


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: July 8, 2021

RE: **Request to Place Measures on the July 13, 2021 Legislative Meeting Agenda**

This memorandum is to request that the following measures be placed on the agenda for the July 13, 2021 Legislative Meeting:

- **Protecting Consumers from Unjust Debt Collection Practices Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2021**
- **Protecting Consumers from Unjust Debt Collection Practices Emergency Amendment Act of 2021**
- **Protecting Consumers from Unjust Debt Collection Practices Temporary Amendment Act of 2021**

On March 11, 2020, the Mayor of the District of Columbia issued Mayor's Orders 2020-45 and 2020-46, 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. Additionally, the Council has enacted many resident protections through legislation such as the Coronavirus Support Temporary Amendment Act of 2020 (D.C. Law 23-130). With the public health emergency expiring soon, many of the protections in the law will lapse, including protections regarding debt collection. This emergency would amend DC Code Section 28-3814 to provide consumers greater protection against certain methods and practices of collectors. Some of these protections include:

- Expanding the definition of debt so it includes all consumer debt, including medical debt;
- Placing a reasonable cap on attorney's fees paid by individual consumers so debt collection lawsuits do not drive consumers further into debt; and
- Providing procedural protections against arrest and imprisonment, including a prohibition against imprisoning, or jailing of debtors for failure to pay debts or failure to appear.

My office worked extensively with the Office of Attorney General on language in the draft bills. The draft measures are attached. Please call me or Mr. Blaine Stum if you have any questions at (202) 724-8092.

cc: All Councilmembers
Council Officers