

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

MEMORANDUM

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TO Nyasha Howard, Secretary to the Council

FROM: Phil Mendelson, Chairman 

DATE: March 26, 2026

RE: **Request to Place Measures on the Agenda for March 31, 2026 Regular Legislative Meeting**

Please place the following measures on the agenda for the March 31, 2026 Regular Legislative Meeting:

- **Open Meetings Clarification Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2026**
- **Open Meetings Clarification Emergency Amendment Act of 2026**
- **Open Meetings Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2026**

D.C. Law 26-24, the Open Meetings Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2026, expires on March 29, 2026. That legislation was co-introduced by all Councilmembers and the introduced version is attached.

The Committee of the Whole held a hearing on April 22, 2025 on the permanent version of this legislation: Bill 26-208, the Open Meetings Clarification Amendment Act of 2025. The Committee has not yet marked up the bill, taking additional time to discuss certain provisions with the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability and other stakeholders. This emergency is necessary to prevent a significant gap in the law between the imminent expiration of the temporary measure and the committee markup of the permanent bill.

This legislation maintains, unchanged, the status quo. It amends the Open Meetings Act to clarify the definition of “meeting” specifically related to the types of gatherings of the Council that constitute “meetings.” The legislation also provides for the ability of a public body to be briefed about potential terrorist or public health threats as long as no official action is taken. It exempts meetings between the Council and the Mayor provided that no official action is taken at these meetings. The bill provides that a meeting shall be deemed open to the public if the public body takes steps reasonably calculated to allow the public to view or hear the meeting while the meeting is taking place, or, if doing so is not technologically feasible, as soon thereafter as reasonably practicable. And the bill clarifies that meetings of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (comprised of federal, judicial, and local agency heads) are exempt from the open meetings requirements.

This emergency legislation remains particularly necessary in the current political climate to allow the Council to be briefed as a body in a timely manner and to develop appropriate responses to rapidly unfolding issues, and to ensure that other public bodies in the District are able to receive, discuss and analyze relevant information securely, while also ensuring that the process for taking any official action with respect to that information is conducted publicly.

Draft copies of the measures are attached. Please call me or Christian A. Washington, Special Counsel, if you have any questions at (202) 724-8083.

cc: All Councilmembers  
Council Officers