

**Testimony of the Friends of the DC Archives
Before the DC Council, Committee on Transportation and the Environment
Mary Cheh, chair
DC Archives, FY17 Budget, Department of General Services
Friday April 22, 2016**

Good day, I am Bill Rice, here for the Friends of the DC Archives (FDCA) speaking on how Mayor Bowser's FY17 budget for the Department of General Services affects the DC Archives and the Office of Public Records. FDCA advocates upgrading the building and staff at the current Archives at Naylor Court; creating a new, state-of-the-art Archives building for the District; and developing a full records management program for the DC Government.

The Mayor's FY17 capital budget has \$55 million for a new Archives, with a small decrease of \$216,000 while it extends spending by two years, to FY19 and FY20.

We strongly support the Mayor's full \$55 million allocation for the new facility and that it continue to be included in FY17 and FY18. We do have reservations about the Penn Center building that DGS is considering for the new facility, including about this location and access (notably by transit), whether it can accommodate research and exhibit activities and whether it is the right place and building to serve as the center and principal repository for the history of our local government. Retrofitting an existing building is also the most costly option, according to the DGS report by Hartman/Cox-EYA on the new Archives.

In order to fully explore these questions before a site/building is selected, FDCA suggests a forum focused on the new building, like the one last May on the overall future of the Archives.

We commend DGS for last year's report by Hartman/Cox-EYA and for the \$3 million allocated for immediate upgrades to Naylor Court. The report brings together for the first time an estimate of the storage volume needed for the hardcopy materials created by District agencies, along with a preliminary estimate of the size of the new facility to house these documents. However, as we've pointed out, the report does not include the DC Courts, DCPS and some other repositories, nor did it have any estimates for demolition (if required) or for the furnishings and specialized equipment that will be needed. We are anxious to work with DGS to develop and implement this project via a mechanism like the one being used for school modernization.

We look forward to a progress report on the Naylor Court upgrades, now that summer is almost upon us.

Thank for your consideration and welcome any questions.

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