Chairman Phil Mendelson

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to provide additional flexibility and authority to the Executive to address critical needs of District residents during a public health emergency including wage replacement, business relief, and additional authorities and exemptions regarding health, public safety, and consumer protection.

 RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “COVID-19 Response Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2020”.

 Sec. 2. (a) There is reasonable cause to believe that there is an imminent hazard or actual occurrence of widespread exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) that poses a significant risk of substantial future harm to a large number of people in the District of Columbia.

 (b) COVID-19 has been detected in numerous states, with more 1,000 confirmed cases and at least 29 fatalities in the United States. On January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation’s healthcare community in responding to COVID-19. The World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have COVID-19 to be a “public health emergency of international concerns.” On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

 (c) As of March 11, 2020, the District of Columbia Health Department confirmed that there are ten positive cases of COVID-19 in the District. The person-to-person spread COVID-19 and the increased availability of testing kits make it virtually certain that the District will have more confirmed cases and that COVID-19 will have a significant impact on the District’s residents, businesses, visitors, students, and at-risk population.

 (d) On March 11, 2020, the Mayor of the District of Columbia issued Mayor’s Order 2020-45 and 2020-45, declaring a public emergency and a public health emergency in the District due to the imminent threat to the health, safety, and welfare of District residents posed by the spread of COVID-19.

 (e) To aid the District residents and businesses during this emergency, there is an immediate need to provide relief for those that may be impacted by COVID-19, including via wage replacement for residents that may face work stoppages due to quarantine or actual sickness, prohibiting evictions for the duration of an emergency order issued by the Mayor, authorizing the Mayor to establish a grant program for affected small businesses, and making temporary administrative allowances concerning meetings of District boards and commissions, including Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.

 (f) To aid the Mayor in addressing the critical needs of District residents during this emergency, there is an immediate need to grant the Mayor various powers concerning public health, safety, and consumer protection

 (g) It is also necessary to allow flexibility to delay transmission of the fiscal year 2021 budget up to May 1, 2020 at the latest but earlier if the public health emergency is lifted. The Council also requires changes to its rules with respect to the ability to conduct legislative business during the emergency.

 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances, making it necessary that the Coronavirus Response Emergency Amendment Act of 2020 be adopted after a single reading.

 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.