

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
COMMITTEE REPORT**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

DRAFT

---

**TO:** All Councilmembers

**FROM:** Chairman Phil Mendelson  
Committee of the Whole

**DATE:** February 7, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Report on PR 25-8 “District of Columbia Auditor Kathleen Patterson Reappointment Approval Resolution of 2023”

The Committee of the Whole, to which PR 25-8, “District of Columbia Auditor Kathleen Patterson Reappointment Approval Resolution of 2023” was referred, reports favorably thereon, and recommends approval by the Council.

CONTENTS

I.	Background and Need.....	1
II.	Legislative Chronology .....	4
III.	Position of the Executive .....	4
IV.	Comments of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions .....	4
V.	Summary of Testimony .....	4
VI.	Impact on Existing Law .....	5
VII.	Fiscal Impact.....	5
VIII.	Section-by-Section Analysis.....	5
IX.	Committee Action.....	6
X.	Attachments .....	6

**I. BACKGROUND AND NEED**

Proposed Resolution 25-8, the “District of Columbia Auditor Kathleen Patterson Reappointment Approval Resolution of 2023,” was introduced by Chairman Mendelson on January 3, 2023. The purpose of PR 25-8 is to approve the reappointment of Ms. Kathleen Patterson as the District of Columbia Auditor for a 6-year term to end February 25, 2029.

The Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) was established by the United States Congress in section 455 of the Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 803; DC Official Code § 1-204.55). ODCA’s mission is to “support the Council of the District of Columbia by making sound recommendations that improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of the District government.”<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to the Home Rule Act, the District of Columbia Auditor is appointed by the Chairman of the Council, subject to the approval of a majority of the Council. Under D.C. Official Code § 1-205.55(b), the District of Columbia

---

<sup>1</sup> About ODCA, The Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (Feb. 1, 2017), <http://dcauditor.org>.

Auditor, whose term of appointment is six years, is required to “each year conduct a thorough audit of the accounts and operations of the government of the District.” Additionally, D.C. Official Code §1-204.55(c) states: “(t)he District of Columbia Auditor shall have access to all books, accounts, records, reports, findings, and all other papers, things, or property belonging to or in use by any department, agency, or instrumentality of the District government and necessary to facilitate the audit.” The Home Rule Act provision for a District of Columbia Auditor was no doubt modeled after the General Accounting Office. That office was later renamed the Government Accountability Office reflecting its evolved role in not only examining the books of the federal government, but also acting as a partner to Congress and its committees with program evaluations, policy analyses, and decisions on a broad range of government programs and activities. The role of the D.C. Auditor has similarly evolved.

The following table reflects the appointed Auditors serving since Home Rule:

**Table A: District of Columbia Auditors**

<b>Auditor</b>	<b>Resolution Number</b>	<b>Date of Council Approval</b>	<b>Term End Date</b>
Matthew Watson	R 1-35	Feb. 25, 1975	Feb. 25, 1981
Otis Troupe	R 4-41	March 10, 1981	Feb. 25, 1987
			Feb. 25, 1993
			Feb. 25, 1999
Russell Smith	R 10-300	Feb. 1, 1994	Feb. 25, 1999
Anthony S. Cooper	R 11-679	Dec. 3, 1996	Feb. 25, 1999
Deborah Nichols	R 13-53	March 2, 1999	Feb. 25, 2005
	R 15-729	Nov. 9, 2004	Feb. 25, 2011
Yolanda Branche	R 19-332	Dec. 6, 2011	Feb. 25, 2023
<b><i>Kathleen Patterson*</i></b>	R 20-684	Nov. 18, 2014	Feb. 25, 2023
	R 22-18	Feb. 24, 2023	Feb. 25, 2023
	<b><i>PR 24-8</i></b>	<b><i>Feb. 7, 2023</i></b>	<b><i>Feb. 25, 2029</i></b>

\*Nominee

PR 25-8 would confirm the reappointment of Ms. Kathleen Patterson, to serve a six-year term (ending in February 2029). This would be Ms. Patterson’s third appointment as Auditor. Ms. Patterson is currently a resident of Ward 3 and has resided in the District for over 45 years. She has a Bachelor of Science in Journalism from Northwestern University, a Master of Arts in English Literature from Georgetown University, and she completed a year of graduate study in English Literature at the University of York in England as a Rotary Foundation Fellow. Ms. Patterson began her career as a reporter, and she spent approximately 11 years reporting or

writing on national and local politics, social welfare, and education policy. She then spent eight years as the Director of Communications for the American Public Welfare Association, now the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), an organization that was created during the Great Depression to assist state government officials with representing the concerns of their constituents to the federal government. In 1994, Ms. Patterson was elected to the Council of the District of Columbia representing Ward 3. She was re-elected twice. During her 12 years on the Council, Ms. Patterson chaired three Council committees: the Committee on Government Operations (1997-2000), the Committee on the Judiciary (2001-2004), and the Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation (2005-2006). As a Committee chairperson, Ms. Patterson had oversight of major District agencies and a substantial percentage of the District's spending. Prior to her appointment as Auditor, Ms. Patterson was Director of Government Relations for The Pew Charitable Trusts, a non-profit global research and public policy organization dedicated to serving the public.

During a hearing on her appointment, Ms. Patterson laid out what she believes have been significant accomplishments since November 2014 as Auditor including garnering greater media visibility of ODCA's work, strong peer reviews that rated ODCA's work at the highest rating, public engagement to drive ODCA's work, rightsizing ODCA's responsibilities and ending unnecessary audit mandates, and responsiveness to community concerns. She also cited ongoing challenges for ODCA such as engagement and cooperation with District agencies in conducting and releasing audits, and more robust engagement and buy in from Council committees.

ODCA continues to grow in size and stature under Ms. Patterson's leadership. In 2021, the Council adopted legislation creating a new Deputy Auditor for Public Safety which is currently being recruited for. The Auditor has also supported legislation adopted by the Council that allows ODCA to carry funding over fiscal years to support contract audits timelines. As mentioned previously, ODCA has risen in public visibility through Ms. Patterson's work leading to increased public awareness of the work of ODCA. As also mentioned earlier, ODCA continues to have strong compliance with auditing standards and is regularly peer reviewed. The most recent 2022 peer review report from the National Conference of State Legislatures' National Legislative Program Evaluation Society noted that members of the peer review team have a favorable opinion of the ODCA and its staff, that they were impressed with numerous aspects of ODCA's operation.<sup>2</sup>

The Committee also notes that ODCA, under Ms. Patterson's leadership, has released a number of significant reports that have assisted the Council in its oversight activities and provided the public with thoughtful and objective information on the functions of various agencies and programs. Since 2015, ODCA has issued hundreds of audits and reports. Some of the major issues examined during Ms. Patterson's tenure include:

- Six reports on the Housing Production Trust Fund resulting in increased agency compliance and better transparency of the program.

