TESTIMONY OF MICHELE A. TINGLING-CLEMMONS
BEFORE THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT, APRIL 19, 2005 @ 1:00 PM

IN OPPOSITION OF APPLICATION #17304 OF WMATA TO CONSTRUCT A 5-STORY BUILDING BEHIND BENNING ROAD METRO STATION, 4500 BENNING ROAD, NE

GREETINGS CHAIRMAN GRIFFIS, NEIGHBORS AND FELLOW CONCERNED CITIZENS. I AM MICHELE TINGLING-CLEMMONS, AND I LIVE AT 4614 CENTRAL AVENUE, NE ALONG WITH MY HUSBAND AND 3 TEENAGED CHILDREN RIGHT DOWN THE STREET FROM THE PROPOSED FACILITY. I COME HERE TODAY ON BEHALF OF MY FAMILY AND NEIGHBORHOOD, TO EXPRESS MY OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED FACILITY AND I BRING WITH ME SEVERAL PETITIONS SIGNED BY NEIGHBORS WHO ARE ALSO IN OPPOSITION TO THE BUILDING AND THE FACILITY METRO IS PROPOSING TO CONSTRUCT FOR CSOSA. WE WANT TO HAVE THIS HEARING RESCHEDULED AT A TIME WHEN WORKING RESIDENTS CAN ATTEND AND BECAUSE THE NOTICE THAT ZONING SENT TO CHRISTINE TOLSON MISTAKENLY, ADDRESSED TO HER AS CHAIR, WAS NOT PROPERLY TRANSMITTED TO THE CHAIR, NOR SHARED WITH THE REST OF THE COMMISSION OR THE COMMUNITY. THEREFORE, WE HAVE NOT HAD THE REQUIRED LEGAL NOTICE TIME.

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D.C.

WE ARE OPPOSED FOR SEVERAL REASONS: ONE, ON A DAILY BASIS, WE FIND OURSELVES COMPETING FOR PARKING SPACE WITH NUMEROUS CAR OWNERS WHO DON'T LIVE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD, MANY FROM MARYLAND AND ELSEWHERE, DUE TO OUR PROXIMITY TO THE BENNING ROAD METRO STATION. WHILE WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED BY CSOSA THAT THEY WILL ENCOURAGE THEIR NEARLY 100 EMPLOYEES TO TAKE THE METRO TO WORK, WE HAVE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE DAILY STRUGGLE. WHEN I BROUGHT MY HUSBAND BACK FROM THE HOSPITAL, EARLIER IN FEBRUARY, I COULD NOT FIND A SPACE CLOSE ENOUGH FOR HIM TO WALK BACK INTO THE HOUSE WITHOUT GREAT DIFFICULTY, OR TO CARRY IN HEAVY GROCERIES. WE'D RATHER NOT HAVE TO WALK SO FAR WHEN RUNNING ERRANDS OR GOING TO COMMUNITY MEETINGS. WE ARE OPPOSED TO CITING A 5-STORY OFFICE BUILDING IN OUR COMMUNITY, WITH NO COMMERCIAL SPACE, INADEQUATE PARKING (BECAUSE, WHERE WILL THE CLIENTS PARK) AND TRYING TO SELL US ON ITS BENEFITS.

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OUR NEIGHBORS, WHO HAVE ONLY RECENTLY BECOME AWARE OF THE PLANS IN PLACE, ARE ALMOST UNIFORMLY OPPOSED TO PLACING AN OFFICE BUILDING FOR FEDERAL PAROLE OFFICERS RIGHT

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HERE IN OUR COMMUNITY. THEY ARE MOST CONCERNED WITH THE SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN, SENIORS AND FAMILIES; THE SECURITY OF OUR HOMES AND PROPERTY; THE IMAGE THAT WILL BE PROVIDED FOR OUR YOUTH; THE ADDED CAR AND FOOT TRAFFIC, LITTER AND TRASH; AND THE ATTENDANT HEALTH PROBLEMS TO BE RACED BY THE MANY PEOPLE WITH SEVERE ASTHMA AND OTHER RESPIRATORY ISSUES. WE ALSO DO NOT WANT ANOTHER NANNIE HELEN BURROUGHS AND DIVISION AVENUE WITH THE ADDICTS NODDING AND PANHANDLING.

THE SITE AT 4500 BENNING ROAD IS LESS THAT 5 MINUTES FROM 3 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, A MIDDLE SCHOOL, AND RIGHT NEXT DOOR TO A DAY CARE CENTER. THE FAMILIES AND CHILDREN SERVED BY THESE AGENCIES ARE RIGHTFULLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SAFETY OF THEIR CHILDREN. MANY OF THE SENIORS AND OTHER HOMEOWNERS ARE ALREADY VICTIMS OF BREAK-INS, ROBBERIES, MUGGINGS, AND ARE NOT EAGER TO BE THE SITE TO ATTRACT MANY OF THE PERPETRATORS AND OTHERS TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHICH IS ALREADY UNDERSERVED WITH THE RESOURCES THAT ARE SORELY NEEDED AND THAT NEITHER THIS BUILDING NOT ITS STAFF WILL PROVIDE. WE KNOW THAT CLIENTS WILL COME IN FOR REGULAR DRUG TESTING, MINIMAL JOB TRAINING, AND WILL ACCOUNT FOR INCREASED FOOT TRAFFIC OF AT LEAST 500 PEOPLE DAILY, ACCORDING TO CSOSA'S ESTIMATES. WE DON'T HAVE TRASH CANS AVAILABLE ON OUR STREETS FOR THE LITTER THAT PEOPLE ARE LEAVING BEHIND NOW, BOTH ON FOOT AND FROM THEIR CARS. ALREADY, WE HAVE TO CHASE LOITERERS FROM HANGING IN THE ALLEY THAT ABUTS OUR HOME BECAUSE OF THE SHADE AND SEATING IT PROVIDES. THIS BUILDING WILL ONLY INCREASE THAT PROBLEM, AND THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WILL MONITOR OUR COMINGS AND GOINGS

WE NEED JOBS, AFFORDABLE HOUSING, RECREATION FACILITIES, SECURITY FOR OUR SENIORS AND EDUCATION FOR OUR YOUTH, SIT-DOWN RESTAURANTS. WE DO NOT NEED THIS FACILITY IN OUR COMMUNITY, WE DO NOT WANT IT, AND WE HAD WANTED THIS HEARING POSTPONED. WE WERE NOT SUFFICIENTLY OR CLEARLY NOTIFIED BY OUR SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICT ANC COMMISSIONER, CHRISTINE TOLSON, NOR MARSHALL HEIGHTS OR OTHERS. THIS IS ONLY ONE OF MANY PROJECTS THAT ARE BEING PUT IN OUR COMMUNITY WITHOUT OUR KNOWLEDGE AND OVER OUR OPPOSITION. WE URGE YOU TO GIVE US THE OPPORTUNITY TO FULLY NOTIFY OUR COMMUNITY AS IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN, GIVE US THE TIME FOR A FAIR HEARING, AND CONSIDER THE MANY ALTERNATIVES AVAILABLE. THANK YOU.

- ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY
- THIS FACILITY COULD BE PUT NEAR THE HUMAN SVC BLDG AT 1ST & N ST N.E. AWAY FROM ALL COMMUNITIES.