HELPFUL TIPS AND POINTERS FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON CITY BUDGET

• The City Budget Hearing starts at 5:30pm, but people often show up as early as 2:30pm to wait in line to testify earlier in the evening.
• The later you show up, the later you will testify. In the past, public testimony has lasted past 10:00pm.
• It is helpful to bring two copies of your testimony: one copy that is one minute and one that is two minutes.
• It is helpful to time yourself and practice beforehand.
• It is better to have less material and speak slowly, than lots of material and speak rapidly. It is always easier to understand when you take your time delivering your remarks.
• You are likely to be given the option to testify either an individual or as part of a group. It is good to decide ahead of time so you can plan together and prepare the appropriate amount of time for your testimony.
• If you testify as an individual, you usually only get either ONE or TWO minutes to testify.
• If you testify as a group, the entire group usually gets either FOUR or FIVE minutes to testify, regardless of how many people are in the group.
• To count as a group Council usually requires three people at a minimum.
• If you testify as a group, Council doesn’t want you to also testify individually.
• SHSC leaders will be there with red felt scarves for people who support the SHSC recommendations to wear. Councilmembers can see the room full of red scarves from their seats in Council Chambers, making the support visible, even when someone doesn’t testify. Be sure to get and wear your red scarf!
• You can potentially be waiting a long time, so make sure to bring water or snacks so you don’t get hungry.
• City Hall security will close the Chamber doors when the room hits capacity. If there are more people in line (there always are), people are redirected to the “overflow” room where they can watch the hearing on TV. People in the overflow room are able to move upstairs to Chambers when there is room.
• Remember your number on the sign-in sheet. Council will call the numbers of upcoming speakers and you can go upstairs to Council Chambers just before it is your turn to speak.

Optional Bonus Points:
• Put the longer version of your testimony on letterhead of your organization, or just a nice-looking format, be sure it includes your name. Bring nine copies and give it to Council when you testify. This is also handy if you need to leave before you get to testify, you can still leave your testimony in writing.