



Good Evening, my name is Corwin Knight. I am a native of Washington, DC. I am the Founder and CEO of the Hope Foundation, which is a social service provider that implements communication skills and conflict resolution skills to youth who attend the Brookland Manor Community Center as well as community centers located in the metropolitan Washington, DC area. It is with great pleasure that I submit this written testimony to the committee and offer my support for MidCity Financial and the Brookland Manor Redevelopment.

I am also a former offender of the judiciary system who has successfully transitioned back into society. My past as a former offender and ward of the justice system who transitioned to create and head The Hope Foundation Reentry Network Inc. makes me uniquely qualified to work with individuals and families who come from communities that look like the communities that I grew up in. The Brookland Manor Apartment community, owned and operated by Mid City Financial, is one such community. That is why it pleases me to be able to offer programs to MidCity Financial in the Brookland Manor Community as well as lend my support to the incredible work that it offers.

My organization's mission is to bridge the gap between ex-offenders and society by offering mentorship and linkages to employment opportunities. I work extensively with diverse client populations, including incarcerated men, women, transgender, families, substance abusers, and at risk youth. My organization's goal is to reduce the number of offenders who re-enter the system by fostering programs that will be available upon an inmate's immediate release. I also work to provide youth who are deemed "at risk" because of their family structure, financial status or exposure to the justice systems with alternatives to a life of crime.

The Hope Foundation has established a link to provisional service which is a fundamental component of individual stabilization and long term success. Our objectives are to reduce recidivism and increase public

safety in our communities and provide effective evidence-based support services to men and women incarcerated in the DC Department of Corrections and making participants more self-supporting, responsive and productive members of society. That is why we were so happy to partner with Community Services Foundation (CSF). Like us, CSF is committed to providing individuals and families with the tools that they need to make better choices and become productive members of society. Our relationship with CSF began over a year ago when we partnered with them, through the help of a DC Trust grant for the Congress Park Community to provide communication skills and conflict resolution strategies to youth. The program was so successful; we were able to expand our services to include the Brookland Manor Community Center in our program offerings this past summer.

The youth in the Brookland Manor Community are bright, engaging young people who are looking for an opportunity to shine. They wanted the tools to avoid conflict and to help maintain peace in their homes and in their communities. I know that CSF's work in the Brookland Manor Community Center is fundamental to the success of the property. I know the young people are better as a result of their interaction with the Center and the resources that CSF provides. On a personal level, I know this type of care and concern is needed to positively affect lives. It is the type of care I wish I had received.

My strength lies in my authentic and common sense approach at translating complex concepts and issues. In addition to several certifications, including Recovery Coaching and Parenting, I bring a unique expertise of having experienced major life obstacles, overcoming them and the ability to translate personal experiences of restoration in a way that is universally identifiable and applicable. Without a doubt, I know my experiences are incredibly insightful. I have the ability to paint a living picture that connects to the heart, soul and inner wisdom of the listener allowing them to make the mental leap from their current circumstance. Because of my authentic role, community partners, like the Community Services Foundation and the Brookland Manor Community Center are able to gain the tools they need to make the community better.

I know the changes that are happening in the community may be scary for some residents who are concerned about their place in the new community. My work with MidCity Financial, Community Services Foundation

and the Brookland Manor Community Center makes me confident that resident concerns are being considered in the development of the new community and resident services are slated to continue in the future. I commend the property on their dedication to this program and am committed to maintaining my relationship with them in our attempts to continue positively impacting the lives of people who need the services that we have to offer.