Annual Session 1846

Monday January 19th 1846

This being the day appointed by the Charter for the Meeting of the City Council, and pursuant to adjournment the Second Branch met in in their Chamber

Present Robert Howard Esqr, President and all the Members

A Message was received from the First Branch, proposing the appointment of a joint Committee to wait on the Mayor to inform him that the Council have assembled and are ready to receive any Communication he may have to make, and naming Messrs. Watkins and Collins as the Committee

The Message was read and concurred in

Messrs. Loudenman & Keene were appointed the Committee and the First Branch informed thereof by Message

Mr Loudenman from the Committee reported verbally that the Committee had waited on the Mayor, and that he informed them that he would send up a communication in a few Minutes.

Mr Lackman Secretary to the Mayor really appeared and presented the following Communication:

Mayors Office
Baltimore January 19th 1846

To the members of the
First and Second Branches of the City Council
Gentlemen

In your again assembling to carry forward the trust that have been confided to you, relative to the affairs of our city, and as we contemplate with pride its great prosperity since we last met, we cannot but be filled with gratitude to the great Parent of all for the manifold blessings which he has in his infinite goodness been pleased to bestow upon us. It needs but a short review of the past to cheer us on to the renewment of every effort to remove all obstacles

that may be found lying in the way of our rapid onward march of improvement. And with this view it becomes my duty to gather up and lay before you some of the subjects that may in an especial manner be worthy of your consideration

I am gratified in being able to state, as will fully appear by reference to the annual statement of the Register and the report of the Collector of the city, that the financial department of the city government is in a sound and flourishing condition

The ability with which these documents are prepared, and the clearness with which the complicated details contained in them are set forth can be better appreciated by your own careful perusal and which, doubtless, you will bestow upon them, than I might venture to hope could be gained by any analysis made by me. They are herewith transmitted, and they will furnish such data of information respecting the monetary affairs of the city, as may be safely relied upon. The promptitude with which the citizens of Baltimore have paid the state and city taxes to a very large amount during the past year evinces the most commendable spirit on their part to preserve, as far in their lies, the credit of the city, and state from reproach.

The credit of the city, which depends alone upon the sentiment of her people, must never remain a moment the mark of suspicion. I am desirous in this connection to call your attention to what I conceive to be a subject of much importance. I allude to the propriety of asking from the present Legislature the passage of a new assessment law or at least that the General Assembly be memorialized to apply some corrective to the evils under which we at present labor. It must be evident from the nature of the case, that with the rapid growth and increasing business of the city of Baltimore its expenses and disbursements must correspondingly increase and, by necessity, its revenue system cannot remain unchanged. It is a salutary provision of our state constitution and our departure from it would be manifest injustice that every person should contribute his proportion of public taxes according to his actual worth. In enforcing this wholesome principle, that the public burthen should be borne in equal proportions by all, it becomes necessary that such proportions should be readjusted at short intervals, or at