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CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON FINAL PASSAGE OF BALTIMORE CITY'S FISCAL YEAR 2011 BUDGET

BALTIMORE, MD – "I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues on the Council for your hard work over the past months. The City faced a budget deficit of \$121 million dollars and we had to make some tough choices. We raised additional revenue in a responsible way that shared the burden equally among residents and business owners.

Because of the Council's efforts, all vital city services will continue uninterrupted. There will be no layoffs of sworn police officers. Foxtrot and the police's marine and mounted units will remain in operation. This council fought to save recreation programs for our youth and our seniors. We prevented hundreds of layoffs of city workers. We protected bulk trash pickup, and made sure that there were no cuts to the Main Streets programs.

In the midst of these trying budget pressures, we fixed the police and fire pension plans – avoiding the city's certain bankruptcy in the process.

Again, we had to make tough choices. As leaders, we want to support the men and women who risk their lives to protect our city. We value their service and we are thankful for their dedication.

During this process able minds have disagreed about the steps to correcting the worst budget shortfall in recent memory. But, in the end, this council was able to pass a series of measures that, collectively, will help usher Baltimore into the future.

To our constituents – both residents and business leaders – who look to us to keep the streets clean and safe, I say this: Thank you for your patience. Thank you for being involved in the process. I personally received countless letters and emails and phone calls from engaged Baltimoreans who weighed in on the council's various proposals. Whether or not we agreed on every issue, I appreciate your ideas, your perspective and sincerely ask that you remain

involved.

I would also like to say a sincere thank you to Mayor Rawlings-Blake. I thank you for crafting a sound budget that tried to address a severe budget deficit. I look forward to working with you to help Baltimore emerge from this period better-positioned for the future.”

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