


Council of the District of Columbia

MEMORANDUM

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

TO: Chairman Phil Mendelson
FROM: Councilmember Charles Allen 
RE: Request to Agendize Measures for the January 7, 2025 Legislative Meeting
DATE: January 2, 2025

I request that the following measures be placed on the agenda for the January 7, 2025 Legislative Meeting:

Emergency Legislation Introduced at the Request of the Mayor

- “Climate Commitment Clarification Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2025”
- “Climate Commitment Clarification Emergency Amendment Act of 2025”
- “Climate Commitment Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2025”

Section 109e of the District Department of the Environment Establishment Act of 2005 (“Act”) prohibits the District government from installing “space- or water-heating appliances that rely on the combustion of natural gas, oil, or other fossil fuels at the site of the appliance, except in cases where compliance with this paragraph would be technically infeasible,” in District-owned buildings.

The Executive’s current interpretation of the Act is that it prohibits the District government from repairing, reconstructing, or replacing components or units of existing space heating and cooling or water heating systems that rely on the combustion of fossil fuels.” The Executive estimates that there are 162 boiler systems managed by the Department of General Services in approximately 117 District of Columbia Public Schools locations. There are also 33 boiler systems in properties managed by Department of Parks and Recreation, 10 in Department of Human Services properties, 22 in Fire and Emergency Services properties, 20 in Metropolitan Police Department properties, and 28 across the municipal cluster. If the Council does not clearly allow system maintenance, residents will be at risk of extremely cold temperatures for living, working, and learning during winter.

I plan to work with the Executive on a permanent solution that preserves the Act’s original intent. However, for the time being, emergency legislation is necessary to clarify that the District government can repair, reconstruct, or replace components or units of fossil fuel-based space heating and cooling or water heating systems during winter.

Proposed Resolutions Approved by the Committee

- PR25-0995, the “District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Board of Directors Jed Ross Confirmation Resolution of 2024” (*may be renumbered for CP26*)
- PR25-1023, the “District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Board of 20 Directors Dr. Unique N. Morris-Hughes Confirmation Resolution of 2024” (*may be renumbered for CP26*)

Chairman Mendelson introduced PR25-0995 and PR25-1023 at the request of the Mayor on October 10 and October 18, 2024, respectively. PR25-0995 and PR25-1023 would appoint Jed Ross and Dr. Unique Morris-Hughes as principal members of the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Board of Directors for terms to end September 12, 2027. The Committee held a roundtable on both nominations on December 11, 2024, and voted to confirm both nominees at its Additional Meeting on its December 18, 2024. Both nominees, if confirmed, would be filling the remainder of existing four-year terms. Mr. Ross is currently serving on the DC Water Board as an alternate member for the District, having been confirmed by the Council in 2018 for an unexpired term, and in 2019 for a full term. Dr. Morris-Hughes, if confirmed, would be joining the Board for the first time.

To the extent necessary given the Council's winter recess, I request a waiver of Rule 231(c) pursuant to Rule 426 with respect to these measures so that they can be considered at the next legislative meeting.

Copies of these measures are attached. Please contact Kevin Whitfield, Committee Director, at kwhitfield@dccouncil.gov with any questions.

cc: Members, Council of the District of Columbia
Office of the Budget Director
Office of the General Counsel
Office of the Secretary