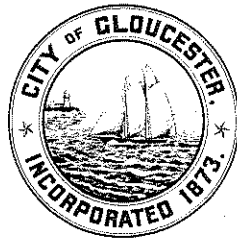


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CITY OF GLOUCESTER  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

February 26, 2008

Congressman John F. Tierney  
2238 Rayburn Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Tierney:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony on the federal budget. I must say that I am disappointed that I am not allowed to deliver my testimony in person.

As an elected official in my city of Gloucester, Massachusetts, when we put forward a budget, we hold public hearings. Last year, 700 residents appeared at our public hearing on the school budget. One after another, dozens of people addressed their elected representatives to express sadness, dismay, and frustration with a budget that called for the closing of an elementary school.

This year's budget outlook isn't much better. In Gloucester, as in many communities across the Commonwealth, expenses are far outpacing revenues. With a recession setting in, rising employee health care costs, skyrocketing energy costs and gas prices – all amidst stagnant wages - there is little tolerance on the part of my constituents for increased taxes, fees or other regressive revenue measures.

Gloucester in particular is being crushed under the weight of the infrastructure work required to comply with Federal environmental laws and fix aging water and sewer systems.

I am asking you and your colleagues to support and increase funding for all domestic initiatives that impact the quality of life for each of us. Whether it is education, public safety, homeland security or earmarks which become lifelines for communities like mine, domestic issues need to be the highest priority of the Federal government.

I firmly believe that the citizen's experience of this great country of ours is through the city or town that they live in. If I could leave you with any lasting impression at all, it would be that as Mayor, I am on the frontlines of running a city with diminishing resources, and then have to make the hard choices to close fire stations, lay off staff, or cut essential services such as those we deliver to veterans, our senior citizens, or our children.

Perhaps there will come a time when someone such as I will be given the opportunity to deliver a message directly to representatives in Washington, D.C. via personal testimony during the budget process. No lobbyist. No special interest group. Just a direct report and reminder of what it is like to be going through these hard times in our country at the local level. Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolyn A. Kirk".

Carolyn A. Kirk  
Mayor