

Coalition for Community Investment

Statement of Principles to Guide Decisions on D.C. Budget

The District of Columbia faces severe economic challenges. Declining revenues have already led to the adoption of significant budget cuts in the Fiscal Year 2009 budget. The cuts affect a wide range of programs, including parks, public safety, and transportation. However, they will fall especially hard on low-income families due to reduced funding for affordable housing, homeless services, health care, and income supports.

The health and prosperity of our city depend on public investments that expand economic opportunity in our neighborhoods and support families. In these difficult times for our economy and for our citizens, careful planning is needed to make sure we can continue to meet these goals.

We, the undersigned, represent local businesses, local congregations, nonprofit organizations and advocacy organizations. We encourage city leaders to partner with concerned citizens to identify a prudent and balanced approach to managing the city's fiscal crisis.

We, therefore, submit the following principles to guide further decision-making on the D.C. budget.

Stimulate local economic recovery. The D.C. budget plays an important role in the local economy. Widespread evidence indicates that public investments that support low-income individuals and families stimulate economic recovery because beneficiaries spend the money quickly and locally. Support for human capital development, the environment, and infrastructure will help D.C. build living-wage jobs, healthy communities, and a thriving business climate.

Maintaining funding for vital public structures in D.C. is especially critical now. Public investments in the midst of a recession can support the economy and prevent economic problems from getting worse.

Avoid cutbacks that unintentionally increase costs. Safety net programs help provide stability for D.C. families and individuals who are already struggling with stagnant, low wages, layoffs and rising food, energy, medical and housing costs during this economic downturn. Cutbacks in such programs can prove to be "penny wise and pound foolish" by increasing hardship, reducing residents' buying power, and creating the need for more costly emergency services.

Include sensible revenue expansions. Program cuts are not the only way to balance a budget. Consideration of responsible revenue enhancements and D.C.'s rainy day fund should be part of the city's approach. The economic downturn offers an opportunity to review D.C.'s revenue system and identify changes that would both raise revenue and improve our tax structure.

Operate collaboratively, transparently and inclusively. The District budget has significant impacts on the local economy, the daily lives of residents and the inclusiveness and vitality of our city. Therefore, the Mayor, the City Council and the public must work together to achieve commonsense solutions that reflect our community values. District officials must address budget shortfalls in a timely manner, but not at the expense of open, informed decision-making. In particular, the process for addressing budget deficits should give interested community members complete information on proposed options and sufficient time for public response.

Working together, D.C. residents and city leaders can use their collective practical know-how, technical expertise and experience to chart a path through this financial crisis, by investing in the long-term strength of our families, our economy, and our communities.

Budget Balancing Statement of Principles Endorsements

Academic

Center for Inspired Teaching
DC Law Students in Court Program
Teaching for Change
UDC School of Law

Businesses

3rd Point International (Ward 1)
Amsterdam Falafelshop (Ward 1)
Ben's Chili Bowl (Ward 1)
Big Monkey Comics (Ward 2)
Boundless Yoga (Ward 2)
Busboy's and Poets (Ward 1)
City Living Source (Ward 1)
D.C. Access (Ward 6)
Dogs by Day (Ward 2)
Dos Gringos Café (Ward 1)
FRESHFARM Markets (Ward 1)
Garden District (Ward 1)
Greater Goods (Ward 1)
Green Pets (Ward 2)
Green Room Speakers (Ward 4)
Harkness Design (Ward 1)
Home Slice, LLC (Wards 1,2,3,4,7,8)
Hoopla EcoBoutique (Ward 1)
Inscape Studio (Ward 1)
Island Infusions LLC (Ward 4)
ITF Consulting, Inc. (Ward 2)
Joint Concepts, Inc. (Ward 1)
Junk in the Trunk Removal Services (Ward 5)
Logan Hardware (Wards 2, 6)
Logan's Antiques (Ward 1)
Mid City Embroidery (Ward 2)
Mt. Pleasant Main Street (Ward 1)
Next Door (Ward 1)
NextGen Persuasion, LLC (Ward 1)
Open City (Ward 3)
Oromo Center Inc. (Ward 4)
Pfeiffer's Hardware (Ward 1)
Politics and Prose (Ward 3)
Potter's House (Ward 1)
Urban Referrals Service (Ward 1)
Schroyer and Associates, Inc. (Ward 2)
Steen Enterprises (Ward 3)
The 7th Street Garden (Ward 2)
The Diner (Ward 1)
The Printer (Ward 1)
TORO MATA - The Art of Peru (Ward 1)

