Testimony of
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To
Zoning Commission For the District of Columbia
Case Number 02-20
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Good evening, Chairperson Mitten and members of the Commission:

My name is Susan Pervi, and I am the Vice President for Student Life for The Catholic University of America. I am here to testify on behalf of the University in Zoning Commission Case #02-20. I am joined by my colleagues, Kathryn Bender and Carl Petchik.

I have been a member of the CUA community for 20 years, as of this past December. I have been part of the senior leadership team for the last 15 years, first as the Vice President for Administration and now, as the Vice President for Student Life, where I am able to continue to guide essential institutional programs and services.

I have been responsible for ensuring campus facilities are established and maintained to promote a respectful, learner-centered environment. I have taken great care to ensure the institution remains focused on preserving the total campus environment, not just individual facilities, and that we practice responsible renovation and growth as we continue to "respect and build on tradition, yet effectively respond to change."

I now continue to lead the planning, development and implementation of a broad range of programs to enable students to be fully engaged in their formal studies, while learning life-long skills to grow physically, socially, emotionally, vocationally and spiritually, and to be able to do so in a safe and supportive environment. The student life staff works in close partnership with a dedicated academic community, campus ministry and facilities operations staff.

The Catholic University of America is a national institution committed to a strong local presence, and is proud to be in a well-established neighborhood in the District of Columbia. We were established 116 years ago, in 1887, by the Catholic Church in the United States as a graduate research center, modeled after the great European universities of the nineteenth century. That unique founding mission continues today, but on a much

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-20
Exhibit 54

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-20
EXHIBIT NO.54

larger and more comprehensive scale. Our particular commitment to excellence in scholarly research and teaching is demonstrated in the university's graduate and professional programs of study, but also extends to undergraduate programs as well. I have provided a fuller institutional background, history, mission, aims, goals and overview of academic program offerings in the introduction section of the document update of our 1992 campus plan, which we have entitled, *Campus Plan 2002.*

We are, indeed, a unique institution of higher education, given our history and evolution. We are, for example, an institution that has consistently been committed to recruiting, retaining and developing student-athletes, and why we remain a National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III institution. As a Division III school, our athletes are successful students first, excelling in philosophy, architecture, engineering and music in the classroom, and then excelling in the pool, on the soccer field or on the basketball or volleyball court, and led by coaches who are also teachers in our local schools or retired from local police agencies. Our student athletes are not on athletic scholarships, but as recently acknowledged by the NCAA and USA Today, are collectively the group of athletes in Division III with the highest academic achievement in the country, as measured by grade point averages. Our athletic award programs resemble the academic honors programs at other institutions.

Yes, we are an institution proud of our students! In fact, in 2001 alone, we celebrated, along with our very supportive community members in ANC-5C, our students' accomplishments as:

National Novice Debate Champions

National Men's Basketball NCAA Division III Champions and

National Moot Court Champions

The mission and traditions of The Catholic University of America attract students and employees who contribute to the many well-established and meaningful outreach programs offered regularly. Enthusiastic students, faculty and staff contribute more than 40,000 hours of volunteer service each year. The University serves the underserved in educational, social, health and spiritual help to the sick, elderly, homeless, disabled and poor of the community. Outreach projects, large and small, are encouraged as an integral part of our campus life.

The University actively develops partnerships, especially those that contribute effectively to the lifelong education of citizens, our community's youth and adult learners. For example, a decade-old partnership between the Community Preservation and Development Corporation and the CUA Metropolitan College focuses on quality Career Enhancement Programs for the Edgewood Terrace Community. Program goals include helping adult learners develop skills to secure employment, successfully attend college, and complete certificate or bachelor degrees.

CUA operates the area's leading legal services clinics focused on reducing domestic violence and providing advocacy for the elderly. Similarly, the University has recently received an initial three-year grant to help CUA improve mental health care for children and adolescents. The grant will help fund faculty salaries and curriculum development for a new master's degree and certificate program in child and adolescent mental health care. The grant and program will also help support a new clinic in the Brookland area of the District of Columbia, where CUA students will assist faculty in providing mental health services for children.

