

Thank you Council Member Pinto for introducing the FUN bill and thank you Chairman White for holding this hearing. I am a member of the Ward 2 Education Council, a Hardy Middle School parent, and a Ward 3 resident who lives on and enjoys our beautiful 2021 renovation of Hardy Park. I'm here to urge you to support Bill B24-0554 and to amend it to include educational buildings.

I moved to the district in 2018 and have since remained astonished that students in the public school system here are constantly having to fight to make use adequate resources when those resources have already been allocated for public use.

- Private, for-profit uses of public lands and buildings should, at an absolute minimum, be subject to Council review.
- In the few years that I have lived in Washington DC, I have observed the renewal of a private school's lease on the public school building outside my house (the Old Hardy school), a renewal that lasts through 2038, and generates scandalously low city revenue;
- this was a hand-off that occurred quietly and without Council review on Christmas eve during a time when public schools in my ward are so bursting at the seams that students are eating lunches at 2:30 in the afternoon because there is not enough space to contain

them in cafeterias; and they are crammed into trailers in parking lots in order to have enough space for learning.

- I have also witnessed a private school's contract extension for use of the public field where my child's public school sports teams practice;
- I've watched as busses arrive to pick up and transport kids across the city for an hour's drive, a waste of their time and of public resources all so that a private entity can exclusively enjoy a public field. I've also observed, in consternation, my child complain about loss of time for homework because he rode on a bus across town for practice but because the traffic was so heavy the kids never even had an opportunity to get out of the bus; they had to turn around and go home in order to make it back in time for pick up.
- Again, this field contract renewal took place without Council review.
- And now I find myself reading about plans to build a multi-million dollar public elementary school to sit on top of a multi-million dollar public park renovation, a building that will be located right next door to the public school that is already there for such a purpose but has been leased to a private entity.

- It all strikes me as rather wasteful, as if these public goods are not being used in the interest of the public at all. They are being redirected, under executive oversight, to benefit private interests.
- Indeed, it is positively unconscionable that DCPS students and families find themselves constantly having to compete for resources against private schools that are explicitly designed for children from families who can afford to pay a tuition of \$60,000 per child per year.
- The Council should be in a position to hold hearings on any such transactions involving the private lease of public lands and public buildings.
- I ask that you specifically amend the bill to cover not only fields but also buildings and leases such as the Old Hardy school. I ask you to please mark up and pass this bill quickly.