FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Monday September 16, 2019

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CHAIRMAN MENDELSON INTRODUCES LGBT PANIC DEFENSE LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, DC – This afternoon D.C. Council Chairman Phil Mendelson introduced the “Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Panic Defense Prohibition Act of 2019” – which limits the ability of hate-crime perpetrators to claim “gay panic” as a legal defense.

“We as a government must do all that we can to protect populations whose very existence can be taken advantage of,” Mendelson said. “It is unacceptable for bigots to claim panic as a defense, as if the victim was at fault for the bias-related crime.”

Mendelson – who shepherded the District’s marriage equality legislation through the Council 10 years ago – has been a longtime advocate of LGBTQ rights in the District and as much as possible wants to continue to make sure their concerns are taken seriously by the District government.

Next month, Mendelson will facilitate a roundtable meeting between LGBTQ advocates, the Mayor, and government agency heads, in order to assist in getting a deeper conversation going about the challenges facing the LGBTQ community in the District and how we can solve those problems.

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