


COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

FROM: Phil Mendelson, Chairman 

DATE: October 1, 2024

RE: **Request to Agendize for the October 1, 2024 Legislative Meeting**

The following measures are placed on the agenda for the October 1, 2024 Legislative Meeting:

- **Pilot Truancy Reduction Congressional Review Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2024**
- **Pilot Truancy Reduction Congressional Review Emergency Amendment Act of 2024**

D. C. Act 25-529, the Pilot Truancy Reduction Emergency Amendment Act of 2024, will expire October 21, 2024. It was adopted at the Council's last legislature meeting before the recess on July 9, 2024. Although identical temporary legislation has been approved by the Council (Bill 25-913), it is pending transmittal to Congress. A congressional review emergency is necessary to prevent a gap in legislative authority.

The purpose of the underlying measure is to test (i.e., pilot) the Mayor's proposal to change truancy referrals in our schools. The goal of the referrals (current and proposed) is to help students. The purpose of the pilot is to test both the ability and the effectiveness of the Department of Human Services (DHS) to handle truancy referrals – the Mayor's proposal.

These measures would amend the Act to provide for compulsory school attendance, for the taking of a school census in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes to select 5 secondary educational institutions to refer students aged 14-17 to DHS when they accrue 15 unexcused absences within a school year. The emergency sets three requirements for DHS. DHS must: (1) notify the selected schools of all relevant procedures for referral 10 business days before the start of this coming School Year 2024-2025, (2) produce a preliminary report by March 31, 2025, and (3) a final report by August 15, 2025. The report will measure the success of the referrals. On June 12th, 2024, the Council approved the Fiscal Year 2025 Local Budget Act of 2024 which included \$3.38 million for the expansion of truancy intervention services at the Department of Human Services.

Copies of the measures are attached. Please call me or Bijan Verlin, Legislative Policy Advisor, if you have any questions at (202) 724-7130.

cc: All Councilmembers
Council Officers