably resolving this matter. This confirms that this matter is settled by the above.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Barry'.

ROBERT E. BARRY
Union County Counsel