



# The District's Dime

Going Beyond the Budget Book

The DC Fiscal Policy Institute blog  
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## Next Week: Big Opportunity for Health Exchange Budget Input

By Wes Rivers

“Winter is coming,” which means DC’s budget season is fast approaching! As DC government agencies prepare their budgets, the DC Health Benefit Exchange Authority – also known as DC Health Link – is offering advocates a sneak peek at their preliminary fiscal year 2017 budget proposal next **Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2:30 pm at DC Fiscal Policy Institute (820 First Street NE)**. The meeting offers a great chance for advocates and DC Health Link consumers to ask questions and provide feedback on the agencies’ funding priorities.

Among other areas, DC Health Link’s executive director, Mila Kofman will present proposed funding levels for:

- **Consumer assistance** – DC Health Link’s In-Person Assister program has been successful in enrolling residents in Medicaid or private health insurance. The program’s enrollment events across the community, in libraries and in churches, have helped thousands of residents get access to the coverage they need. So far, most consumer assistance has been funded through federal grants. It will be important to hear from DC Health Link how those programs will be funded in the absence of federal grants which expire in 2016.
- **Information Technology and the Contact Center** – As DC Health Link gets further along in its development, it will be important that it makes investments in the usability and consumer friendliness of the online portal. That means investment in IT consultants and software upgrades. The contact/call center is also an important vehicle for consumer assistance – applicants can get real time help with the online forms.

The meeting will have ample time for participants to comment and ask questions of Director Kofman and her staff. This is a great opportunity to weigh in before the budget is sent to the DC Health Exchange’s Executive Board for their approval.

So mark your calendars for next Monday, and if you would like to attend, **please RSVP to Wes Rivers ([rivers@dcfpi.org](mailto:rivers@dcfpi.org) or 202-325-8821)**.