

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

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

DRAFT

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**TO:** All Councilmembers

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

**DATE:** July 11, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Report on PR 25-266, “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Hector Torres Confirmation Resolution of 2023”

The Committee of the Whole, to which PR 25-266, the “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Hector Torres Confirmation Resolution of 2023” was referred, reports favorably thereon with technical amendments, and recommends approval by the Council.

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**I. BACKGROUND AND NEED**

On June 7, 2023, Proposed Resolution 25-266, the “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Hector Torres Confirmation Resolution of 2023,” was introduced by Chairman Phil Mendelson at the request of the Mayor. PR 25-266 would confirm the Mayor’s nomination of Mr. Hector Torres for reappointment as a member of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities for a three-year term to end June 30, 2026.

Mr. Torres is a Ward 6 resident. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Art Education from St. John’s University. He is a Principal at Absolute Hospitality, a self-employed hospitality consultant, and a freelance artist-painter. Mr. Torres had a long and successful 49-year career in the hospitality industry where he served as the Vice President of Beacon Hotel & Corporate Quarters, and at Capital Hotels and Suites. In his retirement, Mr. Torres

spends his time making people happy not only through the hospitality industry, but through his original passion of art.

The Commission on the Arts and Humanities (Commission) was established by the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Act, effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C. Official Code § 39-201 *et seq.*). The Commission is now an independent agency within the District government<sup>1</sup> and is designated by the National Endowment for the Arts as the state arts agency for the District of Columbia. Its role is to evaluate and initiate action on matters relating to the arts and humanities and to encourage programs and the development of programs that promote progress in the arts and humanities.<sup>2</sup>

The Commission consists of 14 members appointed by the Mayor for three-year terms, with the advice and consent of the Council.<sup>3</sup> The Commission is tasked with appointing an Executive Director who serves as the chief administrative officer of the Commission.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the mission of the Commission is to provide grants, programs, and educational activities that encourage diverse artistic expressions and learning opportunities so that all District of Columbia residents and visitors can experience the District's rich arts and humanities community.<sup>5</sup>

Members of the Commission must be District residents and must have displayed an interest or an ability in the arts and humanities or must be active in the furtherance of the arts or humanities.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the Mayor has to give due consideration to recommendations made by the arts and humanities community, and has to ensure that there is reasonable representation of all the wards in the District when considering appointments to the Commission.<sup>7</sup> Further, no employee of the District government can serve as a member of the Commission.<sup>8</sup>

In the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Support Act of 2019,<sup>9</sup> the Council approved additional requirements for individuals to be eligible to serve on the Commission. By July 1, 2019, six of the 18 members appointed to the Commission are required to meet the following requirements: (1) two members with specific interest, ability, or experience in the humanities; (2) two members with specific interest, ability, or experience in arts or humanities education; and (3) two members with specific interest, ability, or experience in theatre and performing arts.<sup>10</sup> By July 1, 2020, four of the 18 members appointed to the Commission are required to meet the following requirements:

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission became an independent agency on July 22, 2019. *See* section 2204 of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Independence and Funding Restructuring Amendment Act of 2019, effective September 11, 2019 (D.C. Law 23-16; 66 DCR 9621). *See also* the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Budget Subtitle Technical Emergency Amendment Act of 2019, effective October 20, 2019 (D.C. Act 23-129; 66 DCR 14808); and the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Budget Subtitle Technical Temporary Amendment Act of 2019, effective December 24, 2019 (D.C. law 23-39; 67 DCR 14816).

<sup>2</sup> D.C. Official Code § 39-203(a).

<sup>3</sup> D.C. Official Code § 39-203.

<sup>4</sup> D.C. Official Code § 39-205.

<sup>5</sup> Commission on the Arts and Humanities - About CAH, <https://dcarts.dc.gov/page/about-cah> (last visited January 11, 2020).

<sup>6</sup> *Supra* note 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> Effective September 11, 2019 (D.C. Law 23-16; D.C. Code § 39-201 *et seq.*).

<sup>10</sup> *Supra* note 4.

