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COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday June 21, 2023

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**CHAIRMAN MENDELSON STATEMENT ON
REPUBLICAN PROPOSALS TO RESTRICT THE DISTRICT**

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, DC Council Chairman Phil Mendelson decried the newly released Republican proposal for federal payments to the District. The House Appropriations bill on Financial Services and General Government makes numerous cuts and contains numerous policy riders that will harm the District, including:

- Fails to fund the full needs of our Court system by \$143.8 million;
- Cuts HIV/AIDS testing and Treatment by 20% (\$1 million) and prohibits use of federal funds for the needle exchange program;
- Cuts \$20 million from the city's request for "Emergency Planning and Security" (EPS);
- Continues to prohibit the District from regulating the sale of cannabis;
- Prohibits any funding from being expended for abortions – both local and federal dollars; and
- Prohibits the District from expending any funds on automated traffic enforcement.

"These riders are not just anti-Home Rule, they are actually harmful to the District.

"Cutting funding for the courts harms public safety and the rule of law by making their work more difficult. Cutting the EPS fund stretches the already-understaffed police department which must protect both federal and local interests during national events – this, too, harms public safety.

"Perpetuating the marijuana rider only means the illegal market will continue to grow, because the District is handcuffed in the ability to regulate sales and distribution.

"The District led the nation in HIV/AIDS infections in the past because of a previous rider prohibiting needle exchange programs. Now the Republicans want to resurrect that harmful rider.

"Moreover, the riders will throw our budget out of balance by hundreds of millions of dollars. Republican House leaders have criticized the District for being poorly run, even though we have one of the most fiscally stable governments in the nation, and now they propose to truly throw it out of whack.

"These constant attacks on our autonomy are undemocratic, reckless, harmful, and serve no purpose but to score political points nationally while disrupting our government.

"I urge Congress to reject these proposals and get to its real work to support District residents, like passing commonsense gun legislation, confirming judges, and supporting our police."