

## **FAIRFAX COUNTY ALLIANCE FOR HUMAN SERVICES**

### **TALKING POINTS**

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

1. Discuss your understanding of the overall budget situation. Be sure to emphasize that there are persistent social and economic disparities in our community, and that many of our most vulnerable residents need assistance in order to survive. These disparities and needs have escalated during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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 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, pp 1-2, and the Advertised Budget for more information.)
3. As you express your support, concerns, or opposition:
  - 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.
  - If you have specific information relevant to the FY 2022 Budget about the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on services and the people who need them be sure to present it.
4. 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.
5. If you are concerned about current and/or future unmet needs identified in the Strategic Plan and/or in other planning reports, say so, and provide as much specific information as you can.

6. If you are willing to support the Advertised Real Estate Tax Rate to prevent cuts to human services, provide revenue to meet current and growing needs, and fund priorities, be sure to include this point in your communications with the Board of Supervisors.

The County Executive's proposed FY 2022 Budget is balanced on a Real Estate Tax Rate of \$1.14 per \$100 of assessed value, a one cent reduction from the current rate of \$1.15. On March 9, the Board of Supervisors voted to advertise a Real Estate Tax Rate of \$1.15 per \$100 of assessed value. The \$1.15 advertised rate is the ceiling for the tax rate that will be approved by the Board on April 27 and adopted on May 4.

For FY 2022, each penny of the Real Estate Tax Rate is worth \$27.14 million in revenue. Therefore, if the Board adopts the \$1.15 advertised Real Estate Tax Rate, instead of the lower rate proposed by the County Executive, the Board would be able to use the additional \$27.14 million to add funding to the budget for priorities and unmet needs.

***If you are willing to support the Advertised Tax Rate of \$1.15 to fund important human services priorities and unmet needs, now is the time to say so.***

***If you are concerned about funding unmet needs in the future, urge the Board to address these issues in the Budget Guidance for FY 2022 and FY 2023.***