(1) two members with specific interest, ability, or experience in public art; and (2) two members with specific experience in arts or humanities organizational administration or governance.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 1: Membership of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities**

**\*\*An updated membership listing will be included once received from the Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments (MOTA)\*\***

Mr. Torres has found the experience as commissioner as challenging and gratifying at multiple levels. He has been proactive in various committees particularly the Grants Committee, Executive Committee and Education Committee, that oversee the funding and program offers that are driven by established principles of diversity, equity and inclusion. Mr. Torres has been gratified to see how the Commission has further evolved in its support of communities of color, with intentionality, while also supporting the District's world class arts institutions and encouraging inclusive operating practices. He notes that in recent years the Commission has significantly grown its reach and supported nascent arts practitioners and artistic endeavors, and that without the Commission's support these artists would not have been able to have their voices heard, seen, or appreciated.

Mr. Torres meets the requirements to continue to serve as a member of the Commission pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 39-203(a-1)(2)(C) as he has a specific interest, ability, and experience in theatre and performing arts. The Committee believes Mr. Torres years of involvement in the arts attests to her ability to serve on the Commission. The Committee recommends adoption of PR 25-266.

## II. LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

June 7, 2023	PR 25-266, the "Commission on the Arts and Humanities Hector Torres Confirmation Resolution of 2023" is introduced by Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor.
June 16, 2023	Notice of Intent to Act on PR 25-266 is published in the <i>District of Columbia Register</i> .
June 20, 2023	PR 25-266 is "read" at the June 20, 2023 Legislative meeting; on this date the referral of the PR to the Committee of the Whole is official and the 90-day period for Council review begins.
June 23, 2023	Notice of Public Hearing on PR 25-266 is published in the <i>DC Register</i> .
June 30, 2023	The Committee of the Whole holds a public hearing on PR 25-266.
July 11, 2023	The Committee of the Whole marks-up PR 25-266.

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<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

### III. POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

Mr. Hector Torres is the Mayor's nomination for appointment to the Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

### IV. COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

The Committee received no testimony or comments from any Advisory Neighborhood Commission on PR 25-266.

### V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee of the Whole held a public roundtable hearing on PR 25-266 on Friday, June 30, 2023. The testimony summarized below, and attached, is from the portion of the hearing pertaining to Mr. Torres.

*Hector Torres, Nominee*, testified and answered questions from Chairman Mendelson regarding his background and experience as it pertains to the Commission on the Arts and Humanities and her interest in serving on the Commission.

The Committee received no testimony or comments in opposition to Mr. Torres' appointment.

### VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

Members of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities are appointed pursuant to section 4 of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Act, effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C. Official Code § 39-203).

### VII. FISCAL IMPACT

PR 25-266 will have no fiscal impact on the District of Columbia budget or financial plan. Pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 39-203(e), members of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities do not receive compensation.

### VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1

States the short title of Proposed Resolution 25-266.

- Section 2 Confirms the reappointment of Hector Torres as a member of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities for a three-year term to end June 30, 2026.
- Section 3 Requires that a copy of the resolution, upon adoption, be transmitted to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.
- Section 4 Provides that the resolution will take effect once approved by the Council.

## **IX. COMMITTEE ACTION**

### **X. ATTACHMENTS**

1. PR 25-266 as introduced.
2. Nominee's response to Committee questions.
3. Written testimony.
4. Legal Sufficiency Determination.
5. Committee Print for PR 25-266.



**MURIEL BOWSER**  
**MAYOR**

June 7, 2023

The Honorable Phil Mendelson  
Chairman  
Council of the District of Columbia  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 504  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

In accordance with section 2 of the Confirmation Act of 1978, effective March 3, 1979 (D.C. Law 2-142; D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01), and pursuant to section 4 of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Act, effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C. Official Code § 39-203), I am pleased to nominate the following person:

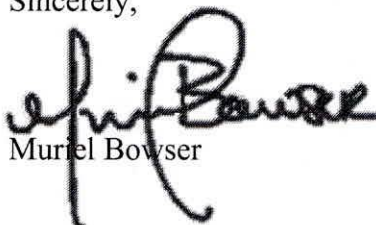
Mr. Hector Torres  
H Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024  
(Ward 6)

for reappointment as a member of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities, for a term ending June 30, 2026.

Enclosed you will find biographical information detailing the experience of Mr. Torres, together with a proposed resolution to assist the Council during the confirmation process.