---

<sup>2</sup> NCSL/NLPES Peer Review Management Letter, attached.

- A series of school modernization audits that led to the elimination of non-governmental oversight of school modernizations.
- Policing and use of force reviews that led to changes in policies and practices at MPD and amendments to the law by the Council to improve policing.
- An education data audit that found the District is not effectively using education data, including an upcoming compliance report to identify continuing gaps.

As current District of Columbia Auditor, and as a former councilmember, Ms. Patterson has an extensive background in analysis of District agency program performance and spending. Her record as Auditor since initial appointment is excellent. The Committee believes that Ms. Patterson will continue the good work of ODCA and further strengthen the office going forward. We recommend her reappointment.

## II. LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

January 3, 2023	PR 25-8, “District of Columbia Auditor Kathleen Patterson Reappointment Approval Resolution of 2023” is introduced by Chairman Mendelson.
January 13, 2023	Notice of Intent to Act on PR 25-8 is published in the <i>DC Register</i> .
January 13, 2023	Notice of a Public Hearing on PR 25-8 is published in the <i>DC Register</i> .
January 30, 2023	The Committee of the Whole holds a public hearing on PR 25-8.
February 7, 2023	The Committee of the Whole marks-up PR 25-8.

## III. POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Auditor is subordinate to the Legislative Branch and therefore the Executive has not commented on this nomination.

## IV. COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

The Committee received no testimony or comments from any Advisory Neighborhood Commission on PR 25-8.

## V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee of the Whole held a public hearing on PR 25-8 on January 30, 2023. The testimony summarized below is from that hearing. Submitted copies of testimony are attached to this report.

***Robert Vinson Brannum, Public Witness***, testified in support of the reappointment and described his former work with Ms. Patterson. He also recommended that ODCA assist Advisory Neighborhood Commissions with record-keeping and that ODCA examine the use of non-disclosure agreements at District agencies.

***Fritz Mulhauser, Public Witness***, testified in support of the reappointment and recommended that the Office of the Chief Technology Officer make more education data available to ODCA and that ODCA should consider creating a high-risk list of government programs and operations.

***Kathleen Patterson, Nominee***, testified regarding her background and her work as current Auditor. She described what she sees as important accomplishments thus far under her leadership and opportunities to further strengthen her office and oversight of agencies and programs.

There were no additional comments or testimony received regarding the appointment.

## VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

PR 25-8 fulfills the Council's responsibility to appoint the District of Columbia Auditor, pursuant to § 1-204.55(a) of the District of Columbia Official Code.

## VII. FISCAL IMPACT

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer indicates that a Fiscal Impact Statement is not needed for a confirmation. Pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 1-204.55(a), the Auditor of the District of Columbia is compensated at a rate as may be established from time to time by the Council. The annual compensation for the Auditor, which is \$193,155, is included as part of the annual budget for the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor.

## VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <u>Section 1</u> | States the short title of PR 25-8.   |
| <u>Section 2</u> | Confirms the reappointment of Kathleen Patterson for a six-year term to end February 25, 2029. |
| <u>Section 3</u> | Directs the Chairman to transmit a copy of this resolution to the appointee.                   |
| <u>Section 4</u> | Provides that PR 25-8 shall take effect immediately.   |

## **IX. COMMITTEE ACTION**

## **X. ATTACHMENTS**

1. PR 25-8 as introduced.
2. Nominee's response to Committee pre-hearing questions.
3. Written testimony.
4. Letter from National Conference of State Legislatures' National Legislative Program Evaluation Society.
5. Legal Sufficiency Review.
6. Committee Print for PR 25-8.

January 24, 2023

The Hon. Phil Mendelson, Chairman  
Council of the District of Columbia  
The John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

I write to provide answers to the Committee's questions in advance of the January 30, 2023, hearing on the resolution nominating me for a full term as D.C. Auditor.

1. Please provide a copy of the Financial Disclosure Statement you filed with the Office of Campaign Finance or the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability. If you have not filed a disclosure form, please provide answers to questions no. 2-8 in lieu of that statement.

See attachment which includes responses to questions 2 through 8.

2. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business with the District Government in which you have a beneficial interest valued in excess of \$1,000, including publicly traded stock.
3. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business (including consulting) with the District Government from which you or your immediate family have received (or are receiving) income for services rendered in excess of \$200 during the past two years.
4. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting business with the District Government in which you or any member of your immediate family serves as an officer, director, partner, or agent. Also list the position(s) held, a brief description of the entity, and any other pertinent details.
5. Please provide the name of any lender and the amount of liability for each outstanding liability borrowed by you or any member of your immediate family in excess of \$1,000. Do not include loans from a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution, or from any business enterprise regularly engaged in the business of providing revolving credit or installment accounts.

6. Please list the location of all real property located in the District of Columbia in which you have an interest with a fair market value in excess of \$1,000.
7. Please list all professional and occupational licenses held by you.
8. Please list any professional organizations of which you are currently a member.
9. Please list all boards and commissions connected with the District Government on which you are or have been a member and include the term of service for each.

As chairman of the Committee on Government Operations with oversight for information technology, I served as the D.C. Council's representative on the governmental planning body concerned with the millennium's impact on government systems, roughly 1998-2000. I served as a member of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council while serving as chair of the Council Committee on the Judiciary, 2001 through 2004.

10. Please list any other boards (e.g., Board of Directors for a non-profit) on which you are currently a member.

None.

11. Do you have any outstanding liability for taxes, fees, or other payments to the District, federal or other state or local governments, either contested or uncontested? If so, please provide documentation of attempts to pay the amount owed or to resolve the disputed claim.

No.

12. Do you or any member of your immediate family have any interest, financial or otherwise, that may directly or indirectly pose a conflict of interest for you in performance of your duties Auditor?

No.

13. Please describe any local political activity (i.e. the District of Columbia local elections or campaigns) that you have engaged in over the past six years, including all campaign contributions to a D.C. candidate or political committee.

None.

14. Are you registered with any local, state, or federal government to lobby? If so, list the jurisdiction(s) in which you are registered.

