

Council of the District of Columbia
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY & PUBLIC SAFETY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC OVERSIGHT ROUNDTABLE
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004

COUNCILMEMBER CHARLES ALLEN, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY & PUBLIC SAFETY

ANNOUNCES A PUBLIC OVERSIGHT ROUNDTABLE ON

THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS' PERFORMANCE IN CONDUCTING THE
JUNE 2, 2020 PRIMARY ELECTION

Friday, June 19, 2020, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Virtual Hearing via Zoom

On Friday, June 19, 2020, Councilmember Charles Allen, Chairperson of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, will convene a public oversight roundtable to consider the Board of Elections' Performance in Conducting the June 2, 2020 Primary Election. The roundtable will be held virtually via Zoom from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Public witnesses will testify from 10 a.m. to noon, followed by government witnesses from noon to 4 p.m.

The Board of Elections ("the Board") is an independent District agency, overseen by a Chairperson and two other board members, and is responsible for administering elections in the District. Most recently, the Board administered the June 2, 2020 Primary Election, the operation of which was significantly affected by the unprecedented COVID-19 public health crisis. However, the Committee has heard from numerous District voters who were disenfranchised in the Primary Election due to the decision-making of Board leadership and cascading, unaddressed operational issues. Therefore, and in light of the upcoming November 3, 2020 General Election, the Committee is moving immediately to conduct this public oversight roundtable on the Board's performance.

As the Board prepared for the Primary Election, the Committee, other Councilmembers, and the Executive raised numerous concerns with Board leadership regarding mail-in balloting, communications, outreach, and decision-making, such as:

- Widespread and persistent technical difficulties with voters' ability to request mail-in ballots through every method the Board offered;
- Voters failing to receive mail-in ballots upon request;
- An inability for voters to track mail-in ballot receipt and processing using the Board's website tracking software;
- A dearth of coordinated, timely, and consistent public relations concerning mail-in balloting, relevant deadlines, and Vote Center operations; and

- A lack of planning and resources devoted to the enfranchisement of particularly vulnerable populations, such as incarcerated residents in the D.C. Jail.

These issues were not resolved by the Board prior to the Primary Election and led directly to hours-long lines at Vote Centers, an overwhelming number of voters not receiving their requested mail-in ballots, and ultimately, disenfranchisement.

The Committee invites the public to testify or to submit written testimony. Anyone wishing to testify at the roundtable should contact the Committee via email at judiciary@dccouncil.us and provide their name, telephone number, organizational affiliation, and title (if any), by **close of business Monday, June 15**. **The Committee will permit public witness testimony for the first two hours of the hearing, and testimony will be limited to no more than three minutes in order to maximize the number of witnesses heard.** Witnesses should submit a copy of any written testimony electronically in advance to judiciary@dccouncil.us by the end of the business day on Wednesday, June 17.

Witnesses who anticipate needing language interpretation, or require sign language interpretation, are requested to inform the Committee of the need as soon as possible, but no later than five business days before the roundtable. The Committee will make every effort to fulfill timely requests; however, requests received in fewer than five business days may not be fulfilled, and alternatives may be offered.

For witnesses who are unable to testify at the roundtable, written statements will be made part of the official record. Copies of written statements should be submitted to the Committee at judiciary@dccouncil.us. **The record will close at the end of the business day on Friday, July 3.**