



OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN MENDELSON
COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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COUNCIL TO HOLD HEARING ON TIPPED WORKERS FAIRNESS AMENDMENT ACT

WASHINGTON, DC – The DC Council Committee of the Whole has announced a public hearing on Initiative 77 to be held on Monday September 17. Specifically, the hearing is on Bill 22-913, the “Tipped Workers Fairness Amendment Act of 2018,” which would repeal the Initiative. “This hearing is an opportunity for everyone for and against Initiative 77 to explain why this is good law,” said Council Chairman Phil Mendelson.

“Indeed, that is the fundamental question: whether, on the merits, Initiative 77 is good policy,” Mendelson said. “We should no more defend a bad law if it’s an Initiative, than we should defend a bad law if the Council wrote it.”

Initiative 77 was explained on the ballot and in pro-Initiative literature as legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and also, to raise the wages of tipped workers to \$15 per hour. However, current law already requires a \$15 minimum wage and also requires that tipped workers get the same hourly amount as the minimum wage.

“This is not the first time the Council has changed or amended an initiative approved by voters,” Mendelson said. “In the case of medical marijuana, the Council substantially re-wrote the initiative after it was voted on. The point of an initiative is to put the public policy on the table. But that does not mean the initiative can’t be modified. With medical marijuana we modified it substantially.”

“In my view, the explanation of Initiative 77 on the ballot was misleading if not inaccurate,” Mendelson added. “Moreover, the vast majority of tipped workers oppose this, even though Initiative 77 was sold as helping them.”

This hearing will be a chance for voters, and workers affected by the legislation, to speak to the initiative. The hearing will be held at the John A. Wilson building in the Council Chamber at 11 a.m. Non-government witness testimony will be limited to three minutes.