

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004**

**COUNCILMEMBER CHARLES ALLEN, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

ANNOUNCES A PUBLIC HEARING ON

B25-0472, the “Tree Preservation Enhancement Amendment Act of 2023”

**B25-0487, the “Office of Natural Area Conservation Establishment Act of
2023”**

B25-0547, the “Food Access by Public Transit Study Amendment Act of 2023”

B25-0564, the “Environmental Justice Amendment Act of 2023”

and

B25-0569, the “Pesticide Operations Amendment Act of 2023”

Monday, March 18, 2024, 9:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Hybrid Hearing in Room 120 and via Zoom

To Watch Live:

<https://dccouncil.us/council-videos/>

<http://video.oct.dc.gov/DCC/jw.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/CMcharlesallen>

On Monday, March 18, 2024, Councilmember Charles Allen, Chairperson of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment, will convene a public hearing to consider five bills: B25-0472, the “Tree Preservation Enhancement Amendment Act of 2023”; B25-0487, the “Office of Natural Area Conservation Establishment Act of 2023”; B25-0547, the “Food Access by Public Transit Study Amendment Act of 2023”; B25-0564, the “Environmental Justice Amendment Act of 2023”; and B25-0569, the “Pesticide Operations Amendment Act of 2023”. **This is a hybrid format hearing, with public witnesses appearing virtually via the Zoom platform and government witnesses testifying in-person from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

B25-0472 would expand the definition of “Special Tree” to cover trees with a circumference between 25 inches and 100 inches, provide an increased fee for removal of a “Special Tree” by an applicant who does not receive the homestead deduction, allow an applicant to remove a “Heritage Tree” subject to payment into the Tree Fund, and to limit the use of the Tree Fund for plantings on public property.

The stated purpose of B25-0487 is to amend Department of Energy and Environment Establishment Act of 2005 to establish the Office of Natural Area Conservation (“ONAC”) within the Department of Energy and Environment to manage, conserve, and activate District-owned or District-managed forested natural areas and forest patches in accordance with a Forest Health and Invasive Plant Response Plan developed by the agency. The bill would also establish an Adopt a Patch Forest Stewardship Program, administered by ONAC, to provide technical assistance and training to volunteers interested in supporting ONAC’s work.

The stated purpose of B25-0547 is to require the District Department of Transportation (“DDOT”) to conduct a study on the accessibility of supermarkets by public transportation in low food access areas in the District. The bill would require that, prior to conducting the study, DDOT survey at least 500 District residents in low food access areas to assess the transportation modes and routes used to travel to and from supermarkets, as well as the use of grocery delivery services.

B25-0564 would expand the requirements of Environmental Impact Statements and require a Cumulative Impacts Statement for any major action (i.e., a project that costs over \$1 million and may have a significant impact on the environment, subject to certain exceptions) in an overburdened community or any action at an applicable facility (sewage treatment plant, transfer station, etc.) in an overburdened community. The bill would also require a modified Cumulative Impacts Statement for any plan or policy that impacts the siting or operation of applicable facilities in the District or any concept analysis or design of an interstate, freeway, expressway, or arterial road inconsistent with the District’s climate commitments. Additionally, the bill would require that the Mayor disapprove any cumulative impacts action with disproportionate impact unless mitigating measures are taken or a reasonable alternative is used instead, and authorizes the Mayor to fine an applicant or revoke an action taken on behalf of an applicant for failure to comply with mitigating measures or conditions of operation. The bill would furthermore require that the Mayor maintain a file of all Environmental Impact Statements, Cumulative Impacts Statements, and supplemental Environmental Impact Statements for public review. Finally, the bill would enhance accountability mechanisms under the Environmental Policy Act, authorize the Mayor to impose a fee on an applicant for the cost of reviewing a cumulative impacts screening form or preparing a Cumulative Impacts Statement, and create the Energy and Environmental Justice Division at the Department of Energy and the Environment.

The stated purpose of B25-0569 is to clarify that the Mayor may establish categories and subcategories of private (i.e., non-commercial) pesticide applicators.

The Committee invites the public to provide live and written testimony. Public witnesses seeking to provide live testimony at the Committee’s hearing must thoroughly review the following instructions:

- If you would like to provide live testimony during the hearing or submit written testimony for the record, please use the Council’s Hearing Management System at <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/hearings/>. HMS is a universal, centralized way to find out about upcoming hearings, sign up to testify, submit testimony, download testimony, and see who else is testifying. **The deadline to register to provide testimony through HMS is Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 5:00pm. The hearing record closes on April 2, 2024, after which you will be unable to submit written testimony.**
- Once you have identified the hearing you want to testify at, read the Hearing Notice at the bottom of the page for additional details on the hearing. The hearing page shows how many witnesses have already signed up under the “Witnesses” heading.
- Click the “Register to Testify” button at the upper right of the page to register to testify at the hearing. If the deadline to sign up for a hearing has already passed, or if there are no public witnesses, the button will not be available.
- If there are multiple topics to be considered at a hearing, select which one you would like to testify on by placing a checkmark next to the relevant topic or legislation. If testifying on behalf of an organization, select “Organization” and include your title and the organization’s name. If you are testifying on your own behalf, select “Individual.” There may be additional fields included by a committee to gather additional details.
- Click the “Submit Testimony” button in the upper right on the hearing page. If the deadline to submit testimony for a hearing has already passed, the Submit Testimony button will not be available.
- Select “Live Testimony” or “Record Testimony.” Select “Live Testimony” if you previously registered to testify at the hearing. If your testimony is only for the written record, choose “Record Testimony.” Please use the same name, organization information, and email address that you used if you registered to testify.
- You can upload testimony in either Adobe PDF, Microsoft Word, Apple Pages, or a plain text file by clicking “Upload my Testimony.” You can also type your testimony from this page with some formatting capability by selecting “I will type my testimony here.”
- After completing the web form, you should receive a confirmation email from noreply@dccouncil.gov. Prior to the hearing, you will receive an email from noreply@dccouncil.gov from the Committee with additional details on testifying.
- The Committees will approve witnesses’ registrations based on the total time allotted for public testimony. The Committees will also determine the order of witnesses’ testimony.
- Representatives of organizations will be allowed a maximum of five minutes for oral testimony, and individuals (and any subsequent representatives of the same organizations on whose behalf another witness has testified) will be allowed a maximum of three minutes. To accommodate additional public witnesses, the Committees may reduce witnesses’ allotted time for testimony but will inform witnesses if they plan to do so.
- Witnesses are not permitted to yield their time to or substitute their testimony for the testimony of another individual or organization.

- Witnesses who anticipate needing language interpretation, including ASL interpretation, are requested to inform the Committee on Transportation and the Environment as soon as possible but no later than five business days before the hearing. The Committees will make every effort to fulfill timely requests; however, requests received fewer than five business days before the hearing may not be fulfilled, and alternatives may be offered.