

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



August 22, 2012

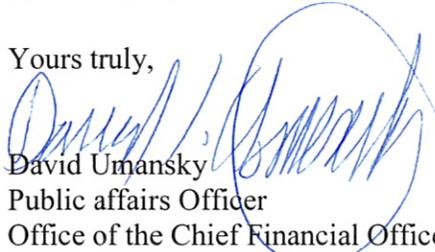
To the Editor:

In its August 12 editorial "Yielding on tax appeals is hitting D.C.'s bottom line, the Washington Post lamented, *"That's more than what it would take to restore the top three priorities that Mayor Vincent C. Gray (D) wanted to include in the city's budget, but could not, due to revenue restraints: \$7 million for the homeless (lost due to federal funding cuts); \$15 million for job training for welfare recipients; and \$23 million to help hospitalize poor people who get sick."*

One therefore must wonder why over the past several years, The Washington Post has consistently appealed its real property tax assessments and has agreed to settlements that reduced those assessments by millions of dollars, costing the District's residents hundreds of thousands of dollars. Also, the Post is currently before Superior Court asking for another significant reduction.

So, the question is: Why is it wrong for some property owners' assessments to be lowered, but not the Post's?

Yours truly,


David Umansky
Public affairs Officer
Office of the Chief Financial Officer

P.S. Below and attached are materials, for your information, that relate to this matter.

The Washington Post owns the following lots in square 197: 858; 859; 7001; and 7002. Lot 859 is the main building. For the periods TY 2007 through TY 2013, The Washington Post has appealed the assessments for all 4 properties every year. Their tax reps are Wilkes Artis, the largest real property tax appeal law firm in DC. For TY 2012, the assessments for all of the above lots were reduced by 18% at the first level of appeal (at OTR). For TY 2010, the case is before Superior Court and thus the assessments are under appeal. For TY 2009, the assessments were reduced nearly 7%, and the stipulation filed with the Court is attached as a ".pdf" (2009 CVT 9678.pdf) – this is public record. Please attached chart (Washington Post Chart(3).doc) for appeal history and results.