

Zoning Statement

By

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May 11, 2006

Good evening, my name is Shirley Evans Cooley. I am the president of the Washington Association of Child Care Centers and the Director of Rehoboth Baptist Church Child Development Center located in Ward 8. I have been in the field of early childhood education for over 30 years serving the children of the District of Columbia.

I am here tonight to support the existing and future pre-school programs, child development centers and charter schools. It has come to our attention that a small group of neighborhood residents want the DC Zoning Commission to pass an "emergency" zoning restriction that would take away the rights of all small schools to exist in the city's residential neighborhoods.

The motivation that brings me here is my undying passion for the well being of children and the known fact that neighborhood centered learning facilities allows parents and families to better partner with the schools and be active in the building of a culture of learning. Young minds are developed when the environment is filled with proficient teachers, is nurturing, safe and accessible to all stakeholders. To block child development centers, charter schools and other small schools from the neighborhoods also prohibits the ability of the family to strengthen their involvement with the growth of their children's academic and socio-emotional development.

Washington DC stands third in the country with nationally accredited homes and centers that service our children. We as care givers are aggressively moving forward to give our children a quality education and there are some who would stop this progress. Their primary health facility (DC General) was taken away which impeded their access to quality health care. NOW the intent of this legislation is to also deny communities of what has proven to be a sound plan for a quality education. This legislation can not take root or again the most vulnerable will suffer.

ZONING COMMISSION

CASE No. 06-06

EXHIBIT No. 37

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District of Columbia
CASE NO. 06-06
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