

Written Testimony of Bettina Lawton to the Fairfax County Human Services Council On behalf of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board

FY 2021 Advertised Budget
March 16, 2020

On behalf of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Service Board, thank you for the opportunity to submit a written response to Fairfax County's FY 2021 Advertised Budget (released Feb. 25, 2020). As chair of the CSB Board, I want to express my gratitude for the continued support of the Human Services Council as the CSB works to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our community.

During FY 2020, we served over 21,000 people, of all ages, who have mental health challenges, substance use disorders, and developmental delays and disabilities. The CSB greatly appreciates that the FY 2021 Advertised Budget includes funding increases to key county and CSB initiatives. We are also pleased to see 37 Full Time Equivalent staff positions included in the proposed budget, and believe the budget meets the CSB's critical needs for FY 2021. With that in mind, we ask for this council's support for full funding of CSB's priority areas as presented in the FY 2021 Advertised Budget, including:

- The total \$1.58 million and 12 FTE positions for Diversion First. This county priority continues to be a focus of the CSB. The CSB's designated portion of \$535,282 and 3 FTE positions will provide support for discharge planning, housing assistance, and specialty dockets.
- The \$1.38 million and 11 FTE positions for CSB to provide Addiction Recovery and Treatment Services. Substance use treatment remains a top county and CSB priority. The \$1.49 million and 9 FTE positions for the Opioid Task Force. The FY 2021 Advertised Budget provides \$643,482 to the CSB to continue increasing the vital services of medical detoxification and substance use prevention programming. The CSB is grateful for the county's ongoing commitment to the multi-agency Opioid Task Force.
- The \$930,040 and 8 FTE positions for support coordination, which will help the CSB meet the requirements of state mandated support coordination services to individuals with developmental disabilities.
- The \$342,383 and 3 FTE positions to help expand self-directed services for individuals with developmental disabilities. This funding will help provide equitable and sustainable services for people with developmental disabilities so they can learn or improve important skills and have a life like ours.
- The 9 FTE positions for CSB's utilization management team to address the fiscal and administrative challenges presented to the CSB as staff navigate the requirements of six separate managed care organizations. This funding will allow the CSB to continue to strengthen its healthcare business operations.

Moving into this next fiscal year, the CSB has ongoing concerns with potential fiscal challenges as related to the base budget reduction in state general funds for Medicaid. As a result of action taken in the 2019 General Assembly session, the CSB did receive \$1 million last fiscal year to help

make up for the \$1.69 million FY 2019 cut. However, no funding was included in the recently passed state biennium budget, and the CSB faces a \$4.3 million cut in FY 2020. CSB anticipates that it will receive Medicaid funding to make up only one half of this general fund reduction. With this shortfall lingering, we will keep the Human Services Council and Board of Supervisors apprised of any fiscal challenges.

As the CSB looks beyond FY 2021, we are encouraged by the county's continued efforts to expand affordable housing options in an equitable manner. The Commonwealth's recently passed two-year spending plan also includes an investment in housing. With additional state dollars for permanent supportive housing for 1,630 people with serious mental illness, the CSB will continue to focus efforts on providing services in conjunction with the additional supportive housing opportunities. While housing is critical, individuals placed in permanent supportive housing need a high-level of support to help them identify goals to continue recovery and live successfully in the community. To address this challenge, the CSB is requesting the Human Services Resource Plan include funding for additional Program of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) teams each year for the next 3-4 years. Multidisciplinary PACT teams provide services in the community 24-hours a day, seven days per week.

Thank you again for providing this opportunity for the CSB to share its FY 2021 budget priorities. We remain deeply appreciative of the sustained and generous support we receive from Fairfax County.