



November 16, 2017

Phil Mendelson
Chairman
Committee of the Whole
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

Thank you for considering me for appointment to the Child Support Guideline Commission. If appointed, I would be honored to utilize my expertise and experience in child support to serve the District in this capacity. Below, please find my responses to your questions in advance of Monday's public hearing on my nomination.

1. *Please provide a copy of the Financial Disclosure Statement you filed with the Office of Campaign Finance or the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability. If you have not filed a Financial Disclosure Statement, please provide answers to questions 2-8 in lieu of that statement.*

I have not filed a Financial Disclosure Statement. Please find answers to questions 2-8 below.

2. *Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business with the District Government in which you have a beneficial interest valued in excess of \$5,000, including publicly traded stock.*

I do not have any interest in any business entity transacting business with the District Government. To the extent I may own publicly traded stock in a business entity that may transact business with the District Government, I am not immediately aware of any such interest and furthermore do not believe that any such interest exceeds \$5,000.

3. *Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business (including consulting) with the District Government from which you or your immediate family have received (or are receiving) income for services rendered in excess of \$1,000 during the past two years.*

Neither I nor my immediate family has transacted business with the District Government.

4. *Please provide the name of each business entity transacting business with the District Government in which you or any member of your immediate family serves as an officer, director, partner, or agent. Also list the position(s) held, a brief description of the entity, and any other pertinent details.*

None.

5. *Please provide the name of any lender and the amount of liability for each outstanding liability borrowed by you or any member of your immediate family in excess of \$5,000. Do not include loans from a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution, or from any business enterprise regularly engaged in the business of providing revolving credit or installment accounts.*

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family has any loans other than from a federal or state insured and regulated financial institution.

6. *Please list the location of all real property located in the District of Columbia in which you have an interest with a fair market value in excess of \$5,000.*

1010 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Unit 913
Washington, DC 20001

3816 Military Rd. NW
Washington, DC 20015

7. *Please list all professional and occupational licenses held by you.*

I am a member of the Bar in good standing in the State of New York, Third District, and the District of Columbia.

8. *Please list any professional organizations of which you are currently a member.*

None.

9. *Please list all boards and commissions connected with the District government on which you are or have been a member, and include the term of service for each.*

I was a member of the Board of Excel Academy Public Charter School from 2009 until 2013.

My spouse, Michael Vu, is currently a member and Vice Chairman of the Maya Angelou Public Charter School Board in Washington, DC.

10. *Please list any other boards (e.g. Boards of Directors of a non-profit) on which you are a member.*

None.

11. *Do you have any outstanding liability for taxes, fees, or other payments to the District, federal, or other state or local governments, either contested or uncontested? If so, please provide documentation of attempts to pay the amount owed or to resolve the disputed claim.*

No.

12. *Do you or any member of your immediate family have any interest, financial or otherwise, that may directly or indirectly pose a conflict of interest for you in performance of your duties as a member of the Commission?*

No.

13. *Please describe any local political activity (i.e. the District of Columbia local elections or campaigns) that you have engaged in over the past five years, including any campaign contributions to a local candidate or political action committee.*

None.

14. *Are you registered with any local, state, or federal government to lobby? If so, list the jurisdiction(s) in which you are registered.*

No.

15. *(a) Why have you agreed to serve for a four-year term?*

I have been engaged in the practice of child support law in the District for the past six and a half years while employed at the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia. I was initially hired in 2011 at the inception of Child Support Community Legal Services Project, a joint endeavor between Legal Aid and Bread for the City. Funded by grants from the D.C. Bar Foundation, Legal Aid and Bread for the City created the Child Support Resource Center, a legal services center based at the Paternity and Support branch of the DC Superior Court. Four days per week, I or another attorney from Legal Aid or Bread for the City is available at the P&S Branch of the Superior Court to provide legal information, advice, and same-day temporary representation to custodial and non-custodial parents in their paternity and child support cases. I have been one of the attorneys staffing the Child Support Resource Center at least on a weekly basis – and sometimes several days a week – for the past six and a half years. During my time at Legal Aid, I have assisted hundreds of custodial and non-custodial parents with questions about D.C.’s Child Support Guideline – some relatively straightforward and some incredibly complex. I have become an expert in this area of the law, particularly as it applies to low-income families.

I appreciate the Council’s wisdom in continually appointing a commission to reevaluate the D.C. Child Support Guidelines and make recommendations to ensure that application of the Guidelines results in fair and appropriate support orders. For children living below or close to the poverty line, regularly paid child support has the power to significantly boost their standard of living and thereby reduce the stress they face in their everyday lives. I intend to remain actively engaged in this area of the law going forward and am willing to devote a portion of my time over the next four years to service on the Commission. While I understand that this is a significant commitment, I am prepared to make that commitment in order to share my expertise and be a voice for low-income families on the Commission.

- (b) How do you plan to help the Commission fulfill its role and mission during your time on the Commission over the next four years?*

In my practice, I regularly assist both custodial and non-custodial parents in seeking fair child support orders. As such, I am in a unique position to see how the Guidelines apply to both sides, and to help evaluate how any proposed changes would affect families as a whole – particularly families living in poverty. I intend to use the perspective I have gained from my and my colleagues’ clients’ experiences under the current Guidelines to inform my contributions to the Commission and as a lens through which to view any recommendations for changes.

16. *Please discuss any past and present experiences not already mentioned that you believe are relevant to support your appointment as a member of the Commission.*

My undergraduate degree is from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. My course of studies focused on domestic public policy, specifically policies affecting child wellbeing. After graduating, I stayed on to work with my thesis advisor at The Center for Research on Child Wellbeing at Princeton, where I assisted with a national longitudinal research project that studied, among many other things, the impact of child support on father involvement and on child outcomes. In addition, I also worked on *The Future of Children*, a journal that translates social science research into policy recommendations on issues. This background in public policy and social science, including economics, will inform my participation in the Commission and will be particularly useful in the event the Commission decides to revisit the economic models that are the baseline of our joint income model for determining child support awards.

Again, thank you for considering me for appointment to the Commission. I look forward to discussing my candidacy with you and the other Councilmembers at Monday's public hearing. If there is any additional information I can provide before then, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,



Meridel Bulle-Vu
Supervising Attorney, Family Unit