



Public Hearing Testimony on the FY 2020 Budget for Fairfax County

**Fairfax County, Virginia
April 10, 2019**

I am Judy Helein, and I am the co-president of the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area.

I am testifying today to applaud the County for this strong budget and to offer four specific statements about the FY 2020 budget.

The League of Women Voters is a grass roots organization made up of volunteers. We have a long history in Fairfax County; our organization has proudly been serving the County for 71 years. We are nonpartisan political organization that never supports or opposes candidates for office, or political parties. Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to anyone -- men and women -- age 16 and older. We care deeply about elections and voting as well as other important issues facing our County such as behavioral health, education, affordable housing, transportation, and diversity and inclusion.

On behalf of the League, I am pleased to submit the four following statements on the FY 2020 budget.

1. We want to thank you for fully funding the schools and giving pay increases to our teachers and county employees. This pay increase is overdue and well deserved.
2. We support the added and much needed funding for behavioral health such as Diversion First and initiatives to address the opioid epidemic. These are important steps to providing mental health and substance abuse services in the community rather than through incarceration.
3. We urge our County to make funding decisions in accordance with OneFairfax that promotes diversity and inclusion in our community. This includes funding for affordable housing and efficient transportation.
4. Our County's election office will likely need funds to enhance its already strong satellite absentee voting program and a repeat of the 2015-2016 reserve fund established for the eventual replacement of elections equipment. We are fortunate that our County has the resources and expertise to hold multiple well-run elections each year. We hope that you will make this funding available to ensure that we continue to have state-of-the-art elections equipment.

We want to compliment County staff on the quality and availability of the information provided to residents about not only the proposed budget but also the history and extent of services provided to residents.

Our members have been attending the budget town hall meetings throughout the County, and we also have participated in the strategic planning sessions on our vision for the County. Our

members have given their feedback throughout these meetings. We thank you and County staff for making sure that all of our voices are heard!