

**TESTIMONY OF MARTA BERESIN, WARD 3 RESIDENT  
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
PUBLIC BRIEFING ON  
BILL 18-1101, "FISCAL YEAR 2011 REVISED BUDGET REQUEST ACT OF 2010";  
AND BILL 18-1100, "FISCAL YEAR 2011 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET SUPPORT ACT  
OF 2010"  
NOVEMBER 30, 2010, 9:30 A.M.**

Good morning Chairman Gray and Councilmembers. My name is Marta Beresin and I am a resident of Ward 3. I am here to testify about the Budget Request Act of 2010. I have lived in the District for over 22 years and have two children in the DC public school system. I am married and both my husband and I practice law in the District and are upper income earners. We vote and we serve on juries regularly! I am testifying today because I am gravely concerned that the Council might be under the misimpression that we – and people like us – our neighbors and friends in Ward 3 – would rather see safety net programs cut than our taxes raised. I am here to let you know that that is not the case.

I strongly urge the Council to raise my taxes to fill the budget gap and NOT cut safety net programs. My husband I have not been affected by the recession OR asked to make ANY sacrifices since it began. We have not lost our jobs or had our salaries cut, our mortgage has not gone up, our health insurance premiums have not changed. Moreover, we have had new recreation centers completed (Stoddert) and more slated to begin soon (Guy Mason) in our neighborhood and have not been asked to pay more taxes on our incomes, our yoga classes, or our tickets to see the Nutcracker this December. Meanwhile, our less fortunate neighbors have been gravely affected by the recession: they have lost jobs, health insurance, even their homes due to foreclosures and evictions. And due to program cuts in effect and planned, they are waiting longer and longer for subsidized housing, are in danger of losing their welfare and disability benefits, and wait for months for essential services like emergency shelter – even when they have children and have absolutely no place to live.

So please: Raise my income and luxury taxes and hold off on renovating Guy Mason Rec Center and other capital projects not yet underway in the District until our economy improves and we've taken care of other more pressing human needs. In exchange, the District can ensure that families do not go without food on the table, healthcare, or emergency shelter. Essential safety net services form the most basic purpose of a government – to protect the welfare of its citizenry.

In summary, I am willing to pay higher taxes if it means fewer DC residents will lose their homes because they are behind in rent by a couple months and can't access help to prevent an eviction. I am willing to pay higher taxes if it means fewer DC residents must go hungry because they cannot get disability benefits or have had their welfare checks cut. Just a one percent income tax increase on incomes above \$200,000 would raise \$75 million, and I venture to say that \$20 less per paycheck will not cause great harm to such households. I have talked to my neighbors; they are people of good will – they may not love paying taxes, but they are willing to do more to ensure that others are safe during this recession.