I would appreciate the Council's earliest consideration of this nomination for confirmation. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Steven Walker, Director, Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments, should the Council require additional information.

Sincerely,

  
Muriel Bowser



Chairman Phil Mendelson  
at the request of the Mayor

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To confirm the reappointment of Mr. Hector Torres to the Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "Commission on the Arts and Humanities Hector Torres Confirmation Resolution of 2023".

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia confirms the reappointment of:

Mr. Hector Torres  
H Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024  
(Ward 6)

as a member of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities, established by section 4 of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Act, effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C. Official Code § 39-203), for a term ending June 30, 2026.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution, upon its adoption, to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

# Hector J Torres

## Background

**Hector J. Torres**, born in New York City, conceived in Puerto Rico.

Attended St. John's University, graduated 1973 with a B.S. in Secondary Art Education. Curriculum designer for several community education programs focusing on bilingual, bi-cultural education for inner city pre-school age students; leading to the co-authorship of a HEW Funded program focused on "Bi-Culturalism" through art. This program was used in pre-school centers in the South-Bronx and other neighborhoods in New York.

Taught at Jamaica High School in the NYC school system, and part time lecturer of Art History at St. Johns University as well as instructor of studio drawing classes at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

Recently retired from a 49-year career as a hotel executive in Washington DC, and in New York City

Set Designer for three GALA Productions in 1991, 1992 and again in 1995

48 Years - Hospitality experience includes Vice-President for Capital Hotels, Grand Heritage Hotels, Meristar Hotels, Sheraton, Loews and Grand Metropolitan Hotels of London.

Currently serving on the Board Carlos Rosario International Charter School. Advisory Boards of GALA Hispanic Theatre, and Have served on various boards: Destination DC, Washington Performing Arts, Identity and on advisory committees for Commission on The Arts and Humanities, and SBA.

## About the Artists Work:

Working in a range of styles, mediums and imagery, representing works both non-figurative and abstract all an attempt to create works that represent diverse ways to express and respond to a wide range of interests. More than anything, the body of work manifest ways of giving life to the creative process combined with a passion for experimentation with color and form.

Works on paper or canvas represent an exploration of color, exploiting the contrasts and harmonies created by color, and the emotions and memories they evoke. The use of color to define and create form, even the absence of such.

Often the works take on a level of experimentation in the form of assemblage by mixing and experimenting with textures, found objects and ephemera with occasional journeys to capture fantasy, faith, the familiar and sentimentality.



Many resonate with deep appreciation of artists such as, Klee, Jean Arp, Cornell, Matisse, Davis, Picasso, Miro and too many others to name. However, mostly the works of Artists of the late 40's and 50's that have in so many ways lent of themselves to my vision.

Images and works represent an opportunity to respond to daily life, to go to a place were forms, rhythm, composition and playfulness exists, if only in the imagination. "A place where reality simply does not exist, at least for those few and precious times left to be in a world of my own making".

A note of deep appreciation to Jay Haddock, my Husband and Life Partner of 49 years, who has always been there encouraging and supportive of my work.

## **Exhibitions:**

- 1970 Museo Del Barrio, New York City (group Show)**
- 1971 New York Public Library, Donnell Branch, NYC**
- 1972 Group Show "Nueva Cultura, An Odyssey Through Contemporary Puerto Rican Art"  
Bronx Museum of the Arts**
- 1977 Bronx Museum of Art-Juried Show: Award winner**
- 1985 Arts Club of Washington-Exhibit and lecture "Calligraphy Expressions"  
Washington, DC.**
- 1991 Set Designer "Negritud" for Teatro GALA, Adams Morgan, Washington, DC**
- 1992 Set Design for "Raices Cubanas" for Teatro GALA, Adams Morgan, Washington, DC**
- 1993 Group Show, Puerto Rican Visual Arts Exhibition, National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc. Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC**
- 1994 Hispanic Mosaic, Sponsored by HISPA AT&T Hispanic Employees Association, Oakton, VA & Washington, DC**
- 1995 Crucifixions- An Art Exhibition of Works by Hispanic Artists- Moscoso Gallery, Washington, DC**

