



A CATALYST FOR PROGRESS IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

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September 18, 2016

Mary Cheh, Ward 3 Council Member
Chair, Committee on Transportation and the Environment
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 108
Washington, D.C. 20004

RE: Tree Canopy Protection Amendment Act of 2015; No. B21-0318

Dear Members of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment:

The Federal City Council applauds the Tree Canopy Protection Amendment Act. The Act provides a much-needed update to the Urban Forest Preservation Act of 2002, better known as the "Tree Bill."

The Amendment Act expands the Urban Forestry Administration's role for planting and maintenance of trees on all District properties, revises out-of-date fees and fines, and similar modifications. However, it could do more. Please consider the following modifications to better protect and restore the City's tree canopy for benefit of future generations:

- **Change the size limit for a Special Tree from 47" circumference to 40".** While it would be impractical to enforce removing trees smaller than 40" because professional assistance is not always needed, trees 40" or greater would require a contractor (and a permit). Forty inches is therefore a reasonable – and enforceable – minimum.
- **Remove the provision that would authorize Tree Fund moneys for tree maintenance.** This would undermine the reason the UFPA was passed in the first place – to replace canopy lost from tree removal by replanting new trees.
- **Partition the Tree Fund into two accounts – 50% for tree planting on right-of-ways and other DC lands; 50% for tree planting on private lots.** The Tree Fund has always been used exclusively to plant street trees. While use of some Tree Fund dollars for this purpose is reasonable, exclusive use of it is not – especially given that most planting opportunities have shifted to parks and private lands.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anthony A Williams
Chief Executive Officer