No.



15. Why have you agreed to continue to serve? Include in your answer what you believe should be the priorities for your office.

I believe my D.C. government experience to date provides me with a unique and useful perspective as D.C. Auditor. I believe the priorities of ODCA should continue to be to provide accurate, constructive, and actionable information to D.C. government leadership, including the directors of agencies we audit, and in particular to members of the D.C. Council in their oversight responsibilities. As I will detail in testimony, one immediate area of focus is improving the working relationship with Councilmembers and Council staff to help ensure that our report recommendations have traction with the legislature.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve and I am happy to respond to any additional questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathleen Patterson  
D.C. Auditor

Attachment: Kathy Patterson BEGA FDS User Report 2021

#### FDS Filing Details for 2021

**Name:** Kathy Patterson

**Date of Appointment or Employment:** 12/15/2014

**Final Date of Service:**

**Position:** D.C. Auditor

**Agency:** Office of the DC Auditor

Position Held with the District Government During the Prior calendar year (If Not The Same As Above)

**Position:**

**Final Date in Position:**

**Agency:**

#### Non District Employment/Business

1) Did you have any non-District employment or engage in any outside business or other activity during the previous calendar year for which you received compensation of \$200 or more?

**No**

2) Was your spouse, registered domestic partner, or dependent child(ren) employed by a private entity or did they engage in any business endeavors during the previous calendar year for which they received compensation of \$200 or more?

**No**

3) In the previous calendar year, did you serve in any unpaid position or in any other formal capacity (without compensation) of a non-government board or other outside entity where you had influence over the entity's finances or decision-making (e.g., as an officer, director, partner, consultant, contractor, volunteer, or member)?

**No**

4) During the previous calendar year, did your spouse, registered domestic partner, or dependent child(ren) serve in any unpaid position or in any other formal capacity (without compensation) of a non-government board or other outside entity where they had influence over the entity's finances or decision-making (e.g., as an officer, director, partner, consultant, contractor, volunteer, or member)?

**No**

5) During the previous calendar year, did you have any agreements with a former or current employer, other than with the District of Columbia, for future payments or benefits (such as separation pay, partnership buyouts, or pension or retirement pay) or for future employment or for a leave of absence?

**No**

6) During the previous calendar year, did your spouse, registered domestic partner, or dependent child(ren) have any agreements with a former or current employer, other than with the District of Columbia, for future payments or benefits (such as separation pay, partnership buyouts, or pension or retirement pay) or for future employment or for a leave of absence?

**No**

#### Securities, Holdings and Investments

7) Did you have a beneficial interest in or hold any security at the close of the previous calendar year that exceeded, in the aggregate, \$1,000 or that produced income of \$200 or more?

**No**

8) Did your spouse, registered domestic partner, or dependent child(ren) have a beneficial interest in or hold any security, at the close of the previous calendar year, that exceeded, in the aggregate, \$1,000 or that produced income of \$200 or more?

**No**

9) Did you owe any entity or person (other than a member of your immediate family) \$1,000 or more (excluding: mortgages on your personal residence, student loans, automobile loans, credit card accounts or other revolving credit, and other loans from a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution) during the previous calendar year?

**No**

10) Did your spouse, domestic partner or dependent child(ren) owe any entity or person (other than a member of their immediate family) \$1,000 or more, (excluding: mortgages on your personal residence, student loans, automobile loans, credit card accounts or other revolving credit, and other loans from a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution) during the previous calendar year?

**No**

11) Did you have an interest in any real property located in the District of Columbia during the previous calendar year, aside from your primary personal residence, where your interest had a fair market value \$1,000 or more, or where the property produced income of \$200 or more?

**No**

12) Did your spouse, domestic partner, or dependent child(ren) have an interest in any real property located in the District of Columbia during the previous calendar year aside from their primary personal residence, where their interest had a fair market value of more than \$1,000, or where the property produced income of \$200 or more?

**No**

### **Regulated Professions**

13) Do you hold any professional or occupational licenses issued by the District of Columbia government (i.e., are you licensed to practice law in the District of Columbia, or are you licensed by the District's Department of Health, the District's Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, the District's Department of Mental Health, the District's Department of Insurance Securities and Banking, the Metropolitan Police Department, the District's Occupational and Professional Licensing Administration, etc.)?

**No**

14) Does your spouse, domestic partner, or dependent child(ren) hold any professional or occupational licenses issued by the District of Columbia government (i.e., are they licensed to practice law in the District of Columbia, or are they licensed by the District's Department of Health, the District's Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, the District's Department of Mental Health, the District's Department of Insurance Securities and Banking, the Metropolitan Police Department, or the District's Occupational and Professional Licensing Administration, etc.)?

**No**

### **Gifts**

15) Did you receive any gift(s) from any person that has or is seeking to do business with the District, conducts operations or activities that are regulated by the District, or has an interest that may be favorably affected by the performance or nonperformance of your duties in the total amount or with a total value of \$100 or more during the previous calendar year?

**No**

**Additional Comments**

**Supporting Documents**

**I certify that I have:**

- Not caused title to property to be placed in the legal name, possession, or control of another person or entity for the purpose of avoiding the disclosure requirements on this form;
- Filed and paid my income and property taxes or am in current good standing with the IRS and state tax collector because of an extension, payment plan or other arrangement or agreement;
- Diligently safeguarded the assets of the taxpayers and the District;
- Complied with my duty to report known illegal activity, including attempted bribes, to the appropriate authorities;
- Not been offered or accepted any bribes;
- Not directly or indirectly received government funds through illegal or improper means;
- Not raised or received funds in violation of federal or District law; and
- Not received or been given anything of value, including a gift, favor, service, loan gratuity, discount, hospitality, political contribution, or promise of future employment, based on any understanding that my official actions or judgment or vote would be influenced.
- Completed a full ethics training with-in the last 365 days;

**Additional Comments**

STATEMENT OF

ROBERT VINSON BRANNUM

ON PR 25-8

*THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AUDITOR  
KATHLEEN PATTERSON REAPPOINTMENT RESOLUTION OF  
2023*

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

JANUARY 30, 2023

Greetings and salutations Chairman Mendelson and members of the Committee of the Whole. I am Robert Vinson Brannum, former Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner 5E08 and President Emeritus of the DC Federation of Civic Associations. I am pleased and honored to appear before the Committee to support PR 25-8, the nomination of the Honorable Kathleen "Kathy" Patterson for reappointment as the District of Columbia Auditor.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee I have known Kathy for a number of years in her public service to the people of the District of Columbia. My interactions with Kathy over the years has been from the perspective of an engaged community activist and as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner. Kathy and I did not always agree on issues; however, Kathy was always respectful and willing to listen. Some time ago in not-too-distant past Kathy and I were Democratic primary candidates for the office of Chair of the Council of the District of Columbia. A ruling from the United States Office of Special indicated I could not run for Chairman of the Council as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner which resulted in withdrawal from the race. Later, Kathy and I served together on the Board of the DC Open Government Coalition.

