



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

December 1, 2025

The Honorable Muriel Bowser
Mayor of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser,

We write to request that the District develop a coordinated, proactive plan to expand access to shelter and supportive services for unhoused residents in anticipation of increased federal law enforcement activity during next summer's America250 events. On and leading up to July 4, 2026, the federal government will hold several large-scale events to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Commemorations like these typically involve heightened federal operational and security preparations. The District has an important opportunity to demonstrate leadership consistent with our values and ensure the wellbeing of our most vulnerable neighbors who face increased risk of harm due to their housing status.

We deeply appreciate the significant efforts made by District agencies, outreach teams, nonprofit partners, and community organizations during the recent federal emergency. Their rapid collaboration provided safe shelter, storage access, and pathways to housing at a moment of heightened pressure. We know, however, work remains. Despite the lifting of the emergency, people without homes are still being targeted by federal law enforcement solely because they are unhoused, and on a given night, there are as many as 700 people sleeping outside who are at risk of being arrested for doing so. Last summer's abrupt federal action against our unhoused neighbors indicates we must take seriously the risk that federal agencies will again act with little notice leading up to America250. Building on all the lessons learned in August, the District should plan intentionally for future responses grounded in local values.

To guide this planning, we request the convening of a working group composed of representatives from District agencies, the Council, and community partners, including outreach workers, service providers, legal advocates, and faith-based organizations. Establishing this collaborative body in the near term will create a structured forum for coordination, transparency, and preparation as the District rapidly approaches America250.

While the Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center has improved communication channels with federal partners, it is not a substitute for a locally driven, comprehensive plan. Developing such a plan

will help ensure that unhoused District residents are supported, street homelessness is reduced without criminalizing homelessness, and that all agencies are aligned well in advance of any requests or operational needs.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We respectfully request the favor of a response by Tuesday, December 9, 2025, and look forward to working with you on this initiative.

Sincerely,



Matthew Frumin
Councilmember, Ward 3



Phil Mendelson
Chairman, At-Large



Kenyan R. McDuffie
Chair Pro-Tempore, At-Large



Anita Bonds
Councilmember, At-Large



Christina Henderson
Councilmember, At-Large



Robert C. White
Councilmember, At-Large



Brooke Pinto
Councilmember, Ward 2



Janeese Lewis George
Councilmember, Ward 4



Zachary Parker
Councilmember, Ward 5



Charles Allen
Councilmember, Ward 6



Wendell Felder
Councilmember, Ward 7