

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare an emergency with respect to the need to amend the Office of Human Rights Establishment Act of 1999 to establish a renewable 3-year term of office for the position of Director of the Office of Human Rights.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Director of the Office of Human Rights Term of Office Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2021”.

Sec. 2. (a) The Council has entrusted the Office of Human Rights with many important functions intended “to secure an end in the District of Columbia to discrimination for any reason other than that of individual merit,” as stated in section 101 of the Human Rights Act of 1977, effective December 13, 1977 (D.C. Law 2-38; D.C. Official Code § 2-1401.01).

(b) Pursuant to section 201 of the Office of Human Rights Establishment Act of 1999, effective October 20, 1999 (D.C. Law 13-38; D.C. Official Code § 2-1411.01), the Office operates under the supervision of a Director. Among other powers, the Director possesses powers vested in the Council for purposes of conducting investigations or examinations of municipal matters pursuant to section 301 of the Human Rights of 1977, effective December 13, 1977 (D.C. Law 2-38; D.C. Official Code § 2-1403.01).

32 (c) The Office of Human Rights Establishment Act of 1999 did not expressly specify how
33 the Director should be appointed. The Mayor has appointed Directors with the advice and
34 consent of the Council pursuant to section 2(a) of the Confirmation Act of 1978, effective March
35 3, 1979 (D.C. Law 2-142; D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01(a)). The Director has been presumed to
36 serve an indefinite term at the pleasure of the Mayor.

37 (d) Through oversight of the Office and related proceedings, the Council has determined
38 that urgent improvements in certain functions of the Office are needed. This experience has
39 illustrated the need for the Mayor and Council to revisit the performance and leadership of the
40 Office through periodic reappointment of its Director.

41 (e) The Council therefore wishes to establish a 3-year, renewable term limit for Directors
42 of the Office of Human Rights. Immediate action is necessary to ensure that the term limit is
43 established concurrent with the confirmation of the Mayor's latest nominee to the position.

44 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances
45 enumerated in section 2 constitute an emergency making it necessary that the Director of the
46 Office of Human Rights Term of Office Emergency Amendment Act of 2021 be adopted after a
47 single reading.

48 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.