



LATINO FEDERATION OF GREATER WASHINGTON

September 24, 2007

As President & CEO of The Latino Federation of Greater Washington (LFGW), I am writing to express our support for Hear Mount Pleasant's Campaign to overturn existing "Voluntary" Agreements in Mount Pleasant and replace them with a new Cooperative Agreement that reflects widespread community support. We applaud Hear Mount Pleasant's efforts to end restrictions on live music in Mount Pleasant and to bring more voices and perspectives into local decision making.

LFGW aims to empower Latinos through research, advocacy, and resources that build capacity and promote Latino engagement in all aspects of philanthropy. As a regional intermediary, grant making Latino institution, the LFGW will support a pool of sixty (60-80) Latino serving faith-based and community organizations based in Greater DC.

We support Hear Mount Pleasant's efforts to work with local business owners and residents in a respectful, culturally appropriate and constructive way. Mount Pleasant restaurants, many of which are owned by Latino entrepreneurs, provide jobs, a sense of belonging and a place to gather for members of our community.

We think it's time for a new Cooperative Agreement that allows live music and entertainment, treats businesses as assets and fosters community based approaches to resolving conflict. Rather than attempting to micro-manage each restaurant, the Hear Mount Pleasant Cooperative Agreement focuses on those areas that most affect the surrounding community, for example – hours during which live entertainment may be offered and sound emissions. Second, Hear MTP has worked with community agencies, business owners and residents to identify and resolve complaints and neighborhood concerns through cooperation, collaboration and technical assistance.

We support Hear Mount Pleasant's efforts to bring this crucial aspect of neighborhood decision making into the open and to include more voices in discussions about the neighborhood's commercial and community life. To meet the challenges facing DC's culturally and economically diverse neighborhoods, LFGW and Hear Mount Pleasant share the belief that we need approaches that address problems at their roots. It is vital that to support approaches that foster respect and value the humanity and dignity of everyone involved.

We are proud to support Hear Mount Pleasant's efforts to build comprehensive, inclusive and culturally appropriate problem solving. It's time for a change!

Yours sincerely

Eugenio Arene
President & CEO, Latino Federation of the Greater Washington