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Statement Before The Board Of Zoning Adjustment On

Georgetown University's Campus Plan

July 18, 2000

My name is Grace Bateman. I have been a District resident for 35 years, and a resident of the west side of Georgetown for 20 of those years. From 1988 through 1992 I served on the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, and took an active role in the development and review of the University's last Campus Plan. I continue to be active in the community as a member of the Georgetown Business and Professional Association and as a member of the Citizens Association of Georgetown.

As an ANC member one of my principal activities was to encourage Georgetown University to establish a number of programs to improve University/community relations, and to mitigate the impacts of undergraduate students living off-campus. I am pleased to report that the programs the University began in the early 1990s to address these issues, and that will be continued as part of the University's proposed Campus Plan, have been successful.

In 1988 when I began my tenure on the ANC, we requested that the University address a number of issues related to the presence of undergraduate students in our community. These issues included late night noise, disorderly behavior, and littering and the mishandling of trash. We made a number of specific suggestions to the University to address these problems, including: (1) the application of the Code of Student Conduct to undergraduate students who live off-campus; (2) the establishment of an Office of Off-Campus Student Affairs that is responsible for monitoring and communicating with undergraduate students living off-campus; and (3) the appointment of a University official responsible for maintaining relations with the surrounding community.

The University accepted all of these suggestions. Since the Board last reviewed Georgetown University's Campus Plan, the University has extended the Code of Student Conduct to students living off-campus, and has regularly enforced it when there have been off-campus violations of the Code. The University also has established an Office of Off-Campus Student Affairs, which has been effective in: communicating to students who reside off-campus their responsibilities as members of the community; maintaining a telephone "hotline" for receiving community complaints; and investigating and prosecuting community complaints.

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In addition, the University has invested significant resources in establishing the position of Assistant to the President For Community Relations, and in funding programs to support an ongoing dialogue between the University and the surrounding community on housing, parking and transportation, noise, underage drinking, trash handling, and other issues. During this past year, in recognition of the importance of this function, the University elevated this position to Assistant Vice President status and expanded the staff.

When I look back at where we began in 1988, at a time when the University had done little to address issues with its neighbors, to the University's current commitment of resources to University/community issues, I am amazed and gratified. And I am pleased to see that the University has renewed its commitment to maintaining these important programs in the Campus Plan that is now before the Board. I strongly urge the Board to recognize the importance of the University's ongoing efforts to be responsive to its neighbors, to recognize the significant commitment of University resources these efforts require, and to approve the Campus Plan that is before the Board today. Thank you.