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**ANC 3/4G Testimony Before the
Committee on Transportation and the Environment
Budget Hearing on the
Department of Energy and Environment
May 21, 2020**

Chairperson Cheh and members of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment, I am Randy Speck, Chair of ANC 3/4G (Chevy Chase), and I am testifying on behalf of our Commission, which authorized this testimony at its May 19, 2020 meeting by a vote of 6 to 0 (a quorum being 4).

Our Commission is concerned about two proposed reductions in the Mayor's budget for the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE): (1) the budget would cut funding for the lead pipe water service line replacement program by \$261,740; and (2) the budget would reduce funding for the Clean Rivers Impervious Area (CRIAC) relief program by \$3,870,831, potentially eliminating a program that has been particularly important for non-profit organizations in our community. The Commission recognizes the impact that the coronavirus emergency has had on the District's revenues and the need to

reduce expenditures. Nevertheless, the lead pipe replacement and CRIAC relief programs deserve a priority because of their health and financial impacts on vulnerable residents and institutions, and we ask the Committee to restore that funding in the Council's budget.

Lead Pipe Replacement

On May 13, 2019, ANC 3/4G passed a resolution (available at <https://bit.ly/2VFERAN>) urging the Council “to adopt the recommendation from the Committee on Transportation and the Environment and to include at least \$1 million on a recurring basis in the FY 2020 Budget Support Act.” That resolution cited the overwhelming scientific evidence that “there is no safe level of blood lead concentration for children,” and “the best ‘treatment’ for lead poisoning is to prevent any exposure before it happens” (<http://bit.ly/2VYgZb5>). Children and pregnant women are particularly at risk from *any* exposure to lead, and the partial lead water service lines that are prevalent throughout the District (see <https://geo.dcwater.com/Lead/> for specific details) continue to pose a significant health and safety hazard.

DC Water has begun to implement a program to support lead pipe replacement, particularly for those water customers who cannot afford to pay for replacement themselves. This program is not a luxury. The District should make protection of children's and pregnant women's health a priority. The current level of funding is already inadequate to fully meet the need, and this further reduction by \$261,740 is not warranted and

potentially harmful. We urge the Committee to maintain at least the same level of funding for lead pipe replacement in FY 2021 as in the approved FY 2020 budget.

CRIAC

ANC 3/4G submitted testimony to the Committee at DOEE's performance oversight hearing on February 14, 2019 (available at <http://bit.ly/2IbSrFS>) emphasizing the importance of the "District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Rate Increase Mitigation Amendment Act of 2018." Under that statute, DOEE distributes funds to low-income residents and a limited number of non-profit organizations to provide relief from DC Water's CRIAC fee, which has become a significant burden for many.

The Commission reiterated the need to provide adequate funding for this relief program in its testimony before the Committee at DOEE's budget hearing on April 1, 2019 (available at <https://bit.ly/2WNY0zy>). Three institutions in our ANC — the Knollwood Life Plan Community, Ingleside at Rock Creek, and Temple Sinai — have qualified for and received relief to offset part of their CRIAC fees. That relief has been particularly important since these non-profit organizations have been hit with significantly higher costs and loss of life to combat the coronavirus pandemic. It is not a time to reduce or eliminate the relief that was warranted even in the best of times.

We urge the Committee to ensure that funding is included in the FY 2021 budget to provide at least the same level of relief from CRIAC fees for DC Water customers as was provided in FY 2020. Unless there are sufficient funds in the proposed FY 2021 bud-

get to maintain that funding level, the Committee should restore the \$3,870,831 that the Mayor proposes to eliminate from DOEE's budget.