

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004**

**COUNCILMEMBER CHRISTINA HENDERSON, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
ANNOUNCES A PUBLIC HEARING**

ON

PR25-0386, the “Sense of the Council on the Opioid and Fentanyl Epidemic Resolution of 2023”

ON

Thursday October 26, 2023, 10:00 a.m.
Hybrid in Room 412 and Virtual via Zoom
To Watch Live:
<https://dccouncil.gov/council-videos/>
<https://www.christinahendersondc.com/live>
<https://www.youtube.com/@cmchenderson>

Councilmember Christina Henderson, Chair of the Committee on Health, announces a public hearing on PR25-0386, the “Sense of the Council on the Opioid and Fentanyl Epidemic Resolution of 2023.” The hearing will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, October 26, 2023.

This Sense of the Council urges the Mayor to declare the opioid and fentanyl crisis in the District of Columbia a public health emergency, in recognition of the severity of the situation and the need to commit sufficient resources to safeguard the well-being of District residents. The opioid and fentanyl crisis has had a devastating impact on communities in the District of Columbia and across the nation. It is a public health emergency characterized by staggering mortality rates, strain on the healthcare system, transmission of infectious diseases through needle sharing, adverse effects on families and communities, economic burdens, treatment barriers, and the largely preventable nature of opioid addiction. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has already declared a nationwide public health emergency in response to this crisis. The District of Columbia should follow suit.

In the District, when a public health emergency is declared, it initiates a comprehensive response plan. This includes the mobilization of vital resources, such as funds, medical supplies, personnel, and equipment, possibly with the support of federal agencies. The declaration also

fosters improved coordination among government agencies, healthcare providers, emergency responders, and community organizations to ensure a cohesive and organized response to the crisis. It empowers the District to implement necessary policy changes, and heightens public awareness about the severity of the situation.

The hearing will have a hybrid format, with the government witnesses appearing in-person, and the public witnesses appearing virtually using the Zoom platform. Public witnesses will have 5 minutes to speak if they are representing an organization, and 3 minutes if they are speaking for themselves. The public should sign up at <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings>. Witnesses who anticipate needing spoken language interpretation, or require sign language interpretation, are requested to inform the Committee office of the need as soon as possible but no later than five business days before the proceeding. We will make every effort to fulfill timely requests, although alternatives may be offered. Requests received in less than five business days may not be fulfilled. If you have additional questions, please email Ashley Strange, Legislative Assistant at astrange@dccouncil.gov.

Testimony should be submitted through the Council's Hearing Management System <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/hearings> in advance of the hearing. Testimony will be publicly accessible upon Committee review. If you are unable to testify at the hearing, written statements are encouraged and will be made a part of the official record. Statements for the record should be submitted through the Hearing Management System or left by voicemail by calling (202) 430-6046. The record will close at 5:00pm on Thursday November 9, 2023.