## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION November 10, 2005

Good evening. My name is Mark R. Adelman, Chair of the Education Committee of the Montgomery County Civic Federation. I am here to offer some comments on the FY2007 Capital Budget and the (FY2007-2012) CIP. To begin, I must confess to being (possibly) the only person in the room who has not carefully read the entire document. Hence I will only speak briefly to two issues.

First, we are pleased that you recognize the need to reduce reliance on temporary classrooms (portables). However, it is not clear how serious an effort is to be made to reduce the actual number of portables in use. More precisely, at what rate can we expect the number of these temporary structures to decrease? Furthermore, in connection with this, we urge that you give careful thought to re-defining "temporary" so that the use of such facilities is more limited and that these limitations are consistently and uniformly applied. I personally have a hard time accepting the use of the term temporary in connection with any structure that is in place for more than a year or two; certainly not for five years - or even more. Furthermore, we request that you allocate funds to maintain such facilities so that they are neither depressing edifices within which students are housed nor eyesores inflicted on the surrounding communities. If they are owned by MCPS, they should be cleaned, painted, and landscaped on a regular basis. If they are leased, the leasing agreements should include provision for such maintenance and those provisions should be enforced.

Second, we repeat our objections to the decision to build a new school on the Kendale Road site rather than proceed with the upgrade of the existing Seven Locks ES that was so carefully planned. You have heard the various objections to this decision many times over, so I will not repeat them here, except to state that they all seem to us to remain valid and we have not heard them satisfactorily rebutted. I wish to make only one additional point: if the new school costs even a modest amount more than would the upgrade of the old school, the cost will be paid mainly via the borrowing of money - as are all construction costs. And that additional borrowing consitutes an additional debt, a debt that is paid down each year as part of the operating budget. When we testify before you about the FY2007 operating budget, we will certainly be discussing the MCPS debt service and how better uses might be found for any dollars spent on debt, especially extra debt incurred because of unwise decisions such as that you persist in making regarding the Seven Locks ES situation.

Thank you.

Mark R. Adelman, Ph.D. Chair, Education Committee, Montgomery County Civic Federation 3206 University Blvd. W. Kensington, MD 20895

Phone: 301-942-6893 FAX: 301-942-4108

Email: mra@educationalassistance.org

11/10/05; Copyright Mark R. Adelman