There are few people who walk in high heels of professionalism, dignity, and respect. Kathy is deserving of reappointment as the District of Columbia.

However, as I support Kathy's reappointment, I am moved to refer two (2) items for her office's consideration.

1. First, it is my recommendation the auditor's office develop an active progressive plan to assist and support ANC's financial record-keeping for more accurate and timely compliance with appropriate District rules. The emphasis should be on supporting ANCs rather than punishing ANCs. As a former ANC treasurer, I took the stance there is a difference between a treasurer and an accountant.
2. My second recommendation would be for Auditor's office to survey and review the practice of District agencies presenting non-disclosure agreements or non-disclosure type agreements to silence departing employees or to withhold certain earned financial/personnel rights and obligations. Are such agreements ethical and or legal?

These two (2) recommendations I believe will help to close gaps where there should not be any.

Let' me close where I began my testimony. Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I strongly support the reappointment of the Honorable Kathleen "Kathy" Patterson as the District of Columbia Auditor.

Thank you.

**Testimony of  
Fritz Mulhauser**

Before the  
Committee of the Whole  
Council of the District of Columbia

on

PR25-0008, “D.C. Auditor Kathleen Patterson Reappointment Resolution of 2023”

January 31, 2023

---

Thank you for the opportunity for citizens to testify concerning this important position and the proposed candidate for renomination, Kathy Patterson. I am testifying as a resident of the District for 50 years. In that time, I have worked as an evaluator and attorney in the U.S. Congress, the federal executive branch, and in private nonprofits.

I served the Congress for a decade as Assistant Director in the Program Evaluation and Methodology Division of the GAO or Government Accountability Office – then called the General Accounting Office. In that capacity I had a unique opportunity to take part in significant change in a legislative audit agency—along lines Kathy Patterson has been leading for the D.C. Auditor.<sup>1</sup>

Ms. Patterson brings a wealth of qualifications including serving as D.C. Auditor, confirmed by the D.C. Council in November 2014 and reconfirmed February 2016. She brought diverse and relevant experience to the Auditor role including:

- digging out facts as a reporter, 1970-1984;
- emphasizing facts and analysis 1995 to 2006 as an elected Council Member (D-Ward 3); and
- leading from 2007 to 2014 the efforts of a major nonprofit to translate research into policy.

Under her leadership, the office has grown in scope and impact. Their last tally (covering reports issued in 2018-20) showed that by last January, 71 of 96 recommendations were implemented or in progress. The work has included reports on topics such as:

- COVID-19 mitigation efforts;
- the school modernization program;
- police department use of force policies;
- operation of the 911 emergency call center;
- limits of data used to track D.C. education;
- results of the Housing Production Trust Fund.

This committee and the full Council should not hesitate to reappoint the Chairman’s nominee. Let me add several thoughts on the usefulness of the D.C. Auditor to the Council and some issues to consider in further enhancing that work.

---

<sup>1</sup> See comment by GAO Comptroller General David Walker’s comment almost two decades ago: “GAO did primarily scrutinize government vouchers and receipts in its early years. The days of accountants in green eyeshades, however, are long gone. Although GAO does serve as the lead auditor of the U.S. government’s consolidated financial statements, **financial audits are only about 15 percent of GAO’s current workload**. Most of the agency’s work involves program evaluations, policy analyses, and legal opinions and decisions on a broad range of government programs and activities both at home and abroad.” David Walker, “GAO Answers the Question, What’s in a Name?” *Roll Call* (July 19, 2004) (emphasis added). Available at: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/2019-11/rollcall07192004.pdf>.



1. **Focus Council and executive on essential areas of government.** The Council has acted appropriately to drop outdated audit requirements found in D.C. Code, pruning decades of luxuriant undergrowth to free ODCA resources for work on topics with the most significant opportunity for impact. The ODCA should consider establishing a list of D.C. government programs and operations that are high-risk -- vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement or need transformation to become effective.<sup>2</sup> GAO's list of about three dozen is issued every two years at the start of each new session of Congress and has led to more than \$626 billion in financial benefits to the federal government over the past 15 years. Such a list for the District would stimulate the best effort of the Council in legislative work (including oversight), the offices of the mayor and city administrator in budgeting and planning, and agencies' sustained leadership, planning, and execution.<sup>3</sup>
2. **Big problems need deeper oversight and assured access to data.** To review major agencies and functions of the D.C. government, Council committees need to do deeper dives, which in turn require resources of staff, evaluative studies, and even advance witness preparation as Ms. Patterson did in oversight hearings on MPD mass arrests during her term chairing the Council Judiciary Committee. More than a single annual hearing is required to get facts on the table and hear from community voices, build public support for change, and follow up over the years. Yet D.C. executive leaders criticize committee chairs for serious oversight.<sup>4</sup> I have urged voters to value Council members who go after the facts, and the Council leadership needs to support committee efforts by adding a strong message that agencies and deputy mayors are expected to cooperate.

21<sup>st</sup> Century legislatures nationwide generally agree with GAO that they need more from their auditors—to know if the government is getting results, achieving the goals of laws they pass, and meeting the needs of the communities that elect them.<sup>5</sup>

Measuring results requires access to data, yet D.C. agencies balk too often, frequently exaggerating legal barriers, and thus repeatedly frustrating ODCA work. The Council should help executive agencies re-set priorities by directing the Chief Data Officer to draft government-wide rules for data-sharing. These would harmonize federal laws (sometimes but not always relevant), protect data privacy, and enable needed multi-agency analysis.

---

<sup>2</sup> For the GAO equivalent, see details here: <https://www.gao.gov/high-risk-list>.

<sup>3</sup> To see the links between audit work, high-risk designation, and results, see GAO report: *Key Practices to Successfully Address High-Risk Areas and Remove Them from the List* (GAO 22-105184; March 2022). Available at: <https://files.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-105184.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Fenit Nirappil and Paul Schwartzman, “Backlash to Elissa Silverman’s D.C. Council first term fuels campaign to unseat her.” *The Washington Post*, Nov. 2, 2018. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4whwc3ta>.

