

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY
BROOKE PINTO, CHAIR

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON

**B25-42, the Grounds for Divorce, Legal Separation, and Annulment Amendment Act of 2023; and
B25-44, the Vulnerable Youth Guardianship Protection Amendment Act of 2023**

Thursday, June 8, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

Councilmember Pinto's Youtube Page (www.youtube.com/@cmbrookepinto)
DC Council Website (dccouncil.gov)

On Thursday, June 8, 2023, Councilmember Brooke Pinto, Chairperson of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, will hold a hearing on Bill 25-42, the Grounds for Divorce, Legal Separation, and Annulment Amendment Act of 2023 and Bill 25-44, the Vulnerable Youth Guardianship Protection Amendment Act of 2023. The hearing will begin at 1:00 p.m. and will be streamed live at dccouncil.gov, www.youtube.com/@cmbrookepinto.

B25-42, the Grounds for Divorce, Legal Separation, and Annulment Amendment Act of 2023, would eliminate waiting periods for divorce and legal separation in the District; expand the relevant factors the District of Columbia Courts Family Court Operations Division may consider in awarding alimony or distributing marital property to include evidence of an intrafamily offense; and authorize the Family Court to award exclusive use of a family home to one party while divorce, legal separation, or annulment proceedings are ongoing.

B25-44, the Vulnerable Youth Guardianship Protection Amendment Act of 2023, would allow the Superior Court—which generally does not have jurisdiction over youth aged 18 to 21 but in certain, extremely limited circumstances—to review petitions by youth for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, a new visa class that would apply to abused, neglected, or abandoned immigrant youth under age 21. The legislation also provides the Family Court with authority to appoint legal guardians for youth in this new class.

Due to the imminent threat to the health, safety, and welfare of District residents posed by the spread of the coronavirus, the Council has adapted the methods by which committees may hold public hearings and roundtables to comply with social distancing, large public gatherings, and other public health and safety requirements. Therefore, this public hearing will be held remotely through the Zoom teleconferencing platform.

The Committee invites the public to testify or to submit written testimony, which will be made a part of the official record. Anyone wishing to testify should contact Ms. Aukima Benjamin, Committee Manager to the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, at least 24 hours prior to the start of the hearing at (202) 724-8058 or via e-mail at judiciary@dccouncil.gov; witnesses will receive information on how to join the hearing at that time. Witnesses who anticipate needing language interpretation, or requiring 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 hearing,

which is June 1, 2023. We will make every effort to fulfill timely requests; however, requests received in less than five business days may not be fulfilled and alternatives may be offered.

If you are unable to testify at the public hearing, written statements are encouraged and will be made a part of the official record; testimony may be submitted to judiciary@dccouncil.gov. The public may also leave voicemail testimony for the Committees by calling (202) 630-7585, which will be transcribed and made part of the official record. Members of the public leaving voicemail testimony should speak slowly and clearly, state their full name and the organization they represent, if any, and note the bill, hearing, or agency that they are submitting testimony on. Members of the public are asked to not provide an e-mail, phone number, or other personal contact information in voicemail testimony.

The record will close at the end of the business day on June 22, 2023.