



John R. Curtis  
Provo City Mayor

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March 1, 2011

Rick Healey, Council Chair  
Council Members  
Provo Municipal Council  
351 West Center  
Provo, UT 84601

Dear Chair Healey and Council Members:

As you know, the Administration has proposed a daytime curfew ordinance in response to a request from the Provo Gang Task Force. The task force has been working for several years and includes representatives from the Provo Police Department, the Juvenile Court, the Slate Canyon Juvenile Detention facility, the Provo School District and others. The goal of the task force has been to reduce youth crimes and to find ways to keep Provo youth out of gangs.

As the task force looked at the juvenile crime problem, members reviewed research that showed a significant correlation between truancy and youth crime across the country. And as the task force saw the rapidly growing trend of truancy in the Provo City schools, they felt a need to address it to try to avoid a similarly rapid increase in juvenile crime. The task force developed a three pronged approach which involved a ban on "spice," a revised approach to enforcing juvenile loitering, and a daytime curfew ordinance.

Daytime curfew ordinances have been used effectively in jurisdictions around the country and in communities in Utah including Ogden, Layton and Roy, among others. The provisions of the recommended ordinance were very similar to those in other communities where the program has made a positive difference.

However, as the ordinance has been circulated among various stakeholders in our community, the response from the public has raised a number of important concerns that are clearly important to the residents of Provo. It is clear that the approach recommended by the Gang Task Force, the Provo Police Department and the City Administration will not work as currently drafted in Provo. Accordingly, the Administration is indicating by this letter that it is withdrawing its request for the Council to take action on the draft ordinance.

However, as has been stated by at least one constituent, just because a solution may not be acceptable to the community, we also believe that the recent substantial increase in serious truancy is a problem that is not acceptable in Provo. Consequently, we would like to invite the Council and the public to participate with us to find a comprehensive community approach to the truancy problem. It is a problem that deserves a thoughtful and respectful approach and a meaningful community-wide dialogue.

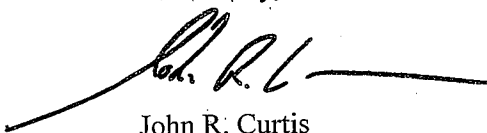
We are proposing the creation of a community task force, consisting of stakeholders including law enforcement, the justice system, public education, home school parents, charter school representatives and others interested in this important community issue. Those interested in serving may apply online at [www.provo.org](http://www.provo.org) to indicate their interest in serving.

We also encourage our residents to submit their ideas and concerns via an email form also included on the city's website, and ask those with an interest to provide their emails via the same form to be placed on an email list with updates on the progress of the community task force. And we will be scheduling a community open house where residents can become better informed on the problems and share their insights into potential solutions.

We want to commend all involved for the approach taken thus far. But it is clear that more work remains to be done. Solving the problem of increased truancy and enhancing the community's effort to reduce youth crime and prevent youth from being involved in criminal activity should be a priority for all of us. Coming together to address the problem is a better approach than feeling divided by any one possible solution. And a solution that works in Provo for our community, devised by our community, will result in a vastly superior solution than one developed without the involvement of all.

The current daytime curfew ordinance as drafted has clearly not met that high standard, and we ask the Council to not act on it at the meeting on March 1. The Administration looks forward over the next few months to the effort of our entire community to find answers to these very challenging problems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Curtis", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

John R. Curtis  
Mayor