

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Washington Convention and Sports Authority Board**



Public Roundtable on  
PR23-0551, “Washington Convention and Sports Authority Board of Directors Brian Kenner  
Confirmation Resolution of 2019”

Testimony of  
Brian Kenner

Before the  
Committee of the Whole  
Chairman Phil Mendelson

Room 412  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20004

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3:30 pm

Good Afternoon, Chairman Mendelson, members, and staff of the Committee of the Whole. My name is Brian Kenner and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear before you to provide testimony on my nomination to the Board of Directors of the Washington Convention and Sports Authority, also known as Events DC. I am grateful to Mayor Bowser for nominating me and appreciate her support and confidence to serve on this board. I would also like to thank you, Chairman Mendelson, for holding this public hearing.

I am a Ward 1 resident and have lived in Washington, DC for the last 21 years. I attended the University of Iowa and subsequently completed a master's degree in public policy from Harvard University, before moving to Washington, DC in 1998. One of my first memories of Washington was walking around Penn Quarter and the then newly constructed MCI Center.

Since moving to DC, I have pursued a career focused on economic development and effective public private partnerships. I was a Presidential Management Fellow under the Clinton Administration and worked at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), and Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

During my work in the federal government, I saw first-hand the importance and value of public private partnerships and their role in improving the daily lives of everyday people. For the next nine years of my career I worked in the private sector primarily focused on supporting federal agencies and public interests. First, I served as a manager at Ernst & Young in their real estate advisory services practice, consulting to a variety of federal and local government organizations. As a vice president at Jones Lang LaSalle in their Public Institutions Group, where my work was focused on consulting to federal government clients with large real estate holdings. Finally, at Fannie Mae, I was a senior investment manager in their multifamily equity group, supporting workforce housing initiatives nationwide.

After close to a decade in the private sector, I became interested in moving back to the public sector. I became the Chief of Staff in the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development in 2009 under Mayor Fenty, and continued in this role through 2013 under Mayor Gray. In 2013, I was appointed City Manager for the City of Takoma Park, Maryland. This role expanded the breadth of my managerial capabilities and responsibilities and gave me a comprehensive understanding of the provision of all city services for the benefit of residents.

In 2015, I was asked by Mayor Bowser to be the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED), an opportunity I eagerly accepted. Serving DMPED and the residents of the District of Columbia enabled me to continue to work to support economic development in DC proper, and in the surrounding region. I wanted our projects to be focused on increasing tax revenue, growing jobs for DC residents, and supporting affordable housing. Many projects were completed or significantly advanced under my leadership, including the redevelopment of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center Campus, and other significant development projects such as the Wharf, Franklin School, Stevens School, numerous phases of the New Communities initiative, St. Elizabeths East Campus, and Grimke School.

In addition to real estate projects, my tenure as Deputy Mayor was also focused on furthering the economic vitality of the District of Columbia through new initiatives, such as the establishment of a new inclusive innovation incubator on Howard University's campus to support entrepreneurs from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, advancing women and minorities in technology, and developing new air routes from the DC region to India, Hong Kong, and El Salvador. I also worked to increase tourism and economic activity across the Washington Metropolitan Area, craft a new five-year economic development strategy for the District of Columbia, significantly increased funding to support affordable housing, and created new grant

programs to support mixed use projects, specifically targeting zip codes experiencing greater than 10 percent unemployment. One of the most memorable achievements during my time at DMPED was enabling the construction of a new grocery store in a food desert in Ward 8, Good Food Market, through one of our newly created grant programs.

As Deputy Mayor, I also had an opportunity to promote DC regionally, nationally, and internationally, working with organizations like Events DC, the Metropolitan Restaurant Association, the Hotel Association of Washington DC, and Destination DC. I consider myself fortunate to have worked alongside great ambassadors for DC, such as Greg O'Dell and Elliott Ferguson, and to have sat on the boards of the organizations they lead, while I was Deputy Mayor. My involvement with these organizations reinforced my belief in the critical role that economic development plays in the overall economic welfare and cultural vitality of DC.

During my previous tenure as a board member of Events DC, I had the opportunity to work with many of the current board members whom I deeply respect. Together, we helped to promote the success of important projects such as: the Cherry Blossom Festival, Jazz Festival, CitiOpen, the historic restoration of the Carnegie Library in partnership with Apple, the marketing of DC at the SXSW annual conference, and development of the Entertainment and Sports Arena on the St. Elizabeths East Campus, hosts to the WNBA Champions, the Washington Mystics.

Currently, I work in Amazon's Economic Development Group, supporting investments and expansions in the DMV and the Northeastern Region of the United States. This role allows me to continue to work with economic development focused organizations throughout the region to support workforce development, transportation, and public private partnerships.

Events DC plays an important role driving economic activity for Washington DC by supporting and sponsoring cultural programs, tourism initiatives, sporting events, and conventions. Were I to be confirmed, my goal as a board member of Events DC would be to work intensively with Events DC staff and fellow board members, and all of the organization's stakeholders to create amazing experiences for residents, visitors, and local communities – promoting the economic and cultural vitality of the city I call home and that I have grown to love so much.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today and am happy to answer any questions you have for me.