1995 Set Design for "Raices Cubanas II" for Teatro GALA, Washington, DC  
2002 Set Design for "SAMBA" A musical for Teatro GALA, Washington, DC

1994-2004 Contributing Artist/Curator for "Art for Life" P.A.H.O. OAS and Museum of Latin America. An Art Exhibit-Auction Benefitting Whitman Walker Clinic

2004-Present: Supporting Via Art Contributions to Fundraisers for Community Organizations in Washington, DC

2018 – Exhibition – June - Gala Hispanic Theatre

2018 – Exhibition "Transitions - Coloring My World" August 6- October 26, 2018 The Gallery @Children's National Health System

2018 – Torpedo Factory – Alexandria, Va.

Juried Group Shows - November – Juried Show- Honorable Mention -December-Juried Show

2019 - April-June - Group Show – "Vision Energy and Shapes Abstracts" Exhibition – City of Bowie Arts Committee

2019- Invited to and Participated in Two Group Showings Sponsored by WPA, The Latino GLBT History Project" in an exhibition titled "Voices of Pride"

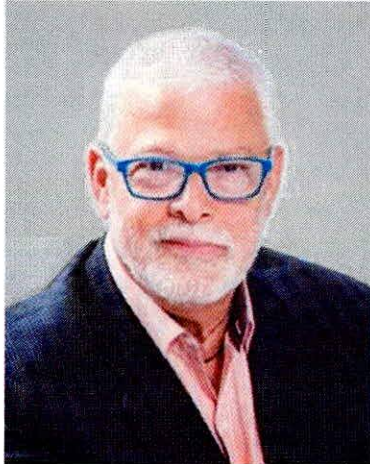
2019 Exhibition: "*Art After Dark: Transitions*", Downtown B.I.D./Moya Design Partners – October 15th to December 2019

2020 Group Show: "*Q THE MUSIC: Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Quincy Jones*", The Gallery at Children's National Health System – January 20 to March 27, 2020



Executive Office of the Mayor - Office of Talent and Appointments  
John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 600 | Washington, DC 20004

## Hector Torres



Hector Torres is a Principal at Absolute Hospitality, a self-employed hospitality consultant, and a freelance artist-painter. Hector had a long and successful 49-year career in the Hospitality Industry where he served as the Vice President of Beacon Hotel & Corporate Quarters, and at Capital Hotels and Suites.

In his retirement, Mr. Torres spends his time making people happy not only through the hospitality industry, but through his original passion of art. Torres has worked with Design Firms and the Downtown DC Business Improvement District to host showcases of his art.

Working in a range of styles, mediums and imagery, representing works both non-figurative and abstract, all an attempt to create works that represent diverse ways to express and respond to a wide range of interests. More than anything, his body of work manifests ways of giving life to the creative process combined with a passion for experimentation with color and form.

A Ward 6 Resident, Hector Torres received his Bachelor's in Secondary Art Education from St. John's University.



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser



Office of the General Counsel to the Mayor

**To:** Tommy Wells, Steve Walker  
**From:** Betsy Cavendish  
**Date:** March 6, 2023  
**Subject:** Legal sufficiency review of Resolutions nominating Maggie Fitzpatrick, Cecily Habimana, Carla Sims, and Hector Torres as members of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities

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**This is to Certify** that this office has reviewed the above-referenced resolutions and found them to be legally unobjectionable. If you have any questions in this regard, please do not hesitate to call Vanessa Careiro, Deputy General Counsel, Executive Office of the Mayor, at 202-724-1303, or me at 202-724-7681.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Elizabeth A. Cavendish'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

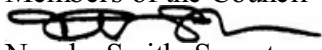
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Elizabeth A. (Betsy) Cavendish

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.**  
**Washington D.C. 20004**

Memorandum

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To : Members of the Council  
From :  Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council  
Date : Thursday, June 8, 2023  
Subject : Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Office of the Secretary on Wednesday, June 07, 2023. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

TITLE: "Commission on the Arts and Humanities Hector Torres Confirmation Resolution of 2023", PR25-0266

INTRODUCED BY: Chairman Mendelson, at the request of Mayor

The Chairman is referring this legislation to Committee of the Whole. This resolution will be deemed disapproved on Tuesday, November 21, 2023 without Council action.