Teaching assistants in Washington, D.C. special education classrooms have an opportunity to get more formal training through a new initiative co-directed by the chair of the CUA Department of Education in conjunction with the CUA Metropolitan College, and announced publicly in September 2001. The ParMet Program, according to Professor Shavaun Wall, "will both enable people who might have had barriers to taking college courses and improve education for children with disabilities."

In July 2002, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced support for a CUA Nursing School initiative to recruit and educate more nurses for primary health care to disadvantaged families and communities. In addition to providing graduate education to recruit, educate and motivate nurses to work as family practitioners in critical, impoverished minority communities, the program will continue to recruit youth to health professions through the health career clubs already operated by CUA at local inner-city elementary, junior high and high schools.

As reported in the Washington Post on January 24, 2002, The Catholic University of America was cited as among the national leaders in using Federal Work-Study Program funds to provide community service, rather than to pay students for campus jobs.

Coordinated through the CUA Campus Ministry Offices, the D.C. Reads Program provides regular, extensive tutoring and other appropriate outreach services, involving over 100 students. The Catholic University of America is one of only two universities we know that has committed its resources, although limited, to the program cost coverage phased out by the federal government for the DC Reads Program.

Institutional commitment to outreach is not just limited to our traditional, undergraduate student population. As best said by Dean Douglas Kmiec, CUA Columbus School of Law, in his Welcome message in Fall 2001..."other [law} schools are justifiably proud when 5% of their classes pursue government and public service. CUA Law for generations has been offering up to six times that number, and never ceasing to ask, how else can we serve?"

A sample report and selection of articles describing further outreach initiatives was previously included as Appendix IV of our submission materials.

Institutional commitment to service, however, extends beyond the traditional outreach projects and programs. As a national institution committed to a strong local presence, CUA looks to its assets-a strong campus environment of 144 acres with a core of dedicated faculty and staff to influence local, regional and national issues of concern.
CUA maintains integrated emergency prevention, preparedness and response plans for potential threats or acts of man and nature. The tragic events of September 11, 2001 prompted a formal review of our plans and implementation measures to ensure our internal preparations and responses remain thorough and sound.

The University has taken a leadership role in urging continuous improvement of consortium, local and federal agency coordination and communication for emergency prevention, preparedness and response. While CUA has long-established, collaborative relationships with the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, D.C. Fire Department and other district agencies, institutional managers at many levels actively seek opportunities to expand collaborative partnerships to benefit the broader community.

CUA has emergency evacuation agreements with neighboring schools and institutions. The University is working with the D.C. Department of Health, through the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile Program, to provide an appropriate facility for the dispensing of medication in the event of an emergency. CUA has been formally recognized by

regulatory agencies for its exemplary safety and compliance programs, especially regarding the Environmental Health and Safety oversight for handling research materials. We have just been informed the Environmental Protection Agency is also honoring us for a model, environmentally sensitive pesticide program.

Please bear with me as I briefly describe our long-standing, and pro-active initiatives with the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department. CUA management and MPD representatives are an integral part of the annual new student and new parent orientations, and continue to participate actively in programs for returning students offered throughout the year. In addition to the direct student programs, MPD management meets regularly, on and off-campus, to coordinate and address matters of local and campus community concern.

Let me reflect for a moment some unique student programs at The Catholic University of America that are designed and delivered to develop students into responsible citizens.

First, during the new student and parent orientations, the "Expectations of a CUA Student" are made clear-and reinforced in all messages-from the President, personally and while students are together with their families, and by other staff following his lead. The expectations, along with core values and an "Undergraduate Student Honor Code Statement" are incorporated into our educational programs, our "Code of Student Conduct" and our disciplinary polices and procedures, under my leadership.

