

The Committee of 100

on the Federal City



Testimony before the Council of the District of Columbia, Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization DHCD/HPTF FY20 Budget Oversight Hearing on behalf of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, April 23, 2019, 1:30pm, Wilson Bldg. room 412

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I am Kirby Vining, Chair of the Housing Subcommittee of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, presenting testimony on behalf of the Committee of 100 concerning oversight of the FY20 budget for the Department of Housing and Community Development. These remarks are presented in the DHCD oversight hearing because they address management and fiscal administration of the HPTF by DHCD.

We read with deep concern the D.C. Auditor's March, 2018 report that contains details of DHCD and HPTF operations. The HPTF has a huge responsibility to administer a large number of complex programs that house many of Washington's most vulnerable residents. But the Auditor noted that proper fiscal accounting of DHCD's expenditures on a rather wide variety of projects and programs was lacking and has made several recommendations to address these issues. Improving internal controls and oversight of projects and programs is of great concern, both to the Auditor and the C100.

So it is with some alarm that we read in the Auditor's February 2019 report, Seventy-seven Percent of DC Auditor's Recommendations Implemented or in Progress (DHCD portion starting on page 19), that while most of the Auditor's recommendations are "in progress," the Auditor finds that DHCD "has not provided sufficient documentary support" to establish that this is the case.

The original fiscal accounting of DHCD projects and programs is thus re-emphasized in this second report and we share that concern. Our government has a fiscal obligation and moral responsibility to be a better steward of public funds for public projects than has been demonstrated, and we would like the Council to emphasize in this budget oversight process that accountability and transparency are necessary, both for the sake of fiscal responsibility, but also for the sake of the people who are the customers of DHCD projects and programs.

<http://dcauditor.org/report/stronger-management-of-the-housing-production-trust-fund-could-build-more-affordable-housing/> 20Mar2018

<http://dcauditor.org/report/seventy-seven-percent-of-district-of-columbia-auditor-recommendations-implemented-or-in-progress/> 25Feb2019