Attachment  
cc: General Counsel  
Budget Director  
Legislative Services

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
COMMISSION ON THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES**



Public Roundtable  
on  
PR25-266, the “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Hector J. Torres  
Confirmation Resolution of 2023”

Testimony of  
Hector J. Torres

Before the  
Committee of the Whole  
Council of the District of Columbia  
The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairperson

June 30, 2023  
10:00am  
Virtual Meeting Platform



**Chairman Mendelson, Members of the Council, Good Morning...**

My Name is Hector J. Torres, I am an Artist, a 43-year resident of the District of Columbia, a Senior, Latino (Puerto Rican), Gay, and Married here in the District of Columbia, to my husband and partner of 54 years, Jay Haddock. Prior to my retirement in 2018, I was a hotel executive with Capital Hotels, a DC based hotel company with over 300 employees. I Love our city, have chosen to live here and consider myself almost a Native. I also believe in and support our desire for Statehood.

I have proudly already served on the DC Arts and Humanities Commission for one term, am humbled and thankful to Mayor Bowser for her trust in my reappointment, more importantly for The Council's past support and approval of my prior appointment and hopefully my re-appointment.

I have for years believed and practiced with much passion, that one must contribute to the community to enrich it, that one can make a difference that one can evoke change, as such have served on numerous boards, helped raise funds for organizations, that at the core of their mission, is to serve the underserved.

I have personally found the experience as commissioner as challenging and gratifying at multiple levels and have been proactive in various committees particularly the Grants Committee, Executive Committee and Education Committee, that oversee the funding and program offers that are driven by established principles of DEIB, under the distinguished Chairmanship of Reggie Van Lee, and recently appointed, Executive Director Aaron Myers.



I believe our city is the national center for the arts, and as such I applaud that we have one of the nation's greatest per capita funded arts organizations in the Commission for Arts and Humanities, as it recognizes the value of our artistic community, its contribution, and its vital economic impact.

I am personally gratified to see how the Commission has further evolved in its support of communities of Color, with intentionality and in doing so setting an example for equity and inclusion, a mission that is constantly evolving, while also supporting our world class arts institutions and encouraging them to practice DEIB principles that will support and impact the entire community of the District and the Nation, through its example. In recent years we have significantly grown our reach and supported nascent arts practitioners and artistic endeavors, that without our support would not have been able to have their voices heard, seen, or appreciated.

As a practicing artist, I understand the plight of art practitioners, and feel that I can contribute to the dialog that is needed in order to accomplish the highest possible degree of equity, in our funding, and access to all communities, and in turn cast the widest net to encourage and include art education access to our young, working and retiring community so as to enrich their lives. Art expands the mind, by opening it to expansive opportunity, it supports our dreams, and adds fuel to our creativity, in all aspects of our lives and endeavors.

I want to encourage the city to continue providing support and funding to our arts community and community in general with a broader vision and provide the impetus for growth





and opportunity and the benefit of the economic engine it has proven to be. I firmly believe that in supporting artists, in all their manifestations, our city will and should support their retention as residents, so they can create, contribute, and thrive with, and within our diverse community.

Thank you for the honor and opportunity to serve, I look forward to renewing my efforts on behalf of our city and our community. In addition, thank you Chairman Mendelson for your support and allowing me to be before you here today. I'm happy to address any question you may have.

Hector J. Torres

Resident Ward 6



1 **DRAFT COMMITTEE PRINT**  
2 Committee of the Whole  
3 July 11, 2023  
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7 A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

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9 25-266

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11 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
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15  
16 To confirm the reappointment of Mr. Hector Torres to the Commission on the Arts and  
17 Humanities.  
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19 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this  
20 resolution may be cited as the “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Hector Torres  
21 Confirmation Resolution of 2023”.

22  
23 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia confirms the reappointment of:

24 Mr. Hector Torres  
25 H Street, SW  
26 Washington, D.C. 20024  
27 (Ward 6)  
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29 as a member of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities, established by section 4 of the  
30 Commission on the Arts and Humanities Act, effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C.  
31 Official Code § 39-203), for a term ending June 30, 2026.

32 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution,  
33 upon its adoption, to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.

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