

# COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

ROBERT C. WHITE, JR., CHAIR  
COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Chairman Phil Mendelson  
**FROM:** Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.  
Chair, Committee on Housing  
**DATE:** May 24, 2023  
**RE:** Requests for May 30, 2023



I request that the following legislation be placed on the agenda for the legislative meeting of the Council on May 30, 2023:

### Emergency and Temporary Legislation

- **“Rent Stabilized Housing Inflation Protection Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2023”**
- **“Rent Stabilized Housing Inflation Protection Emergency Amendment Act of 2023”**
- **“Rent Stabilized Housing Inflation Protection Temporary Amendment Act of 2023”**

This proposed emergency and temporary legislation seeks to minimize harms across the housing system by capping allowable rent increases for rent stabilized units at the lesser of 6.9% and CPI + 2% each year for 2 years.

Under the Rental Housing Act of 1985, annual rent increases for units in certain older buildings are limited to inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus an additional 2%. Accordingly, beginning May 1, 2023, tenants in rent stabilized units could face up to an 8.9% increase in rents – the highest in the history of the District’s rent stabilization program. The Committee on Housing and the Council have heard serious concerns from residents, tenants, organizers, attorneys, and housing policy analysts that this increase will contribute to significant hardship for many of the 90,000 District residents who live in rent stabilized units and may lead to displacement of residents with lower incomes. The Committee and the Council have also heard concerns from building owners about difficulties maintaining habitable rental properties due to lingering financial constraints from the pandemic and from the impact of inflation on maintenance costs.

In April, the Council attempted to consider emergency legislation that would have reduced the maximum rent increases prior to the May 1 date at which the 8.9% allowable increase began. The measure had a fiscal impact that the Administration would not absorb, which caused the legislation to be out of order and prevented the Council from moving forward. The Council is now including funding in the Fiscal Year 2023 Supplemental Budget to cover the asserted administrative costs of a proposed change to the rent stabilization law, allowing this measure to be considered.