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April 16, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: David Deutsch
City Manager

FROM: Len Lucchi *LL*

RE: 2008 Legislative Wrap-Up

It was certainly an honor to represent the City of Bowie before the Maryland General Assembly during the 2008 Session. I was glad to be the "on the ground" person advising you of developments and responding to your inquiries in "real-time" fashion. As you know, the most important role as a government advocate in the state legislature is to "play defense" and with our open line of communication, I was able to make certain that the interests of the City of Bowie were protected.

Out of the 2,641 bills introduced during the ninety-day session, only 747 received approval in identical form from both the House of Delegates and the Senate. Of the 10 joint resolutions introduced, none were approved. Following is a description of enrolled legislation of interest to the City of Bowie:

- 1. Prince George's Hospital System (HB 1039)** – Legislation passed setting up a framework for a long-term solution for the Prince George's Hospital System, including the Bowie Health Center. It requires the County and the State to come up with long-term state/county funding commitments to be included in a Request for Proposals. The legislation sets up a Prince George's Hospital Authority to issue the RFP, evaluate all submissions, and then make recommendations to the 2009 Session of the Maryland General Assembly. It requires an open and transparent process to accomplish this. Delegate Jim Hubbard was the floor leader for this legislation in the House of Delegates and very ably defended it. I worked very closely with Senator Ulysses Currie and others to craft language that would be agreeable to the greatest number of people while holding true to the goal of establishing a world-class health care system in Prince George's

County. This legislation should be looked upon as a starting point and not an ending point to a permanent solution to the county health care crisis.

2. **BRAC Zones (SB 206)** – This initiative of Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown, cosponsored by Senator Doug Peters, allows counties and municipalities in areas that are proximate to new employment growth from the Base Realignment and Closure process to apply for designation as a BRAC Zone. Such a designation brings both an array of tax credits to businesses that locate in the zone as well as priority treatment for funding of state projects including transportation projects.

3. **State Budget (SB 90/SB 150)** – The best news for the City of Bowie is that the Fiscal Year 2009 Operating and Capital Budgets for the State of Maryland contained no new reductions in state aid for municipalities. Although the transportation budget was cut by \$50 million to help pay for the abolition of the computer services tax, the money was cut from state projects and not county and municipal ones. Following are funded projects affecting Bowie:

a. Prince George's Hospital System	\$12,000,000
b. Bowie WWTP Nutrient Removal	\$ 4,000,000
c. Northview Elementary School	\$ 2,893,000
d. Bowie State University Student Center	\$ 1,100,000
e. Cornerstone Assembly Gymnasium	\$ 20,000
f. Belair Swim and Racquet	\$ 20,000
g. Belair Bath and Tennis	\$ 20,000
h. Pointer Ridge Pool and Tennis	\$ 20,000
i. Whitehall Pool and Tennis	\$ 15,000
j. Bowie Lions Club	\$ 10,000

4. **State Agency Task Force (HB 1078)** – This legislation, an initiative of Delegate Marvin Holmes, establishes a task force to report to the General Assembly by September 30, 2009 to look into the location of state agencies in Prince George's County. Although no cabinet department is headquartered in Prince George's County, the O'Malley/Brown team, during the gubernatorial campaign, suggested moving the Office of Homeland Security to the campus of Bowie State University.

5. **Roadside Solicitations (SB 685/HB 1010)** – This bill, sponsored by Senator Doug Peters, prohibits the solicitation of money on any highway in Prince George's County, including shoulders, bridges, underpasses, and median strips. It takes effect on October 1, 2008 and calls for warnings to be issued for first offenses.

6. **Neighborhood Parks (SB 1000/HB 1604)** – This bill, cosponsored by Delegate Marvin Holmes, codifies a program in existence since Fiscal Year 2002 whereby municipalities can apply to the Department of Natural resources for grants to rehabilitate, expand, improve, or maintain existing parks, purchase land to create new parks, develop new parks, and purchase and install playground equipment. It is funded at \$5 million per year statewide from Program Open Space funds.

7. **Property Tax Credit for Accessibility Features (HB 54)** – This bill allows municipalities and counties to establish, at their own option, property tax credits for real property where accessibility features have been installed.
8. **Single Member Districts for Prince George’s School Board (SB 33/HB 1041)** – This bill, cosponsored by Senator Doug Peters, abolishes the at-large voting scheme for members of the Prince George’s County Board of Education and substitutes nine single member districts. Initially, the bill would have placed the City of Bowie in two separate school board districts, but an amendment by Senator Peters placed Bowie entirely within School Board District V, now home to two Board of Education incumbents.
9. **eMaryland Marketplace (HB 865)** – This bill, cosponsored by Delegate Jim Hubbard, requires all counties and municipalities to post notices and awards for competitively sealed bidding on the eMaryland Marketplace. Notices may still be published in other manners currently used as well. The bill specifies that unintentional violation of the bill’s requirements is not grounds for challenging or appealing the contract award or procurement process.
10. **Parren J. Mitchell Public Service Scholarship Program (HB 1287)** – This bill, cosponsored by Delegate Gerron Levi, establishes a scholarship program to assist college and graduate students to prepare for public service career opportunities. It allows the Office of Student Financial Assistance to award up to 10 such scholarships each year to students who agree to work in public service after completing their studies.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you on behalf of the citizens of the City of Bowie.