

Healthy Families ❖ Thriving Communities Collaborative Council

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Testimony of Eugene Kinlow
On Behalf of the Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaborative Council
before the
Committee on Human Services, DC Council
Concerning the
The Child and Family Services Agency's FY09 Budget Hearing
April 12, 2008

Good morning, Chairperson Wells and members of the Committee on Human Services. I am Eugene Kinlow, Chair of the Healthy Families/Thriving Communities (HFTC) Collaborative Council. I am representing all of the chairs of the Collaboratives, many of whom are present for this hearing. They in turn represent many other volunteers who sit on their boards and clock thousands of hours without monetary compensation. They represent both giving and giving back; our best hope for making our fragile neighborhoods healthy.

We appreciate this opportunity to express our support for CFSA's FY'09 budget. There are, however, a number of areas in which we find the Mayor's request to be inadequate as it relates to the agency's partnership with the Collaboratives. I want to use my time before you today to address one of our concerns; that is, the need to provide adequate funding to support full implementation of the co-location initiative, or as we are now calling it, The Partnership for Community Based Services.

As you know, it has long been our vision that the Collaboratives, as unique partners with the city should serve as the engine that drives more currently centralized child and family services into the community. It is for that reason that we were thrilled when, in the FY'08 budget, CFSA proposed, and the Mayor the City Council approved a

\$1.7 million appropriation to support both start up and first year operational funding for the co-location of 75 CFSA In-Home unit staff into the community in partnership with the Collaboratives. Others on our panel will address how the our joint progress on the programmatic components of this effort are advancing.

However, the on-going funding to support this initiative in FY'09 was not included in the agency's base budget. Therefore, CFSA's FY'09 budget request included an Enhancement for \$1,028,000 to cover these costs, including rent, utilities, copier leases, communications costs and vehicle leases. However, the Mayor's budget provides only \$514,000 of this request . Since leases and other first time costs for co-location are, for the most part, already committed, reducing the scope of the re-location initiative is not an option. Therefore, this effort must be fully funded in FY'09.

Upon review of the projected on-going co-location operating costs, and adjusting for some modifications in the Collaboratives' original proposed budgets, it has been determined that an additional \$401,000 will be needed to assure full funding of co-location. This amount would bring the line item to \$915,000 from the \$514,000 provided in the Mayor's budget.

In addition, under the joint program design developed between CFSA and the Collaboratives, CFSA committed to cashing out five positions and allocating that money to the Collaboratives for five family support workers. To date, this action has not taken place and funding for the family support workers is not included in the FY'09 budget. Therefore, the Collaboratives request \$235,000 to cover the salary and fringe benefits for these positions consistent with the agreement reached with CFSA.

This effort to integrate the services of the Collaboratives and CFSA has the potential to redefine our work with families, and to serve as a model for additional partnerships with other city agencies. We urge you to add \$636, 000 to the '09 budget so that this seminal effort can move forward.

Thank you.