

**Testimony before the Council of the District of Columbia, December 13, 2005, on new Stadium to be built by DC businesses and taxpayers.**

**COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**, Sharon Ambrose, Chairperson

**"FINAL BASEBALL STADIUM LEASE AGREEMENT AND EXHIBITS APPROVAL RESOLUTION OF 2005".**

My name is John Capozzi I live at 1619 G Street SE at Barney Circle. Both of my children Camille, 7 and Hans, 4 are students at Watkins Elementary School in the Montessori Program. I am a season ticket holder to the Washington Nationals.

As one of the founding members of the [nodctaxesforbaseball.org](http://nodctaxesforbaseball.org) group, I was very concerned about the amount of public financing that would be provided for a new Stadium would make it impossible to do other needed projects in DC; such as rebuilding every Public school.

Please work to ensure that Major league baseball or the new owner pays their fair share of the cost of the stadium by disapproving this lease. Better yet, STAY AT RFK Stadium. The DC Sports and Entertainment Commission have a great asset in RFK, the parking facilities and the DC Armory. The mission of the Commission appears to be destroying its largest asset, RFK Stadium as soon as possible.

Building at the RFK site would have the additional costs such as the removal of contaminated soil. But those costs are far lower at RFK, because the land is free as well as the additional benefit of not having to invoke eminent domain at the North Capitol site. Also, cap the cost, and don't pass anymore "technical Amendments"—DC can't afford it!

As a resident that lives near RFK, I would support rebuilding RFK. Since the planners are so convinced that the new Stadium will generate significant economic development nearby, then we would appreciate their efforts to bring any retail, restaurants or hotels to our neighborhood.

I see the cost of the Stadium skyrocketing, which was predicted by our group last year, over the loud protests of the Sports Commission, the Mayor and the members of the Council that advocated public financing. Just since November 28<sup>th</sup>, when I testified the costs have risen to greater heights. The mayor has used the metaphor of climbing a mountain in this process and this mountain is reaching Mt. Everest-like proportions.

I think that with the business Community howling about the slight increase in taxes proposed to rebuild DC schools, it is clear that these businesses feel that the burden to pay for this stadium is weighing on their shoulders. Why not lighten that load by saving as much money as possible? Please rededicate your efforts to help the DC taxpayers and businesses that are subsidizing the Billionaire and Multi-Millionaire Major League owners.

Respectfully submitted,  
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