

## COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

### MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Chairman Phil Mendelson

**From:** Councilmember Elissa Silverman



**Date:** January 27, 2022

**Subject:** Request to Agendize Supplemental Budget Resolutions

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I request that the following emergency measures be included on the agenda for the February 1, 2022 Regular Legislative Meeting.

- Omicron Response and Fiscal Year 2022 Supplemental Budget Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2022
- Omicron Response and Fiscal Year 2022 Supplemental Budget Emergency Resolution of 2022

This legislation has two purposes: it requests a supplemental budget for Fiscal Year 2022, and it expresses the sense of the Council that the supplemental budget should include several urgent items to respond to the current coronavirus surge.

First, the legislation will exercise the Council's authority under the Home Rule Act to direct the Mayor to submit a supplemental budget request for FY 2022. The supplemental budget will be due by March 16, 2022, the same due date that the Council has established for submission of the Mayor's proposed budget for FY 2023.

Second, this legislation will declare the sense of the Council in support of using this supplemental budget to fund a limited number of urgent initiatives to further strengthen the District's response to the Omicron wave of the Covid pandemic. These priorities are:

- High-quality, well-fitting masks for DC students and school staff
- Temporary raises for hard-to-fill school employees such as substitute teachers
- Repairs and improvements to HVAC in schools and other District buildings
- Personal pandemic leave for District employees
- Emergency rent assistance and utility assistance

The Bowser administration has recently announced some productive measures to address these priorities in part. For example, DCPS has begun issuing N95 masks to teachers, but not students. Pay has increased marginally for short-term substitute teachers but not for long-term substitutes, and pay for both groups remains low despite very high demand for substitute teachers. Despite repairs to heating and ventilation systems, the continuing use of space heaters in schools and other facilities presents an unnecessary fire hazard in addition to a heightened infection risk. Personal

pandemic leave will be available (retroactive to December 1) to District employees who personally became sick, but not to those who were unable to work while caring for a sick family member. And the District has received an additional \$17 million in federal funds for emergency rental assistance, but this amount is far less than the administration's request to meet our residents' needs.

To strengthen the District's response to the Omicron wave, more robust action is both necessary and urgent, which may require additional funding. Therefore, as a partner in District government, the Council should communicate its willingness to commit additional funds for these purposes on a timeline that could be faster than the Council's expected budget timeline.

Additional funds for this supplemental are available from two sources: increased FY 2022 revenues that have been certified by the Chief Financial Officer through the latest revenue estimate, and the anticipated FY 2021 year-end General Fund surplus, which will be certified upon release of the annual comprehensive financial report (ACFR) in the coming days. As a partner in District government, the Council should express its willingness to approve a supplemental budget for these purposes.

Drafts of these measures are attached. Should you have questions, please contact Will Singer, Legislative Director in my office, at [wsinger@dccouncil.us](mailto:wsinger@dccouncil.us) or (202) 724-8199.

cc: All Councilmembers  
Office of the Secretary  
Mayor's Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs  
Office of the Chief Financial Officer