U.S. SENATOR PAUL STRAUSS
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (SHADOW)

OFFICE OF THE
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FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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January 18, 2005

Mr. Geoffrey Griffs
Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW – Room 210
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Application #17271 – 51 Louisiana Avenue, NW

Dear Mr. Griffs:

In my capacity as the District of Columbia's elected representative to the United States Senate, I am writing in regards to the above referenced application for a variance from the height restrictions of the zoning regulations to allow an addition to this existing property. It is my understanding that the owner, JBG, is seeking a mere 20 foot (20') variance from the height restriction to allow an addition to the existing Acacia building.

I was recently disappointed to learn that despite the full support of the ANC, the Office of Planning, and multiple adjacent property owners, an appointed official of the United States Senate, has requested that the Architect of Capitol oppose this request citing unspecific "security concerns".

While we should all be mindful of the legitimate need to protect our important federal institutions, especially our beloved Capitol, I believe that these concerns are unfounded. There is no evidence that the occupants of this property will present any greater risk to the Capitol or it's occupants than the guests at the adjacent Hyatt Regency, or Holliday Inn, the tenant's and restaurant patrons of 101 Constitution Avenue, NW, the Teamsters, or any other nearby structure. Certainly, there is little evidence that any so-called threat, to the extent that one actually exists, would even be mitigated effectively by the denial of the mere 20 feet that is the subject of this variance.

In the interest of Home Rule, I urge this body to ***consider this application according to the merits as defined by the zoning regulations****, and not to be unduly pressured by the United States Senate, or the existing state of "paranoia" that seems to be the order of the day.*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this application.

Sincerely,

Paul Strauss

Paul Strauss
United States Senator
District of Columbia (Shadow)

BZA
Case No. 17271
Exhibit No. 26

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17271
EXHIBIT NO. 26