Clinic Director
Marian MacGregor, B.A. (Hons.), LL.B.

Counsel
Richard C. Ferriss, B.A. (Hons.), LL.B.
Natasha Persaud, B.A. (Hons.), LL.B.
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Community Outreach Counsellor
Christine Sinclair, B.A. (Hons.), MSW

September 6, 2012

Frances Pritchard
10th floor, West Tower, city Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Re: Ex 22.12 Operating Variance Report for Year Ended

Dear Mayor Ford and members of the Executive Committee:

We are writing in support of Councillor Pasternak's motion to resurplus social programs that were cut in the 2012 budget. The funding cuts affected numerous essential and valuable programs in the city, including the Youth Outreach Workers, the Hardship Fund, sports equipment purchases, and a program which supplemented the cost of dentures for seniors. We are now faced with an opportunity to redress these cuts by utilizing last year's surplus.

Our student community legal clinic works with impoverished individuals living in priority neighbourhoods who need these supports from the city. Our clients on ODSP, for example, make use of the hardship fund to help pay for their medication and prosthetics. The youth in the Jane-Finch community work closely with the Youth Outreach Workers. Their work in the community helps to keep our adolescents engaged and out of trouble, which reduces crime rates and keeps our streets safe. The mentorship provided by Youth Outreach Workers, combined with sports programming and equipment purchases, give our youth the tools they need to become healthy adults.

During the May 7th Budget Meeting, Councillor Pasternak made a motion to use $1,707,600 set aside for the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve to fund these supportive programs. Unfortunately for the city, this motion was lost. We urge the Executive Committee to reconsider Councillor Pasternak's suggestion and continue funding these programs through to December 31st, 2012.

Councillor Pasternak is a shrewd economist who keeps a balanced budget. His proposal will not jeopardize the financial stability of this city. In fact, we believe Councillor Pasternak's proposal is needed to help strengthen Toronto as a caring community that reduces crime and invests in its priority neighbourhoods, youth, and seniors.

Sincerely,

COMMUNITY AND LEGAL AID
SERVICES PROGRAMME

Brittany Harris
On behalf of CLASP Students & Lawyers