



The District's Dime

Going Beyond the Budget Book

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The Mayor's Revised Revenue Priority List

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You may have heard the phrase, “the mayor’s wish list” thrown around this budget season. What exactly is on this list and how should it impact your advocacy strategy? DCFPI is here to explain it to you.

The mayor’s proposed budget [overview](#) presentation included a list of 16 programs totaling \$70 million that did not make it into the FY 2014 budget itself, but will be funded if the city’s revenue projections for 2014 are revised upward before the end of 2013. The official name of the list is the “revised revenue estimate contingency priority list.” The order of items on the list represents the order in which items will be funded if revenue collections improve at the end of FY 2014.

DCFPI hopes the Council will take the extra step needed to move some of these key programs from the “contingency list” to actually being funded within the budget before it is approved in May. There have been similar lists in the budget for the past two years, with only a handful of things funded in 2012 and nothing funded from the list in 2013. Here are some of the programs on the list we think are high priority:

- **\$11 million to increase the child care subsidies.** The first item on the contingency priority list is \$11 million for OSSE to increase the subsidy rate by 10 percent and provide child care subsidies to 200 more families with infants and toddlers. The bulk of this funding would go towards increasing the reimbursement rate paid to child care providers, which has not been updated since 2006 and is based on child care costs in 2004. A rate increase would help ensure that providers can provide quality child care and that families have access to child care centers throughout the city.
- **\$5.8 million to support provider rate increases at the Office on Aging.** Most of this would go toward an increase in the contracts with agencies that provide services to seniors. These contracts have remained essentially flat-funded for ten years. This item also includes \$900,000 to hire two additional social workers each at the five lead agencies that provide aging services, \$300,000 in operational support for five wellness centers, and \$440,000 for Washington Elderly Handicapped Transportation Service (WEHTS) operations, including raises for drivers, who have not received raises for several years.

- **\$4 million to support additional adult literacy and career and technology education.** Both Adult and Family Education and Career and Technical Education stand to see funding cuts in the proposed FY 2014 OSSE budget. These programs help residents by providing adult education services, including family literacy, and offering college and career pathways to students based on their needs.
- **\$1.9 million to expand mental health services in schools.** The fourth item on the list is \$1.9 million to provide school-based mental health services to 19 additional schools, beyond the services already being provided in 53 DC Public Schools and public charter schools.
- **\$4 million for the Program on Work Employment and Responsibility (POWER).** POWER serves TANF families whose head of household is unable to meet program requirements due to incapacity, such as a physical health, mental health, or substance abuse problem. These funds will help increase the capacity of the POWER program to serve more eligible TANF families. Without these funds, families with these problems will face a steep cut in TANF benefits next year, if they have received assistance for more than 60 months, even though their ability to replace lost income is limited.
- **\$1 million to provide application assistance to first-time applicants for federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.** This would help individuals who are also applying for the District's Interim Disability Assistance (IDA) program at the same time. The SSI application process can take more than a year. There is substantial research showing that early assistance in the SSI process, which the District currently does not offer, decreases the application wait time and greatly increases the likelihood of getting approved for SSI.
- **\$10.9 million to fund Schedule H for property tax relief.** Schedule H is a property tax credit targeted at low-income DC residents who spend an excessive portion of their income on property taxes. This past December, the DC Council took steps to make Schedule H [more effective](#) for DC residents. The changes made include raising the income eligibility level from \$20,000 to \$50,000 and simplifying complicated rules that limit participation. But without funding in the fiscal year 2014 budget, these changes will not go into effect.

See below for the full revised revenue priority list that was released with the mayor's proposed budget:

1. **Office of the State Superintendent of Education:** \$11 million to increase infant and toddler slots by 200 and to increase the subsidy rate by 10 percent
2. **DC Office on Aging:** \$5.8 million to support provider rate increase
3. **Office of the State Superintendent of Education:** \$4 million for additional adult literacy-career and technology education
4. **Department of Behavioral Health:** \$2 million for the expansion of the school-based mental health program
5. **Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation:** \$3 million to increase funding to cover summer initiatives
6. **Department of Human Services:** \$4 million for POWER expansion

7. **Department of Human Services:** \$1 million to provide SSI application assistance for first time applicants
8. **HHS Disaster and Behavioral Health:** \$0.5 million for additional staff for CPEP, Mobile Crisis and HOP (8 FTEs)
9. **Department of Human Services:** An additional \$4 million for rapid rehousing
10. **DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities:** \$7 million for New Arts Stabilization Grant Program
11. **Office of the Chief Technology Officer:** \$2.2 million to enhance PeopleSoft program
12. **Department of Forensic Sciences:** \$1.9 million for civilian Crime Scene Response Program
13. **Department of Housing and Community Development:** \$0.7 million to increase small business technical assistance
14. **General Fund Revenue:** \$10 million to reduce the commercial property tax rate on the first \$3 million of assessed value from \$1.65 to \$1.55 per \$100 of assessed value
15. **General Fund Revenue:** \$10.9 million to fund the Schedule H Property Tax Relief Act of 2012
16. **DC self-determination advocacy:** \$0.45 million to support additional DC self-determination advocacy