<sup>5</sup> Further encouragement to states to base decisions on sound evaluation is coming from the National Conference of State Legislatures Center for Results-Driven Governing, launched in September 2020, and Governing for Results Network, a scheme for peer learning by staff, active since August 2021. D.C.’s ODCA is represented in leadership of the NCSL unit on state legislative auditors.

This could be part of a helpful exercise to write a D.C. version of the federal Privacy Act, addressing individuals' rights in personal data held by the government, as the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability and Office of Open Government recommended in their 2022 annual report just issued.<sup>6</sup>

D.C. residents look forward to the work of the D.C. Auditor under Ms. Patterson's renewed leadership in the coming years. Please confirm her and commit to a broadened vision of the Auditor's scope with the access, resources, and authority the Auditor can benefit from as the office assists the Council in doing its work for the District's residents.

---

<sup>6</sup> See BEGA, *Best Practices Report 2022* (December 2022), p. 24. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/bdh35n3h>. D.C. data policy should be law, as it is now only in Mayor's Order 2017-115 (April 27, 2017). In 2018, the U.S. Congress took a step towards expanding available data by passing the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act, P.L. 115-435, 5 U.S. Code § 311. This law requires major federal agencies to create open data plans to make federal data publicly available and searchable. The National Academy of Sciences, Committee on National Statistics, last year reported on data needs for policy, *Toward a 21st Century National Data Infrastructure: Mobilizing Information for the Common Good*, see [here](#). As a result, one provision of the federal Research and Development, Competition, and Innovation Act, P.L. 117-167, passed in August 2022 in the same bill as the CHIPS Act, directs further serious exploration of combining data. That provision authorizes \$9M for NSF to do a pilot test of a sharing model, called a "national secure data service." See Sec. 10375 of the law, codified at [42 U.S.C. 19085](#). It's supposed to be in place by August 2023, the one-year anniversary of the enactment. D.C. should be as aggressive in exploring whatever is needed in District data policy and funding to enable sound analysis of important topics now hidden by needless barriers sequestering data.



Testimony of

The Hon. Kathy Patterson

D.C. Auditor

Before the

Council of the District of Columbia  
Committee of the Whole

Confirmation Hearing on PR 25-8, "District of Columbia Auditor  
Kathleen Patterson Reappointment Resolution of 2023"

January 30, 2023  
1 p.m.

Virtual Platform  
The John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee of the Whole (COW). I am Kathy Patterson, starting my ninth year as D.C. Auditor. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for nominating me to another full term. I see the renomination as recognition of the progress we have made at the Office of the D.C. Auditor, which is almost wholly attributable to an excellent, hard-working and committed staff.

I welcome the opportunity to continue to serve. To that end I ask the Committee and the full Council to support the resolution before you.

When you and I discussed the possibility of my serving as D.C. Auditor, and during the course of my initial confirmation process, I was encouraged and inspired by the Committee's desire to see ODCA become a more nimble and adventuresome office – including trying new ways to secure accountability from District of Columbia government agencies. You and your staff encouraged me and my team to mirror the range of performance audits conducted by the Government Accountability Office. We have sought and I believe we have succeeded in doing both, reflecting the focus on government performance we see at the GAO and also seeking additional ways to provide the Council with useful information on government operations.

I'd like to highlight a few of the specifics that document the progress ODCA has made.

### **Greater visibility**

On October 6, 2022, we published the report, [36 Fired MPD Officers Reinstated; Receive \\$14 Million in Back Pay](#). That report was covered by radio outlets WTOP, WMAL, and WAMU; broadcast outlets WJLA-7, WUSA-9, NBC-4, Fox5, (D.C.'s four network affiliates), as well as CNBC and DC News Now; and print outlets DCist, Washington City Paper, and The Washington Post (both a news story and an editorial). A month earlier we published an update on our October 2021 audit of the Office of Unified Communications and the District's troubled 911 system. That report, [911 Reform Status Report #1: Minimal Progress](#), prompted coverage by The Washington Post, Axios, DCist, WJLA-7, WAMU, DC Line, DC News Now, and two stories by Fox 5 TV. I mention these as just two examples of the far greater visibility the Office of the D.C. Auditor has today than it did eight years ago. ODCA is on [Twitter](#) (@ODCA\_DC) and more recently [LinkedIn](#), which will be used not only for increased visibility for our reports but in our recruitment activities to attract more and highly qualified job candidates. Our Twitter highlights for November included a tweet sharing the findings of our Department of General Services (DGS) report showing the mishandling of repairs of schools and shortcomings in work order management across D.C. It garnered more than 51K impressions, meaning that the tweet was seen that many times.

And our blog, [Auditude](#), has brought a lighter touch to some of our audit topics, such as the 2020 post titled [If it Bleeds, It Leads](#). That column lamented the fact that several of our very good and important audits had received little or no press coverage. We noted that too often "It takes blood and guts or sex and sleaze or at least some kind of scandal to get attention from the media."

And activity on our [website](#) continue to grow. Our average number of sessions on the site is at 3,000/month, up from last year's average of 2,000/month.

Greater visibility isn't necessarily a measure of effectiveness, but it is far easier to have an impact on agency operations, on passage of legislation, or on the creation of new programs to meet demonstrated needs when there is public attention given to the issues explored in ODCA reports. So, I am proud of the visibility we have achieved as an aid to actual effectiveness.

### **Peer reviews**

The strong performance by ODCA has been reflected in our last three peer reviews in 2016, 2019, and 2022. Each review gave ODCA the highest rating. Accountability offices such as ours, and the Office of the Inspector General and other audit and IG shops around the country that follow the Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS), undertake triennial reviews by national partner organizations. For ODCA those include national organizations of state and also of city audit offices, and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) affiliate, the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES).

We undertake a peer review every three years, and in each other year we do our own internal "quality control review" analyzing procedures used in a sample of audits issued the preceding year. The 2016 peer review was conducted by the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA). The ALGA team found that our internal quality control reports constitute "an excellent tool for assessing the effectiveness of ODCA's quality control system and identifying areas for improvement." The ALGA team also wrote that year that ODCA's Overall Assessment of Evidence workpaper was "a thorough way to assess the sufficiency and appropriateness of audit evidence and provide the audit supervisor with and management with a summary of all work completed."

