

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION
A ROUNDTABLE ON
**Bill 18-148: "Transportation Infrastructure Improvements
Bond Financing Act of 2009"**
JIM GRAHAM, CHAIRMAN
John Wilson Building
Tuesday, March 31, 2009
2:00 p.m.

TESTIMONY OF KAREN LEE WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT, HILLCREST COMMUNITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Good afternoon, Chairman Graham and members of the Committee, my name is Karen Lee Williams, President of the Hillcrest Community Civic Association located in Ward 7. I speak today on behalf of the Hillcrest Community Civic Association (HCCA). Accompanying me today are Kathy Chamberlain, 2nd Vice President of HCCA and Vincent Spaulding, former past President of HCCA. If you have any questions, I will call on them to assist me with the answers. There are four points we would like to make: (1) we want to explain the mission of HCCA; (2) we want to let you know that our membership is on record in support of the 11th Street Bridge Improvement Project; (3) we understand that the 11th Street Bridge Improvement Project is eligible as a shovel ready project for stimulus funding; and, (4) we want you to know we support this bond authority as part of the financing strategy for the Bridge Replacement.

First, Hillcrest is located east of the Anacostia River. Hillcrest Community Civic Association (HCCA) is celebrating its 20th year fulfilling its mission to enhance the quality of life and prosperity of residents, families, community organizations and institutions located within our geographic boundaries. HCCA fulfills its mission by advancing the interests of our members before the government and private sector and leveraging our collective influence to achieve community improvements. If you would like more information about HCCA please visit our website at www.hillcrestdc.com.

Second, Mr. Chairman, please be advised that our Association approved a resolution on April 5, 2008 and again February 7, 2009 supporting the reconstruction of the 11th Street Bridge Project Preferred Alternative, which retains the ramp/connection from east Washington neighborhoods to the freeway bridge, primarily because it is estimated to make it easier for those living on the east side of the river to cross the Anacostia river.

The project has three major parts which are designed to:

- Provide new ramps east of the Anacostia River to re-route traffic from the SE freeway across the 11th Street bridge to connect the Anacostia Freeway in both directions; to
- Separate freeway traffic from other traffic including separating pedestrian, bicycle traffic onto a separate bridge, along with a possible future trolley line and local lanes so that local traffic to and from Anacostia, including Anacostia Park, don't have to get on the freeway in order to cross the river; and to
- Facilitate the movement of traffic through the city and to reduce the congestion on city streets and the other Anacostia River Bridges.

I have attached a copy of our approved resolution for the record.

Third, Kathy Chamberlain and Vincent Spaulding have been leading HCCA champions for the 11th Street Bridge Improvement and have participated in a variety of forums and dialogues regarding this project. The most recent being presenting formal testimony before the City Council Committee of the Whole on February 11, 2009 at the Roundtable on DC Priorities for Use of the Federal Stimulus Funding advocating for the 11th Street Bridge to be one of those priorities. At HCCA's March 7, 2009 meeting, the newly appointed Acting Director for the DC Department of Transportation, Gabe Klein, and his staff confirmed the shovel readiness of this project for construction and its eligibility for federal stimulus funding.

Fourth, as we understand it, Mayor Adrian M. Fenty has requested the authority to issue bonds against future federal appropriations; that a portion of the funding for the 11th Street Bridge's Replacement Project will come from these bonds; that passage of bill 18-148 is a critical step toward moving this project forward; and that without the authority to issue these bonds as soon as possible, the project could be delayed indefinitely. As we understand it, the District of Columbia has a triple A bond rating, thus HCCA enthusiastically goes on record in support of this legislation because the 11th Street Bridge project is a critical and essential element of the city's transportation infrastructure, and that, its replacement and improvement will accrue substantial benefits to the quality of life for residents east and west of the river.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have.
