**RESOLUTION OF THE WARD THREE DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BUDGET PROCESS**

**Passed 2/27/19**

Whereas, citizens of the District of Columbia have the desire and duty to influence the spending of their tax dollars in the FY 2020 budget and all subsequent budgets;

Whereas, elected officials have a responsibility to listen to their constituents and consider their input as they develop the budget;

Whereas, the DC Council and Mayor’s office have a very open budget process including Budget Engagement Forums, performance oversight hearings, Agency budget oversight hearings, a Council hearing on the overall proposed budget, and a Council committee markup for each agency’s budget;

Whereas, this open process is desired by the citizens of the District of Columbia and it is important for democracy that citizens have substantive options for influencing the budget;

Whereas, that open process ends at the most critical juncture, when the final budget is compiled and the agency budgets go back to the DC Council where they are merged into a comprehensive budget (The Budget Request Act);

Whereas, this process takes behind closed doors, in secrecy, and the budget is usually released by the Council Chair at midnight immediately before the full Council votes;

Whereas, the budget, a long and complex document, is usually released with no indication of what changes were made after the DC Council went into session behind closed doors;

Whereas, the short time frame gives the citizens of the District of Columbia and the representatives of organizations who speak for them insufficient time to digest and respond to the budget;

And whereas, this interferes with the fundamental right of citizens to make a final review of the budget and reverse changes to what was negotiated during the open process;

Therefore, be it resolved that in 2019 and in each fiscal year going forward, that the Council Chair release the comprehensive budget at least 2 business days before final vote on the Budget Request Act.

Be it further resolved that this year’s schedule be implemented as follows: The Budget Request Act for the FY 2020 budget is currently scheduled for release on Tuesday, May 14. The budget should therefore be released no later than close of business Thursday, May 9, leaving Friday, May 10 and Monday, May 13 as the 2 business days before the first and final vote on the Budget Request Act.

Be it further resolved that the budget be released in a format that clearly indicates the changes that were made.

Be it further resolved that legislation be passed by the Council during the current legislative session to make this two-day review a standard part of the budget process.

Be it further resolved that the Chair of the Ward Three Democratic Committee and his designees are authorized to take all reasonable actions to implement this resolution.

**Passed by:**

**The Ward 3 Democratic Committee**