For the first time, we invited the NCSL's National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES) to conduct our peer review in 2019 since we are a part of the legislative branch of the D.C. government. At the conclusion of a week-long on-site review the Peer Review Team informed ODCA staff that we again received their highest rating. They noted that in their view the strengths of the agency included a diverse staff, well-written reports, and a commitment to improving procedures to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of operations.

Last year we also received the highest rating, again from a team assigned by the NCSL's program evaluation organization. The NLPES team found we continue to attentively follow the Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards published by the Comptroller General of the United States. The review also noted strengths in the areas of independence; credibility and effectiveness; reliability, quality control and assurance; objectivity and professional judgment, and competence. We publish our peer reviews on the [ODCA website](#).

## Innovation

With the invitation early on by the Committee to explore new accountability tools, we have in the last eight years contracted for a variety of public opinion polls to inform our work and that of the Council. Most ambitious was [a reprise of a survey the Financial Authority conducted in 1997](#) that asked District residents to rate the quality of District services and share what they consider the highest priority services. We learned that District residents in summer 2019 were mostly comfortable with their city services: half rated services generally as either good or excellent while only one in eight said the services are poor or very poor (13%). And that was a marked contrast from the control board 1997 survey when only 15% rated District services as excellent or good and a whopping 48% said services were poor or very poor.

The two top-rated services were public libraries and fire protection. The only service that dropped since 1997 in the number who rated it as good or excellent was the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Metro) but even so, at that point 52% continue to rate Metro positively, down from 79% in 1997.

In 1997, crime dominated responses about the most important problem facing the city, but the next highest response—offered by more than one in 10—was that the D.C. government itself was the top problem (11%). In 2019 the District government did not register as a problem or an issue. On the same question in 2019 the top issue cited was a combination of affordable housing and gentrification at 33%, and those issues did not register for respondents in 1997. We used the survey to help set our own priorities.

Other polls we've conducted include:

**DCPS Parent Opinion Survey: [Shopping for Public Schools in the District of Columbia, July 10, 2018](#).** The D.C. Council requested and provided funding for an audit of enrollment in D.C. public schools by ODCA, including projections of enrollment in five and 10 years, and a model for projecting enrollment over time. To help the District understand how parents make decisions on enrollment in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), ODCA contracted with the survey research firm Belden Russonello Strategists LLC, to survey parents and guardians of school-aged children. The survey found that parents in the District have a smorgasbord of educational choices for their children, and while they're sometimes choosing charter and specialty schools, they'd prefer the District invest in neighborhood public schools rather than increasing options for kids to attend out-of-boundary schools.

**A survey about improving outcomes for all students: [D.C. Public School Principals Share Challenges, Concerns, September 4, 2018](#).** This survey of D.C. principals was designed to provide answers to at least some of the questions posed by the State Board and the Chairman of the Education Committee about "an education system that prioritizes appearances and outcomes data over genuine improvement." The research firm Untold Research sent a survey to each of DCPS's 108 elementary, middle, and high school principals; 47 participated in the survey resulting in a 43% response rate. This was followed by confidential in-depth interviews

with principals and other education professionals. The survey included questions arising from the Alvarez & Marsal audit to probe whether principals across the system experience undue pressure to promote students. It included questions mirrored in a 2012 national survey of principals by MetLife. One finding: while 20% of principals nationally say they feel “under great stress” almost every day, among the DCPS principals who responded to this survey, 54% say they feel “great stress” almost every day.

Another innovation was a “secret shopper” test of some of the most-used District services led by veteran government analyst and former Council staffer Jason Juffras. A large proportion of ODCA staffers volunteered to serve as testers seeking information or assistance from the 311 call center, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, the Metropolitan Police Department, D.C. Public Schools, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Public Works. Overall performance was fair to good, and we recommended that the Mayor update customer services standards including deadlines for responding to calls or written requests.

Another innovation has been roundtables we have held to explore important, high priority issues in a way that elicits the expertise of District area residents without the lengthy procedures required for an actual audit. These have been 90-minute discussions that we tape then edit and publish as a report. The first in 2017 was [Readiness, Response, Recovery: A Discussion with Members of the District Homeland Security Commission](#). We invited past and current members of the Commission to discuss its work, challenges and successes, and recommendations for future topics, joined by the then-Chairperson of the Council’s Judiciary Committee, Councilmember Charles Allen.

A second roundtable was published as [Public Schools in the District: Data, Reform, and the Future, July 12, 2018](#). We invited experts on education research and governance—some of whom have held elected or appointed positions in D.C., and all of whom are familiar with the history of reform efforts here and nationally. The 90-minute discussion was taped, transcribed, and edited lightly for length.

Last year on contract with ODCA the Council for Court Excellence conducted a series of roundtable discussions on justice-related topics, each published as an ODCA/CCE joint report, available on each organization’s website.

### **Ending mandates/reducing ANC responsibilities**

Mr. Chairman, you and this Committee have played a major role in improving ODCA’s ability to take on more and higher priority issues by removing some of the mandates we were under previously and restricting what were largely administrative responsibilities associated with the city’s Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs).

The record for my initial confirmation in fall of 2014 included an evaluation of ODCA initiated by former Chairman Kwame Brown. That study of the office undertaken by community leaders

made wide-ranging recommendations for improving the performance and the products of ODCA. Two areas covered were statutory requirements for specific audits that over time held a lower priority for elected officials and the very time-consuming responsibilities associated with the ANCs.

At our request this Committee introduced, held hearings on, and enacted two omnibus bills to eliminate or otherwise reduce statutorily mandated audits, one in 2016 and another this past Council session. These important changes have given us far wider latitude to spend time and resources on other projects with a higher priority for the Council and the community. The ODCA staff and I are grateful for both pieces of legislation. The COW also created a non-lapsing fund so that ODCA can carry over our appropriated budget which is very helpful in conducting contract audits that typically require more than a single fiscal year.

ODCA retains the responsibility to issue an annual report on the financial activities of the ANCs and, of course, we retain the authority and the discretion to audit individual ANCs for their performance, including financial oversight. But prior to the passage of legislation in 2017, we also had responsibilities for ongoing administrative oversight of ANC operations. This placed ODCA, an audit shop, in the position of both overseeing and auditing ANCs, which was a violation of the independence we are required to maintain under GAGAS. The Council moved forward with legislation essentially transferring our administrative duties to the Office of the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (OANC), and we worked closely with that office to transition responsibilities. We continue to produce the annual report based on information we retrieve from the OANC and we are shortly initiating an additional audit of a specific ANC that has not yet undergone an audit by our office.

