PUBLIC HEARING ON B16-951, "WEST END BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT AMENDMENT ACT OF 2006"

Before the
Committee on Finance and Revenue
Council of the District of Columbia

The Honorable Jack Evans, Chairman

November 2, 2006, 11:00 a.m.
Council Chamber (Room 500)
John A. Wilson Building

Testimony of
Sherryl Hobbs Newman
Deputy Chief Financial Officer
Office of Tax and Revenue

Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer
Government of the District of Columbia

Good morning, Chairman Evans and members of the Committee on Finance and Revenue. I am Sherryl Hobbs Newman, Deputy Chief Financial Officer for the Office of Tax and Revenue ("OTR") of the District of Columbia ("District"). I am pleased to present testimony today on Bill 16-951, the "West End Business Improvement District Amendment Act of 2006."

This bill would create a business improvement district ("BID"), the West End BID, running along New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., south from K Street, N.W. to N Street, N.W.; N Street, N.W. west to 25th Street, N.W.; and bounded on the west by Rock Creek Park and on the south by K Street, N.W. from Washington Circle to Rock Creek Park.

A BID is organized and established by property and business owners to enhance the economic vitality of a commercial area. BID expenditures are used primarily for purchasing supplemental services, such as maintenance or security, and capital improvements, such as street benches or lighting, beyond those services already provided by the District. The cost of BID services is financed by a self-imposed tax on the businesses within the community. The tax is collected by OTR and all revenues are returned entirely to the organization managing the BID.

We encourage legislation such as Bill 16-951 because BIDs provide an equitable and reliable means of acquiring funds for services that supplement basic services already provided by the District.

Fiscal Impact of Bill 16-951

We estimate that the proposed legislation would result in no net fiscal impact to the District because all BID costs incurred by the District are to be reimbursed as required under D.C. Code § 2-1215.16(b).

Thank you, Chairman Evans, for the opportunity to comment on this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you or other Councilmembers might have at this time.