To address the national problem of alcohol abuse at the local campus level, CUA has provided the leadership in the metropolitan area for the initial development and subsequent enhancement of a Campus Alcohol Reduction Effort (CARE Program). CUA has pulled together the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, the Alcohol Beverage Regulatory Administration, and the other residential universities in the District of Columbia to work together to reduce abusive and underage drinking. We are especially grateful for our continued partnerships with Lt. Patrick Burke of the MPD, Roderick Woodson of the ABC Board, and Maria Delaney, Director of ABRA.

Citywide accomplishments of the CARE Program include:

- Successful support for a complete revision and strengthening of the D.C. Alcohol law and regulations. Support for this law by D.C. college and university presidents was led by CUA and its President, the Rev. David M. O'Connell, C.M.

This law resulted in increased number of inspectors, better enforcement of alcohol service laws and strengthening of regulations prohibiting service to minors.

- Suspension of the license of Odds Café, including the imposition by the Alcohol Beverage Control Board of substantial penalties including fines, the prohibition of the use of fliers on area college campuses and unfair "drink specials" solicitations aimed at underage college students.

- Exchange of information with other campuses on student judicial processes, possible alcohol-free events and potential "problem bars" in the District. This has emerged into an effort to better coordinate data collection on such bars with the Alcohol Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA) and to produce a more stringent model agreement for all bars regarding advertising and marketing aimed at students. CUA has promoted improved data collection as a member of the executive committee of NCCPUD, representing all D.C. universities to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded coalition.

- CUA provided a model being adopted by other schools in the District for interacting with incoming freshmen and their parents regarding alcohol abuse, including the "Parents CARE" program.

- Support for protest of license renewal at other problem bars.

- CUA provided a translation into Korean, for the many Korean owners of liquor stores and licensed liquor establishments, of a summary of D.C. alcohol regulations.

- Active participation by representatives from CARE members in drafting the final regulations for the new alcohol law.

<u>CUA CARE accomplishments on campus and in the Brookland neighborhood</u>:

- CUA has had strong support and leadership on reducing student alcohol abuse by the CUA President, and from the Vice President for Student Life and the university's campus ministry office. In at least one suspected violation off-campus, the CUA president, himself, reported it to the MPD.

- CUA's "Disciplined Properties" policy, promulgated to all students, extends the CUA Code of Student Conduct to nearby student housing in the Brookland area. CUA has also worked successfully with the D.C. Regulatory Administration to shut down rental properties of absentee landlords. The policy has led to a dramatic reduction in disruptive parties by students living in Brookland.

- The "Parents CARE" program which strengthened the non-alcohol message for incoming freshmen and parents, before and during CUA freshman orientation. Parents sign a written pledge to discuss alcohol issues with their student, with

assistance at orientation provided by the Metropolitan Police Department and the Center for Science in the Public Interest. Parents also receive supporting newsletters during the school year.

- CUA has banned alcohol use by all athletes, even those of legal drinking age, on all teams during the sports season.

- CUA has been able to pro-actively intervene to prevent potentially disruptive situations by investigating rumors more readily brought to the attention of staff by students willing to come forward for the "greater good.".

- CUA received a NCCPUD grant to strengthen its campus alcohol policies.

- CUA has worked closely with ABRA and MPD to support sting operations to reduce the use of fake ID's by its students and punish illegal alcohol sales.

- CUA has increased training for resident life employees regarding alcohol abuse by students, and has strengthened penalties for on-campus alcohol violations. CUA is one of the only local universities to notify parents on an underage student's first alcohol policy violation. Additionally, the President of the University writes a personal letter to all freshmen found in violation, with a copy to their parents.

- Associate Dean of Students Akima Rogers developed a student "Off-campus Living Guide." This is one part of a university effort to better educate students about how to conduct themselves as residents in the Brookland neighborhood.

CUA was the first, and remains one of two known universities in Washington. D.C. with the formal, model "Disciplined Properties Policy" developed to more effectively exercise disciplinary jurisdiction over students living off-campus. It extends beyond just alcohol violations.

