

MVCCA Resolution EDUC 2015-5 Meaningful Citizen Input to the FY2017 Budget Process

WHEREAS Fairfax County's Fiscal Year 2017 Advertised Budget Plan ("FY2017 County Advertised Budget") is in preparation by the County Executive for public release in February 2016 and will include expectations, presumptions and recommendations with respect to revenue sources ("Revenue"), funding levels for County services ("County Funding Levels"), and the proposed amount of support to be provided to Fairfax County Public Schools ("School Transfer"); and

WHEREAS it is anticipated that Revenue will not be adequate, based on FY2016 tax rates, to support County Funding Levels and/or provide a School Transfer which would fully fund the FY2017 School Budget so that additional steep cuts would be necessary and/or Revenue increased through a change in Actual Rate and/or development of additional sources; and

WHEREAS, in March 2016, the Board of Supervisors ("BOS") will advertise the maximum residential and commercial real property tax rate ("Maximum Rate") which the BOS may legally and actually adopt on April 2016, for application in FY2017 ("Actual Rate"); and

WHEREAS the Actual Rate, Funding Levels, School Transfer and related matters in the FY2016 County Advertised Budget will be the subject of citizen comment and testimony at hearings in April 2016 ("Public Hearings"); and

WHEREAS the recent election process suggests that, while expecting fiscal responsibility, citizens are also concerned about maintenance of quality of life, infrastructure and particularly the continued high quality of Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS); and

WHEREAS meaningful citizen input and testimony at the Public Hearings should not be unnecessarily chilled and circumscribed by the arbitrary ceiling of the Maximum Rate (which will be set without any public hearing); and should be informed by full disclosure in the FY2017 County Advertised Budget of the actual needs of the County and FCPS, the Revenue needed to support those needs, and potential sources of new Revenue; and

WHEREAS meaningful citizen input at the Public Hearings specifically requires that the Maximum Rate be advertised at a level which would fully fund FCPS and County needs in order to promote positive discussion and meaningful public participation on the proper balance of taxes and services;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations ("MVCCA"), in order to promote meaningful citizen input to FY2017 Fairfax County Budget, enhance public discourse on budgetary priorities and the proper balance of public services and tax burden, respectfully requests the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to (1) direct the County Executive to include in the FY2017 County Advertised Budget actual County and FCPS needs, the Revenue enhancements needed to support those needs; (2) advertise a Maximum Tax Rate which would at a minimum fully fund both the County and FCPS FY2017 Budgets; and

(B) BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MVCCA expresses no opinion at this time as to Actual Tax Rate, Funding Levels or School Transfer appropriate for implementation in FY2017.