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: November 30, 2017

RE: **Request to Place Emergency Measures on the Agenda for the December 5, 2017 Legislative Meeting**

This is to request that the following measures be placed on the agenda for the December 5, 2017 Legislative Meeting at the Request of the Mayor:

* **Historic Anacostia Vacant Properties Surplus Declaration and Disposition Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2017**
* **Historic Anacostia Vacant Properties Surplus Declaration and Disposition Emergency Approval Act of 2017**
* **Historic Anacostia Vacant Properties Surplus Declaration and Disposition Temporary Approval Act of 2017**

The emergency legislation would declare four District-owned properties in Historic Anacostia as no longer necessary for District purposes, and approve the disposition of the properties to the L’Enfant Trust. The properties are Lot 814 in Square 5779; Lot 849 in Square 5799; Lot 811 in Square 5800; and Lot 884 in Square 5765. The L’Enfant Trust has committed to renovate the properties in accordance with historic preservation standards and use them as workforce housing. This is consistent with emergency and permanent legislation approved last November intended to transfer the properties.

Currently these District-owned properties in the Ward 8 neighborhood of Historic Anacostia are vacant and blighted (arguably a nuisance), and yet controlled by the Department of Housing and Community Development. The purpose of the legislation is to ensure that the Trust, a proven and well-regarded nonprofit, is able to redevelop these homes in accordance to historic preservation standards and turn them into workforce housing. The bill would create affordable homes for working class District residents, eliminate neighborhood blight, and remove homes of negative value from the District’s inventory.

Although last year the Council adopted legislation regarding these houses, the Mayor has not implemented that law, claiming the Council lacked authority to act. This emergency for December 5th is being initiated by the Mayor, and so she will now allow the disposition to go forward. The reason for the emergency is to ensure transfer of the houses this year, and to enable the rehabilitation of the houses to begin as early as the spring. Neighborhood residents are overwhelmingly in support of ending the blight as quickly as possible.

Draft copies of the measure are attached. Please call me or Randi Powell, Legislative Policy Advisor, if you have any questions at (202) 724-8092.

cc: Members, Council of the District of Columbia

Office of the Secretary

Office of the General Counsel

Office of the Budget Director