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**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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**CITY COUNCIL PASSES FY 2011 BUDGET, COMPLETELY CLOSING
PROJECTED DEFICIT WITH VARIOUS REVENUE-GENERATING BILLS**
*Council passes amended 2 cent Beverage Container Tax, which could save dozens of
additional City jobs.*

BALTIMORE, MD – The City Council tonight passed the City’s \$2.2 billion Fiscal Year 2011 budget, which will preserve City services and jobs with minimal disruption.

During the months-long process of finalizing the City’s budget, which included fixing a projected \$121 million deficit, the City Council adopted more than a dozen revenue-generating measures totaling nearly \$44 million. These bills, when combined with \$70 million in spending reductions ordered by the Mayor, represent a balanced budget that continues vital city services and avoids layoffs of emergency responders and city workers.

The Council also passed an amended version of the Mayor’s Beverage Container Tax. The amendment, which was offered by Councilwoman Helen Holton, reduced the tax to 2 cents, allowing its passage. The amended bill, if passed, will help save dozens of additional City jobs. The Council will hold a special meeting on Thursday at 3 p.m. to consider final passage of the amended 2 cent Beverage Container Tax.

“The process of crafting the Fiscal Year 2011 budget has been a difficult one,” City Council President Bernard C. “Jack” Young said. “City Councilmembers understand that we’ve asked our residents to shoulder a heavier burden. We thank each citizen, city worker and business leader for stepping up at such a difficult time, and for becoming a part of the solution to solving Baltimore’s record budget shortfall. These choices have been tough, but are necessary in order to help the city emerge stronger and better-positioned for the future.”

Earlier this evening Council President Young, who also chairs the Board of Estimates, made the following statement as the board set the property tax rate for Fiscal Year 2011 and passed the Ordinance of Estimates.

“Madam Mayor, Madam Comptroller, members of the Board and City Council Colleagues, I would like to personally thank everyone for their hard work, diligence and patience during this challenging budget process. Thank you Madam Mayor for your commitment to making sure this city had a responsible and balanced budget. This was Councilwoman Conaway’s first year as Chair of the Budget and Appropriations Committee and she did an outstanding job.

I would also like to thank Councilwoman Helen Holton for her diligent work in making sure that the numerous revenue bills were heard timely and vetted thoroughly. Thank you to the citizens of Baltimore for your active participation in this process and for making sure your voices were heard and your priorities known. I would like also thank my City Council Colleagues for recognizing the awesome challenge before us and responding with revenue alternatives that helped spread the burden of these tough economic times in a more diverse manner.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Gallagher, Mr. Kleine and their staff for their hard work on this budget as well.

Like other major cities across the country, Baltimore has continued to feel the effects of a steep decline in revenue. It was my responsibility, as City Council President, to work with my colleagues on the Council to find solutions to solve our budget problems in a way that would further distribute the burden across the board. It was not a position that any of us wanted to be in, but in order to ensure that the essential services of our city were restored, we had to consider all options.

I, and my colleagues on City Council and the Board of Estimates, recognize the fact that we’re asking our residents, city workers and business leaders to shoulder a heavier burden. We thank each of you for stepping up at a time when your city desperately needed your assistance to close a record budget shortfall. None of the options available for fixing the city’s budget crisis have been easy. But we’ve tried to balance the city’s budget without placing undue burdens on our citizens, workers or business leaders. Please know that we remain committed to helping the city emerge stronger and better-positioned for the future.

And I again thank Mayor Rawlings-Blake for her commitment to ensuring that the City had a responsible balanced budget. I believe this budget protects our key goals, serves the needs of our citizens, and will help us continue our progress in these tough economic times.

Thank You.”

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