I believe if you took a look at the range of reports issued by ODCA in 2014 and in 2022 you would see a significant increase in reports on higher-priority issues. This is in very large measure a result of the legislative actions taken in that timeframe, and I thank you for that.

### **Community responsiveness**

Several years ago we conducted a survey of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners as a version of a “risk assessment” to assist us in developing our work plan of audits we would pursue. One of the reports that resulted was one you have returned to on several occasions, Mr. Chairman, the 2017 report, [Significant Improvements Needed in DCRA Management of Vacant and Blighted Properties Program](#). Two other major ODCA reports were similarly the result of repeated community requests for our review including the 2021 audit of the District’s 911 program, [District’s 911 System: Reforms Needed to Meet Safety Needs](#). Several ANCs had approved resolutions asking for the 911 study.

A second major community-inspired project is underway now on the Bowser Administration’s Vision Zero program designed to reduce injuries and deaths on our roadways and improve safety overall. We received that request in 2018 in the form of a petition with hundreds of signatures of individuals who identified themselves as “DC’s road users – cyclists, pedestrians,



scooter-riders and drivers – and DC taxpayers” who asked us for an “in-depth audit into the D.C. Vision Zero initiative.” In addition, several ANCs continued to make the plea to ODCA to undertake a major review. In the next month we hope to publish the first Vision Zero report on District Department of Transportation (DDOT) engineering efforts. A second Vision Zero project has just begun, looking at the District’s enforcement efforts with a review of the work of the Metropolitan Police Department, DDOT, and the Department of Public Works.

While most of our work is self-generated based on our understanding of Council priorities and statutory mandates, it is good to know that the District of Columbia community also values ODCA’s work to the point where they have directly sought our review of priority issues. I speak to community groups on occasion, though the frequency was limited during the pandemic. I hope to do more of that because it puts my office in better touch with the perspectives of those we serve, the residents of Washington, D.C. These are always fruitful discussions, letting me and my team know what is on the minds of residents and what issues we should be assessing. I am proud of the responsiveness we have shown to date, but I also know we can do more.

### **Challenges ahead**

A persistent challenge for our office, as well as every other accountability office at the local, state, and federal level, is to maintain a collaborative working relationship with the agencies and programs under scrutiny. There will always be a tension between auditor and auditee but that can be minimized through frequent, open communication and we have sought to be as collaborative as possible with Executive Branch agencies. We have had mixed results.

My preferred way to release a major report is in conjunction with the agency that is the subject of the audit. But we have only succeeded on one occasion in this method, releasing [the 2016 report on the Metropolitan Police Department and its Use of Force policies and practices](#). You joined us at that press conference, Mr. Chairman, as did then-Chief Cathy Lanier and the author of the report, Michael Bromwich. We have proposed that approach on numerous occasions but without further success. We will continue to attempt a joint release of important reports because it provides a single place and time for reporters to hear from ODCA and hear, as well, from the agency under review. And it fosters the kind of cooperative working relationship that promotes clear communication of the goals of ODCA recommendations, with which an auditee can and does agree.

We have a different kind of challenge in our working relationship with our principal audience, the D.C. Council. For the third year in a row we will be releasing a report on recommendation compliance that finds that the Council itself fails to act on more audit recommendations than any other part of the government. We now have a second ODCA staff member, Ruth Werner, who has joined General Counsel Amy Bellanca with responsibility for staying in touch with Council and committee offices. Last year they began outreach sessions with individuals working in almost every Council office, which helped shape our workplan and allowed for a discussion of current topics being reviewed by Councilmembers and also by ODCA.

After the Council's recent organizational meeting I sent letters to Committee chairs congratulating them on their new or continuing assignment and informing them of audits currently underway within their committee's purview, including offering in-progress briefings and updates as projects near their conclusion. We have been taken up on that offer in several instances, which is promising. As you know, Mr. Chairman, I asked to and did attend the Council's annual retreat last spring to share information on ODCA initiatives. And I have requested time on a quarterly basis to attend Council administrative meetings to also share the work we have underway and/or to hear from legislators on their own priorities.

Two years ago, I had an opportunity to meet virtually with each of the three new Councilmembers and recently met with each of your colleagues who are new in this Council period. Such conversations offer not just a chance to explain the role and the work of ODCA but also to discuss the priorities of each office and ways in which our previous work might be of value.

My staff and I were encouraged by the step the Council took to include in the annual budget submission resolution a requirement that agency performance reports include the status of compliance with ODCA reports. This is consistent with D.C. Code requirements for the Mayor to inform the Council what action has been taken on recommendations made by the Auditor. In addition, several D.C. Council Committees have asked agencies questions based on ODCA reports, including status of ongoing audits, recommendations implemented, and ways to improve agency operations in general. And over the last year the Council has held public oversight roundtables on topics directly related to ODCA reports. If confirmed, I will continue our effort to work collaboratively with you, Mr. Chairman, with this Committee, and with all of your colleagues, toward our shared goal of improving government operations and accountability.

## **Accomplishments**

Through our performance and budget hearings and additional focused hearings and roundtables, I think you are very much aware of ODCA's major accomplishments over the last eight years. A few of the highlights of impactful audits follow.

- We issued six reports on the Housing Production Trust Fund, including two comprehensive GAGAS audits and [a critique of funding decisions that ignored the Department of Housing and Community Development's own procurement evaluations](#). Results included significant increases in funding for stronger agency compliance efforts and legislation to increase transparency of the program's decision-making.
- Our series of audits on school modernization projects was followed by dismantling of the D.C. Public Education Partnership, a high-level partnership of two major development firms that seemed to stand in the shoes of the government at an impressive added cost that we documented. I'm hopeful our current focus on the

Department of General Services' management of facilities post-modernization will preserve the value of the modernizations we have already achieved.

