Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

Lillian S. Patterson

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budget hearing - black history museum

Mr. Mayor and Members of Council, Good evening -
I am Lillian Patterson,

a recently retired curator in the Office of Historic Alexandria, at the
Alexandria Black History Museum, now Private Citizen Lillian Patterson.

I speak because I am distressed at the non-funding of my former curator position at the Alexandria Black History Museum.

The museum staff was

made up of 2 full time, 2 part time, and 4 or 5 seasonal staff allowing

them to serve the public 6 days a week plus all special events in an

outstanding and gracious manner. The reduction of the seasonal staff left

the museum short staffed. The museum volunteers are our treasure, but they

cannot be in the building without the professional staff.

Alexandria's advertised diversity of cultures and dissemination of education pertaining thereto is jeopardized when institutions like the Alexandria Black History Museum are under-funded or non-funded. With its reduced staff, the
museum is in a highly stressed position to continue producing the
excellent quality exhibitions, dynamic cultural, educational (including
tutoring), and challenging programs and events.
I am a graduate of the
old Parker-Gray High School. I remember when it was an under-funded
school, then a non-funded school, then a NO-school. I don't want to see
the same thing happen to another of our legacies.
I ask you to keep this
curator position in the budget. Life is tough sometimes and we need the
calming things, like museums, to soothe our weary minds from the painful
things that exist.
I thank you for your consideration.