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Executive Committee
10 Floor, West Tower, City Hall
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October 5, 2012

Re: Hardship Fund, EX23.15 Changes to Provincial Funding Approaches for Homeless Prevention and Social Assistance Programs: Implementation Strategies and Issues

To: Members of the Executive Committee

I am writing to express our deep concern regarding the future of the City's Hardship Fund. The Hardship Fund provides emergency medical support to 1,500 residents annually, who are living in poverty and not eligible for provincial social assistance. In the City's own words, the Hardship Fund "serves primarily poor seniors who face potentially life threatening situations if they cannot obtain needed medical items." As EX23.15 states, 93% of recipients are seniors over the age of 61, with serious health problems, living in poverty and on a fixed income. Medical items include incontinence supplies, prosthetics, hospital beds, medications and the like. The Hardship Fund costs \$1 million and amounts to about 60 cents on the average property tax bill.

As EX23.15 makes clear, there are currently no plans to continue the Hardship Fund beyond December 2012. We were delighted that Councillor Palacio, during the 2012 City budget process, championed the Hardship Fund, moving a motion to save the fund in 2012 which was supported by the Executive Committee.

We are here today to ask you to show that same support for poor and ill seniors by moving a motion that City Council direct the City Manager to ensure that the Hardship Fund is fully funded in the 2013 City budget and that it continue to operate consistent with current City guidelines.

Poor and ill seniors need to know that the Hardship Fund is going to be there for them in 2013. We urge you to make that clear today by passing a motion to reinstate the Hardship Fund.

Sincerely,

John Campey
Executive Director