Chairman Phil Mendelson  
Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Suite 504  
Washington, D.C. 20004

May 12, 2016

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

The Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers (WRAG) is an organization representing a cross-section of regional philanthropy, including family, community, corporate, and independent foundations, as well as corporate giving programs, governmental grantmakers, grantmaking public charities, and individual philanthropists. The most recently available data show that WRAG members collectively invested $228 million in the region, much of which went to organizations focused on the health, education, and well-being of vulnerable children and adults. Today we are writing to express our collective concern for the over 6,000 low-income children and youth who are at risk of losing access to high quality out-of-school time and summer programming as a result of the dissolution of the DC Trust.

As your partners in the provision of youth development services, we know firsthand how impactful these programs are. Quality out-of-school time and summer programs keep our young people safe and engaged in meaningful, productive activities during non-school hours. They promote whole-child development and provide opportunities for deep and sustained family engagement. In short, these programs are a critical part of our upstream prevention and social service safety net for thousands of children, youth, and families.

For these reasons and more, we hope you will commit to protecting the over 6,000 children and youth facing a loss in services by maintaining the $4.9 million allocated in the proposed FY17 budget. Further, we want to express our support for the placement of these funds in a reputable and experienced institution that is able to efficiently and transparently utilize these funds for their philanthropic and programmatic purposes, including vitally important technical assistance and capacity building support, in order to ensure no disruption in either the quantity or quality of services next year.

Finally, we want to express our collective belief that, in many ways, this is an opportunity. An opportunity for us to come together as a community to design a system of youth development
funding and services that truly moves the District forward in closing the opportunity gap for ‘at-risk’
children and youth. We firmly believe that taking several months to reflect on what has and has not
worked locally, to learn from other communities, and to engage experts in youth development and
youth funding strategies will ultimately lead us to the best solution moving forward. Know that, as a
sector, the philanthropic community joins with you in recognizing the seriousness of this issue and
the critical importance of public funding and attention to our city’s children and youth.

Sincerely,

Tamara Lucas Copeland
President
Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers

CC: Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie
Councilmember Vincent Orange
Councilmember Anita Bonds
Councilmember David Grosso
Councilmember Elissa Silverman
Councilmember Brianne Nadeau
Councilmember Jack Evans
Councilmember Mary M. Cheh
Councilmember Brandon T. Todd
Councilmember Charles Allen
Councilmember Yvette Alexander
Councilmember LaRuby May