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CHAIRMAN

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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June 15, 2015

Dear Fairfax County residents and corporate neighbors:

I am pleased to present to you the Fiscal Year 2016 Adopted Budget Plan. It wasn't hard to identify a theme for this year's budget. Speakers during our three days of public hearings and in community budget meetings held throughout the county adopted as their theme a call to *Invest in Fairfax* and that is what this budget seeks to do.

The Budget as amended by the Board of Supervisors on April 21, 2015 and formally adopted on April 28th, results in some changes to the Advertised Budget that I believe are both fiscally responsible and responsive to the needs of the community. In summary, the **FY 2016 Adopted Budget Plan**:

- Maintains our current tax rate at \$1.09
- Addresses our commitment to bolster our reserves
- Does not rely on one-time funding for on-going needs
- Implements a new Compensation Plan for our General County employees with an average increase of approximately 3.60% in FY 2016. This includes an across-the-board Market Rate Adjustment (MRA) of 1.10%. Compensation for all merit employees, including public safety, consists of the MRA, performance/merit increases, and longevities.
- Comes very close to fully funding the School Board's request for their Transfer with an increase of over \$66 million (including funding for School Debt Service) over last year, with School funding accounting for 52.7% of our General Fund Budget. In Fiscal Year 2016 the Schools receive almost 2/3 of the entire increase in General Fund Revenue, and benefit from a net \$9.9 million unanticipated increase from the State. Our Board is pleased to have been able to fund 99.8% of the School's advertised budget while not raising the tax rate for homeowners, many of whom are still struggling to get back on their feet following the Great Recession.
- Honors our commitment to allocate funding to both the County and Schools for Infrastructure Investment and School Construction through Fiscal Year 2015 Carryover balances

- Restores the most critical Human Services reductions in the Advertised Budget – notably, Healthy Families, Parenting Education/Good-Touch/Bad-Touch, as well as mental health services in the jail, and detox diversion positions. Also restores Enforcement of the Grass Ordinance which addresses care of premises issues in neighborhoods.

The **FY 2016 Adopted Budget Plan** is the result of much hard work by my colleagues, members of the School Board, our County staff and our Fairfax County community. It is not a “great news” package, but I think that it is *responsible and responsive* to the needs of our community and to the uncertain fiscal climate we are operating in.

Work will continue during the next months and years ahead to address our County’s challenges through a comprehensive Lines of Business Review. This important discussion will engage the community in an evaluation of programs and services Fairfax County offers in light of our current fiscal environment. This will be an important exercise to ensure that we maintain the quality of life our residents value and rely upon, while making sure taxes are affordable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Bulova". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sharon Bulova