Thursday, February 25, 2016

Good Afternoon,

My name is Cherie Craft and I am here to testify in support of Boston Children’s Hospital’s bid to build a new, state of the art, clinical building, to increase their capacity to serve children in need of their world renown, clinical care.

I grew up in a housing project not too far from where we all gather today, and have raised four children in this city. I am now the founding Executive Director of Smart from the Start, a citywide, non-profit organization serving young children and families living in low-income, underserved communities.

It is no secret that Children’s Hospital provides the absolute highest quality, cutting edge medical care to children of all ages, from the city of Boston and beyond. In addition, Children’s has worked tirelessly to make every effort to provide, and to support an array of programs and services to identify and address other determinants of health, for Boston’s youngest residents. Their desire to build bridges from their campus to neighborhoods and housing projects, like the one I grew up in, has led to great outcomes in promoting prevention and early intervention, for our children. The new building along with the funds it will generate to support community-based programs, will have a profound impact on Boston’s ability to ensure that all of our children have access to excellent care and support services, in their communities.

As a community organizer and advocate, I have fought unnecessary, inappropriate and frivolous institutional expansion on many occasions. However, in this case, I enthusiastically support our children’s hospital’s decision to build this clinical building on their own campus, to expand medical services to our children.

As a mother, non-profit leader and citizen, and am strongly urging MDPH to approve this project.

Sincerely,

Cherie Craft, M.Ed.
Founding Executive Director, Smart from the Start, Inc.