March 14, 2000

Ms. Sheila C. Reid
Chair
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 Fourth Street, NW, Suite 220
Washington, DC 20001

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OFFICE OF ZONING
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

RE: APPLICATION #16556

Dear Ms. Reid,

As rabbis of every synagogue located in our great city, we are writing this letter to demonstrate our strong support of the application for the Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital's (JPDS) for temporary occupancy of 7701 and 7712 Sixteenth Street, NW, as well as JPDS' efforts to secure a permanent home in the District of Columbia.

We represent congregations that have made strong commitments to being in the District of Columbia and which have long-standing ties to District life. The histories of some of our congregations in the city go back well over a century. We also represent the entire cross section of Jewish belief and practice in our synagogues – Reform, Conservative and Orthodox. Many of our families send their children to public schools. But others have opted to provide their children with the Jewish richness of a full-time Jewish day school education, since schools play a vital role in strengthening our Jewish community and our city.

We have come together here with one voice on this issue, for JPDS has grown to be a vital part of the fabric and culture of the District of Columbia and we must do all we can to insure that it continues to thrive here. The school is not a large school, but it is a superb one, filling a vital need, and presently serving some 70 families who live in the District. It is so well regarded that it is attracting many young families who are moving here to be close to the school. Since the other Washington area Jewish day schools are all in the suburbs, this school is an important factor for those families who have chosen to make their lives in our city.

Religious institutions make for good neighbors. JPDS' style of management and its focus on social justice and community relations concerns in the curriculum and activities of the students and in the culture of the institution has helped it contribute to the life of our city. JPDS and the synagogues involved in providing temporary housing for the school are deeply committed to working cooperatively with their neighborhoods in mitigating traffic and other problems. JPDS is committed, as well, to maximizing the positive contribution the school can make to this neighborhood.

We urge you to approve the application of the Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital for temporary occupancy at Tifereth Israel and Ohev Sholom Talmud Torah on Sixteenth Street, NW. This temporary occupancy at these two existing synagogues is indispensable to ensuring that the Jewish Primary Day School will be able to carefully plan its permanent location in the District.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Wohlberg, Senior Rabbi, Adas Israel Congregation

Avis Miller, Rabbi, Adas Israel Congregation

Justin David, Assistant Rabbi, Adas Israel Congregation

Barry Freundel, Rabbi, Kesher Israel

Daniel Zemel, Rabbi, Temple Micah

Hillel Klavan, Rabbi, Ohev Sholom Talmud Torah Congregation

Fred N. Reiner, Senior Rabbi, Temple Sinai

Mindy Avra Portnoy, Rabbi, Temple Sinai

Ethan Seidel, Rabbi, Tifereth Israel Congregation

M. Bruce Lustig, Senior Rabbi, Washington Hebrew Congregation

Deborah Kaiz, Assistant Rabbi, Washington Hebrew Congregation

Joseph Meszler, Assistant Rabbi, Washington Hebrew Congregation

Cc: Andrew Altman, Office of the Mayor
Charlene Drew Jarvis, Councilmember
Chairman Linda Cropp, Councilmember
Harold Brazil, Councilmember
Carol Schwartz, Councilmember
David Catania, Councilmember

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16556
EXHIBIT NO.272

#272
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