

FAIRFAX COUNTY ALLIANCE FOR HUMAN SERVICES

TALKING POINTS

Here are some suggested points to make when you speak at a budget hearing or communicate with the Board of Supervisors:

1. Discuss your understanding of the overall budget situation. Be sure to emphasize that economic recovery is still out of reach for many in our community, and that many of our most vulnerable residents still need assistance in order to survive. (See “Background” attachment, p. 1)

THE ALLIANCE FOR HUMAN SERVICES URGES YOU TO KEEP IN MIND THAT MANY PEOPLE WHO NEED HUMAN SERVICES REQUIRE MULTIPLE SERVICES PROVIDED BY A VARIETY OF AGENCIES, BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE. ALL HUMAN SERVICES DESERVE YOUR SUPPORT

2. Express your opposition to the proposed cuts in human services and your concern about the unfunded human services priorities (See “Background” attachment, pages 2 – 4, and the Advertised Budget for more information.)
3. Express your support for the proposed increases in human services funding and also level funding (as appropriate) and urge the Board to protect this funding as it makes its decisions. (See “Background” attachment, p 2, and the Advertised Budget for more information.)
4. As you express your opposition, concern, or support:
 - Focus on the human services that are most important to you and the impact of the proposed County Budget on those services and the people who need them.
 - Describe the impact of the proposed funding (increased or level) and the consequences if the new or level funding were eliminated or cut. Be specific about the numbers of people who need the service and what reductions would do to the quality and scope of service.
 - If you are also concerned about funding cuts in the past, say so, and describe the effects of past cuts. Talk about real people and how they are suffering because of the elimination of services, longer waiting lists, and/or changes in the quality of services.

WE URGE YOU TO RECOGNIZE THAT MR. LONG'S PROPOSALS ARE NOT NECESSARILY “SAFE” FROM BOARD CUTS. YOUR ADVOCACY FOR THESE PROGRAMS IS ESSENTIAL!

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5. If level funding has been proposed for the programs you are concerned about, and the funding is inadequate, say so, and provide details. If possible, recommend specific increases that would improve access to services or the scope of services.
6. If you are willing to support the Advertised Real Estate Tax Rate to prevent additional cuts to human services, be sure to include this point in your communications with the Board of Supervisors.

The FY 2018 Advertised Budget is balanced at the current Real Estate Tax Rate of \$1.13 per \$100 of assessed value. Last year, the rate was increased 4 cents, from \$1.09. On February 28, the Board of Supervisors voted to advertise a Real Estate Tax Rate of \$1.13 per \$100 of assessed value for FY 2018. This advertised rate is a ceiling. It would not prevent the Board from approving a lower tax rate when it adopts the FY 2018 Budget, but the Board could not adopt a higher one.

For FY 2018, each penny of the Real Estate Tax Rate is worth \$23.75 million in revenue. Therefore, if the Board were to approve a Tax Rate **lower than \$1.13** (both the advertised rate and the rate used to balance the proposed budget), each penny reduction would reduce revenue by \$23.75 million. **Reduced revenue means cuts in funding for services and programs.**

If you are willing to support the Advertised Tax Rate of \$1.13 to prevent more cuts in human services and to provide much needed revenue to meet current needs and protect the most vulnerable members of our community, now is the time to say so.