Lenders

American Housing Opportunity Fund (Ward 4)
Cornerstone, Inc.
Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
Manna Mortgage
Self-Help

Developers

Community Preservation and Dev. Corp.
Community-Vision Consultants
DC Habitat for Humanity
National Housing Trust
Rinker and Associates

Faith Community

Covenant Baptist Church (Ward 8)
D.C. Catholic Conference
First Trinity Lutheran Church (Ward 6)
Washington Interfaith Network

Legal & Advocacy

Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
Children's Law Center
D.C. Action for Children
D.C. Alliance of Youth Advocates
D.C. Coalition Against Domestic Violence
D.C. Coalition on Long Term Care
DC Employment Justice Center
D.C. Fiscal Policy Institute
D.C. Hunger Solutions
D.C. Jobs Council
D. C. Jobs with Justice
D.C. Learns
DC Women's Agenda
Drug Policy Alliance DC Metro Project
Empower D.C.
Gray Panthers of Metropolitan Washington
Legal Aid Society of DC
Legal Counsel for the Elderly
Our Children, Our Community
ONE D.C.
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty
Quality Trust for Individuals with Disabilities
Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless
We Are Family
Wider Opportunities for Women
Women Empowered Against Violence

Labor

Community Services Agency of the Metro Washington
Council AFL-CIO
SEIU Local 32BJ

Health

Lupus Foundation of Greater Washington
Unity Health Care, Inc.
Washington Public Health Association, GWU SPHHS

Political

DC Statehood Green Party

Environmental

Alliance for Healthy Homes
Anacostia Watershed Society
DC Environmental Network
Clean Water Action
Coalition for Smarter Growth
Friends of the Earth
Institute for Local Self-Reliance
Parents for Nontoxic Alternatives
Washington Area Bicyclist Association
Washington Parks & People
Wholeness for Humanity

Social Service

Academy of Hope
Affordable Behavioral Consultants, Inc.
Ayuda (Ward 1)
Beacon House (Ward 5)
Bread for the City
Capital Area Asset Builders
Capital Area Food Bank
Catholic Charities
Christian Communities Group Homes (Ward 5)
Community of Hope
Covenant Full Potential Conversation Center (Ward 8)
Covenant House Washington
D.C. Central Kitchen (Ward 6)
DC Rape Crisis Center
East River Family Strengthening Collaborative, Inc. (Ward 7)
Emmaus Services for the Aging (Ward 2)
Ethiopian Community Center, Inc. (Ward 4)
Father McKenna Center
Foster & Adoptive Parent Advocacy Center (Ward 5)
Girls Incorporated of the Washington, DC
Metropolitan Area
Greater DC Cares
Green Door (Ward 2)
Homeless Children's Playtime Project
Housing Counseling Services, Inc.
La Clínica del Pueblo (Ward 1)
Language ETC
Little Lights Urban Ministries (Ward 6)
Manna Inc. (Ward 5)
Marshall Heights Community Dev. Organization (Ward 7)
Mary's Center
Multicultural Community Service (Ward 1)
N Street Village
National Student Partnerships, D.C. Office
Neighbors' Consejo (Ward 1)
New Endeavors by Women
Pathways to Housing DC
Perry School Community Services Center (Ward 6)
Positive Force
Sasha Bruce
SOME, Inc. (So Others Might Eat)
The Arc of the District of Columbia, Inc.
Vietnamese-American Community Service Center

Membership Organizations

D.C. Behavioral Health Association
D.C. Primary Care Association
Center for Nonprofit Advancement
Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development
DC ACORN
D.C. Language Access Coalition
Fair Budget Coalition
Jews United for Justice
Latino Economic Development Corporation
Latino Federation of Greater Washington
Mount Pleasant Business Association
National Association of Social Workers—Metro D.C. Chapter
Nonprofit Roundtable of Greater Washington

Individuals

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Marcus Robinson (Ward 5)
Alexander Salvador (Ward 1)
Bill Scher (Ward 3)
Suzanne Tarlov (Ward 2)
Karen Williamson (Ward 2)