


COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

FROM: Phil Mendelson, Chairman 

DATE: October 1, 2020

RE: **Request to Place Measure on the Agenda for the October 6, 2020 Legislative Meeting**

Please place on the agenda for the October 6, 2020 legislative meeting the following measures, which I will move with Councilmember Bonds:

- **Emergency Rental Assistance Reform Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2020**
- **Emergency Rental Assistance Reform Emergency Amendment Act of 2020**
- **Emergency Rental Assistance Reform Temporary Amendment Act of 2020**

The proposed measures would make changes to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), including: setting the income limit for eligibility to 40% of area-median income to align the program with the Homeless Services Reform Amendment Act of 2005; streamlining documentation requirements to make it less burdensome for applicants; increasing the maximum allowable payment to reflect current rental costs in the District; and granting the Department of Human Services the authority to waive a rule that restricts the number of months that ERAP funds may cover for rent arrearages during a public health emergency.

These changes are necessary due to the urgent need for rental assistance in the District and the pandemic's adverse effect on renters. Recent data from the Census Bureau suggests that roughly 17,000 renter-occupied households, or 13% of all renter-occupied household in the District, have fallen behind on rent payments. Under current program rules, many of these households are ineligible for assistance, leaving them with few avenues to avoid mounting rental debt-or potential eviction when the public health emergency ends.

The draft measures are attached. Please call me or Mr. Blaine Stum if you have any questions at (202) 724-8092.

cc: All Councilmembers
Council Officers