

April 16, 2016

Mayor Silberberg and members of Council,

My name is Jim Durham, a resident of 622 Fort Williams Parkway. I am speaking today on behalf of Alexandria's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

BPAC members agreed unanimously that they support a property tax increase of an additional two cents, provided that 100% is allocated to Capital investments, and we agree with the Transportation Commission's recommendation to put the first \$1M of additional investment in the Complete Streets program and then fund projects at the top of the Transportation Long Range Plan.

As residents, BPAC members are cognizant of the urgent need for Capital investments in our Schools, Transportation, City Facilities, including parks, and Sewers.

In my former life, I witnessed the impact of a Navy leader who was so focused on operational needs that he deferred needed capital investment over a five year period. 11 years later, the Navy has not recovered and it is not expected to recover for at least another decade. That leader was well-intentioned, but did not appreciate the long-term damage he was causing by deferring needed Capital investment.

Alexandria schools provide a similar example that all of us are familiar with. I see it firsthand with grandchildren in MacArthur and John Adams Elementary schools.

Perhaps not yet quite as visible to all is the degree to which transportation capital investment is being deferred. For example, investment in DASH bus service expansion has been deferred indefinitely; DASH service expansion and other previously funded projects were removed from 10-year CIP last year and added to the Transportation Unfunded list called the TLRP. A pedestrian safety project that has been on the TLRP since 2008 and became the top priority when recommend in the 2012 waterfront plan is now #8 as a result of the growing number of deferred items – previously planned to be funded in the CIP. Meanwhile new plans are adding new items to the unfunded list.

Let's not continue down the path of deferring capital investment in transportation infrastructure from which it will take a decade or more to recover. We ask first, that you allocate 100% of an additional two cent increase to Capital investments. Second, we ask that you implement the Transportation Commission's recommendation to put the first \$1M in additional funds in the Complete Streets program and then fund projects at the top of the Transportation Long Range Plan.

**Jackie Henderson**

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4-16-16

**From:** Jamie Conrad via Call.Click.Connect. <CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 17, 2016 9:36 AM  
**To:** Jackie Henderson; Gloria Sitton  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #94482: City Clerk and Clerk of Council I testified at yesterday's budget hearin

Dear *Call.Click.Connect.* User

A request was just created using *Call.Click.Connect.* The request ID is 94482.

**Request Details:**

- Name: Jamie Conrad
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 703-836-0655
- Email: [jwc58@comcast.net](mailto:jwc58@comcast.net)
- Service Type: City Clerk and Clerk of Council
- Request Description: I testified at yesterday's budget hearing and would like to submit my statement for the record, but can't figure out how to do that -- perhaps because it's after the fact. I've attached it here.

Thank you

- Attachment: [Conrad testimony 4-16-16 re coverage gap.docx](#)
- Expected Response Date: Monday, April 25

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at the *Call.Click.Connect.* staff interface.

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Statement of James W. Conrad, Jr.  
before the  
Alexandria City Council  
regarding the  
proposed property tax rate increase  
(Ordinance 14-5094)

April 16, 2016

Mayor Silberberg and members of Council, my name is Jamie Conrad. My wife Kathy and I have been paying property taxes in the City since 1987. We belong to Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, the Episcopal church at the corner of Seminary and Quaker that holds the big pumpkin sale each fall. We give away every penny of profit we make on that sale, and I'm privileged to be a co-chair of the Outreach Committee that proposes which charities and causes we can help. We can't solve many problems, but we can make a meaningful difference.

In the past several decades, the phrase "religious values" has unfortunately become associated with conservative positions on divisive social issues like same-sex marriage. But the real values that unite the leading religions of the world are more fundamental ones like loving your neighbor as yourself,

and looking out for the least fortunate among us. People of faith want to make sure that, when we pay taxes, our money is being used to effectuate those same values. Just as actions speak louder than words, so the budget of every political entity is a moral document, because it expresses in concrete terms what values we as a community will – or won’t – put our treasure behind.

For that very reason, people of all faith traditions across the Commonwealth have worked through the Virginia Interfaith Center for three years to persuade the General Assembly to expand Medicaid, to provide health insurance for the hundreds of thousands of Virginians who fall into the “coverage gap.” These are the working poor -- people with minimum wage or part-time jobs who aren’t eligible for Medicaid but don’t make enough money to qualify for Affordable Care Act subsidies. And for three years, the General Assembly has turned its back on these people. We don’t know

exactly who the victims will be, but we can be statistically certain that many City residents will suffer increased, unnecessary illness and premature death as a result of this immoral and economically irrational choice.

Some of you may feel that it's not the City's job to step up here, but it is. The Book of Genesis teaches that we are all our brothers' (and sisters') keepers, and that means that our community has a moral responsibility to do something. The City made a good start when it cosponsored the Health Fair at Hammond Middle School last November. The huge turnout for that event showed the huge need for primary care among the City's low-income residents. The folks who organized that event – the Alliance for Alexandria's Uninsured – is working tirelessly to raise private funds, and to get physicians to volunteer their time – to meet some of that need. But it's not enough. The 1-cent increase you're considering today would yield \$3.8 million. Four percent of that would be about

\$150,000. Allocating that amount to Neighborhood Health could make a decisive positive difference in a lot of lives. And with any luck, our example will change some hearts and minds in Richmond. Thank you.

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