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**MEMORANDUM**

TO: DCPL Board of Library Trustees

FROM: Richard Reyes-Gavilan, Executive Director

DATE: January 26 2022

SUBJECT: Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library Auditorium Naming Proposal

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This memo conveys my recommendation that the Board of Library Trustees vote to name the auditorium at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library for Jeff Bezos (“The Bezos Auditorium”) in recognition of the \$2.7 million gift to the DC Public Library Foundation in support of a new Library initiative targeting children aged 5-8 called *Beyond the Book*. The gift represents the largest donation in the history of DCPL and the Library Foundation.

Designed to improve the reading ability for children in grades kindergarten through third grade, *Beyond the Book* extends and amplifies the existing *Books from Birth* program. *Books from Birth* targets children birth to five years old, providing children and their families with free monthly books, literacy programs, and support to transition from pre-K to kindergarten. Specifically, *Beyond the Book* will extend free book distribution with age and grade-appropriate texts for four additional years; provide for literacy programs for families to encourage continued literacy and a love of reading for school-aged readers; and support the transition to kindergarten from preschool by hosting events and programs for families and caregivers.

According to the Board of Library Trustee-approved naming policy for DC Public Library spaces (February 11, 2019), interior spaces may be named for individuals “who have made a significant financial contribution to the Library including donors who have made a significant contribution toward the construction or operational support of a new library or major renovation of a library or library department, an endowment for maintenance and operating costs of a library, or other program activity at the DC Public Library.” Furthermore, the \$2.7 million donation falls within the Board-approved range for the naming of the auditorium.

According to the Board policy, naming rights in honor of an individual or individuals are generally expected to last for the useful life of the space. Per the policy, a signed gift agreement between the Library and Library Foundation will follow Board approval, details of which will be made in consultation with the Board of Library Trustees Executive Committee.