

Testimony of Philip E. Pannell, Executive Director of the Anacostia Coordinating Council before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management

December 12, 2007

Good Morning, Madame Chairwoman. My name is Philip Pannell and I am the Executive Director of the Anacostia Coordinating Council (ACC), which is in its 24th year as a non-profit, volunteer consortium of individuals and organizations concerned and involved with the revitalization of Anacostia and its adjacent neighborhoods. The ACC engages in information gathering and sharing, networking, advocacy and community organizing.

The community is excited about plans to move the new Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to the west campus of Saint Elizabeths Hospital and the local business opportunities that will be available. For the purposes of the DHS development, ACC defines local businesses as those that are located east of the Anacostia River and particularly those that are in Ward 8. The ACC recommends that the local businesses be involved in the planning, construction and operations in all appropriate aspects of the DHS headquarters development and all on-going contractual work.

ACC recommends that the General Services Administration and the District of Columbia government engage in the nurturing of the current local businesses and encourage businesses to locate east of the Anacostia River. It would ideal if the DHS would require contractors and vendors to set up offices in close proximity to the Anacostia Metro station. Also, the ACC recommends that the businesses that are established on the campus be locally owned.

The development that occurred on and around the Navy Yard is an example of the opportunities that are available to the Anacostia River with the DHS. The Navy Yard development has had a cascading impact on that community and enhanced the vibrant 8th Street business corridor from Pennsylvania Avenue to M Street. Because of the dearth of eclectic businesses on Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, ACC encourages the establishment of retail businesses of all kinds, such as food, clothing, hardware, informational technology, entertainment, etc.

Over the years the ACC has been acknowledged for its outreach strategies and its success in organizing large meetings to engage community conversation and involvement. It is more than willing and able to be an outreach vehicle for the GSA and the District of Columbia government and welcomes the opportunity to forge a contractual relationship. In the August 31, 2007 preliminary draft to the National Capital Planning Commission for comment, the GSA's master plan for The DHS Headquarters Consolidation at St. Elizabeth West Campus cites in its Community Involvement Summary the meetings that

GSA representatives have had with the ACC dating back to 2005. ACC stands ready to continue that constructive engagement.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear before you this morning.