- Recommendations in our 2016 report on MPD's use of force policies and practices were largely adopted by MPD and [we followed up on that work following the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020](#). We published two reports in 2021 as case studies of MPD investigations of officer-involved fatalities and will complete that series with a report on MPD's internal review of the death of Karon Hylton-Brown later this year. Our recommendation compliance report to be issued next week states that based on The Bromwich Group assessment, MPD has implemented many of the recommendations made in the recent case studies, including public release of use of force reports. Our case studies included reviews at the request of the Police Reform Commission and one of their report's recommendations has been enacted by the Council based on your legislation, Mr. Chairman. We are in the process of a national search for a Deputy Auditor for Public Safety and will be building out a unit within ODCA to focus on improving performance of the District's law enforcement agencies.
- As required by the D.C. Council in December 2018, [we published a two-volume education data audit on the District's collection and use of data to improve public education](#). The extensive study documented the District's failure to collect and effectively use data on attendance, teachers, courses, discipline, and other issues identified as key by the U.S. Department of Education. Our upcoming recommendation compliance report will detail what has and has not been done in response to the audit.
- We will soon be completing an extensive series of reports on the impact and mitigation efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including several reports by a data analytics firm that found the District met or exceeded steps to address the pandemic's effects in comparison with other jurisdictions. We will issue reports on the District's expenditure of \$495 million in CARES Act funds, the pandemic's impact on behavioral health services, including the need for more robust data collection and sharing, and the experience of District nursing homes during the pandemic.

There is a final accomplishment that is intangible but worth noting. I have described the heightened visibility of the office and the fact that we have undertaken audits at the request of the community. Having District residents be aware that there is a responsive accountability organization within the city's legislative branch of government is an accomplishment in itself. A responsive and responsible Office of the D.C. Auditor is something to be proud of. Intangible, yes, but invaluable.

This concludes my statement Mr. Chairman, and I am happy to respond to questions. Thank you.



To: Kathleen Patterson, D.C. Auditor  
Office of the District of Columbia Auditor

From: Adam Fridley  
West Virginia Legislative Post Audit Division

John Harrington  
Montana Legislative Audit Division

Brenda Erickson  
NCSL

Date: July 22, 2022

Subject: Suggestions for Further Consideration

**Scott Saiki**  
Speaker of the House,  
Hawaii  
President, NCSL

**Joseph James  
"J.J." Gentry, Esq.**  
Counsel,  
Senate Ethics Committee  
South Carolina  
Staff Chair, NCSL

Government processes benefit from regular review, especially when the review specifically seeks ways for improvement. The Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) recognizes the importance of ensuring the quality of the office's work. It requested an NCSL/NLPES peer review to identify whether the office complies with Government Auditing Standards (i.e., the Yellow Book or GAGAS), statutory and internal criteria, and professional best practices. The office also asked for recommendations to improve its process.

The peer review team found positive aspects of the ODCA staff's work.

- ODCA is transitioning to a fully digital process for its continuing professional education (CPE) tracking. The completion of this process will make it easier for ODCA staff to monitor their CPE records
- The peer review team was impressed with ODCA's training guidelines and career ladder.
- ODCA's entrance guidelines and identification of an agency liaison—notably how the expectations and procedures to access data or share information are outlined.
- The peer review team found good, consistent, explanatory templates in place for each step in the audit process. The internal controls assessment template was a template that the peer review team found extremely well done.
- The peer review team found good linkages in work papers and draft reports to related documentation, which made it easier to find and verify information.
- The peer review team was able to clearly see the progression of audit planning for each reviewed report.

During its review, the peer review team suggested improvements for consideration by ODCA management. The suggestions were not criticisms of the office. Rather, they were provided as opportunities for further refinement and do not affect the peer review team’s overall judgment of the office or its compliance with Government Auditing Standards.

- Legislative audit or evaluation offices often struggle to effectively link their work to the legislative process. Sometimes, this may be due to turnover in legislators or legislative staff. It may be exacerbated by the difference in time needed for audit work versus the fast pace of legislative sessions. ODCA may wish to investigate ways to enhance or improve its interaction with the D.C. Council. For example, hold (or increase the number of) special briefings for council members and staff about specific reports as well as general information about ODCA and its work.
- ODCA could update its format and delivery of products to improve accessibility and usability for a variety of users. This could include:
  - ✓ More tightly focused audit subjects with shorter reports.
  - ✓ A more extensive executive summary for reports (e.g., 2-4 pages) that also can be printed as stand-alone documents.
- Improve detail or consistency of information included in the audit scope section. While information technically was not missing, the peer review team noticed that details or information, which in their view should have been included in the audit scope section, had been placed in other sections—for example, under survey or methodology.
- Audit offices or staff may receive questions about why a particular audit—or an aspect of an audit—was done. It may be helpful for ODCA to provide a more risk-based reasoning or explanation for why audits are chosen. The office also could possibly attach a “reason statement” to each objective to provide to a consistent explanation or response to outline why that particular aspect of an audit was done. These processes would aid transparency and uniform messaging.
- Possibly have written summaries of meetings with agency personnel reviewed by agency [or those individuals] to confirm content
- Improve source documentation, especially for data or documents retrieved from the internet. When data or documents are retrieved from the internet, the URL for the data or document and the date of retrieval should consistently be included as part of the source documentation.
- Make sure sufficient reporting of audit methodologies is included; if necessary, move detailed methodology explanations to an appendix, which is allowed under Yellow Book section 9.13.
- Per Yellow Book standards 9.11 and 9.17, audit reports should be neutral and objective. While the peer review team did not find any specific instances for concern in the reports reviewed, the team urges ODCA to remain cognizant of users’ or readers’ perceptions and to use assertive writing to present findings and recommendations purposefully and judiciously.

As discussed in our final peer review report, members of the peer review team have a favorable opinion of the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor and its staff. We were impressed with numerous aspects of its operation. We appreciate the many courtesies shown us during our remote peer review and the opportunity to work with and learn from you and your staff.

1 **DRAFT COMMITTEE PRINT**  
2 Committee of the Whole  
3 February 7, 2017  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8

9 A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

10  
11  
12 PR 25-8  
13

14  
15 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
16  
17 \_\_\_\_\_  
18

19  
20 To approve the reappointment of Ms. Kathleen Patterson as the District of Columbia Auditor.  
21

22 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this  
23 resolution may be cited as the “District of Columbia Auditor Kathleen Patterson Reappointment  
24 Resolution of 2023”.

25  
26 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia approves the appointment of:

27 Ms. Kathleen Patterson  
28 Chevy Chase Parkway, N.W.  
29 Washington, D.C. 20015  
30 (Ward 3)  
31

32 as the District of Columbia Auditor, established by section 455 of the District of Columbia Home  
33 Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 803; D.C. Official Code § 1-204.55), for the 6-  
34 year term to end February 25, 2029.

35 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution,  
36 upon its adoption, to the appointee.

37 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.