CUA, responding to a request from an ANC-5A commissioner several years ago, developed a Memorandum of Understanding and testified at a formal hearing on behalf of the Brookland community to establish reasonable alcohol service restrictions for a local establishment. CUA also led the successful sanctioning against a district-based bar recruiting underage university students from area campuses, and the effort to prevent other establishments from doing the same. Area college students were being offered lucrative fees in exchange for filling bars with underage patrons. Just recently CUA was, as we have been over and over again, the sole testifier on behalf of the greater local

community at ABC Board hearings to call for regular, vigorous, more effective monitoring and sanctioning of a local bar establishment.

I wanted to spend a few moments on these student intervention programs to, again, reinforce our commitment to establishing and providing effective follow-through for student conduct conducive to living and learning in a community environment of respect and civility.

Additional information regarding the CARE Program and off-campus living initiatives are included in Appendix V and VI.

University management seeks, as a priority, the preservation of a pleasant campus, where formal teaching, learning and research, as well as co-curricular activities, thrive in a setting promoting responsible environmental stewardship. Students, faculty and staff work together in the CUA Environmental Awareness Initiative. The University has been partnering with a district-based certified and disadvantaged minority vendor for years, who is also participating in this collaborative program. In December 2001, the National Wildlife Foundation released a report ranking 891 colleges on their commitment to the environment. The Catholic University of America was identified as a leader in recycling and energy conservation.

Consistent with the current campus plan and long-range planning initiatives, the University has been relocating student residences, small and large, from the south campus to the main campus area. CUA has a long-standing, special arrangement with Garden Resources of Washington (GROW) for the use of the cleared and clean south campus properties to cultivate plants for neighborhood beautification, to grow fresh vegetables for the community and a local food bank, and to support the popular neighborhood hobby of gardening in a community-building setting. The University is pleased to continue to be able to support this initiative.

The generous support of a CUA alumnus from the class of 1925, Edward J. Pryzbyla, has provided the University with an opportunity to plant over 300 additional trees on campus during the period of the current campus plan. Matched with additional outdoor seating and attention to places of rest, the campus strives to be a more pleasant place to reflect, stroll and relax for students, faculty, staff and guests, such as our neighborhood senior citizens.

An integrated transportation management program for the safe and secure movement and accommodation of human and material resources is essential to serve our campus and neighborhood as a responsible environmental presence. CUA has an aggressive, integrated transportation management program to address on-going needs and concerns. A summary of the program is included as Appendix II.

I want to assure you we recognize the quality of an institution's physical environment contributes significantly to the recruitment and retention of faculty, students and staff. The Catholic University of America seeks to provide facilities that support the intellectual, cultural and spiritual life of the campus community through improvements that are also respectful of our neighborhood environment.

Now, I share our moment of truth. We need to at least recapture our enrollment position from over 20 years ago. We have leadership, we have energy and we have the commitment to strengthen our ability to enroll and retain both traditional and non-traditional students. To respond to current and prospective students, whose status during their time of enrollment may actually vary from undergraduate, graduate doctoral, graduate master's level, professional, fulltime and part-time, the University is committed to responsible growth of programs and facilities. To do so, however, we must be able to maintain and maximize our ability to compete in the student market of today and the future.

Of course, we would hope to do more renewal of our prominent core facilities and build new additions in a more aggressive timeframe. We recognize we face tough decisions when limited resources are available and there are competing priorities, such as additional safety and security investments. We are fortunate to have a campus setting with generous land area, so essential campus improvements, such as campus housing, can be accomplished without adverse impact on the surrounding local environment.

I hope in this short period of time, I have been able to convey to you our sincere and very real institutional commitment to responsible facility improvements for the continued recruitment and retention of students and employees dedicated to our collective community efforts.

We respectfully request your approval of our case, and thank you, again, for the opportunity to appear this evening.

Susan D. Pervi