



**Rainbow Caucus of
LGBTQ Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners**
Washington, D.C.

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

Via E-mail

19 June 2019

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

We write as DC's highest-ranking LGBTQ elected officials charged with ensuring the best interest of the District of Columbia as a whole. While the DC Council contains many self-professed LGBTQ allies, we have not had true representation on the Council since Councilmembers Catania and Graham left office. The Council's silence on hate crimes and transgender violence, its refusal to provide even \$1 in increased funding for the Office of Human Rights and Office of LGBTQ Affairs that 15 organizations advocated for, its failure to address anti-LGBTQ discrimination and violence, and its lack of action to ensure that we have safe and respectful housing and job opportunities for LGBTQ people of all ages – and in particular trans women of color – deeply concerns and disgusts us.

We learned long ago that Silence = Death ... and your silence and inaction is killing members of our community or placing them in harm's ways and hospital emergency rooms. We will not be complacent, we will not be silent, and we will hold every single Councilmember accountable for their failures – both now and during election time.

LGBTQ people are suffering when they walk down the street, they are targets, and they are dying from preventable causes. Recent instances include the brutal murders of Ashanti Carmon and Zoe Spears – both transgender woman of color, the violent attack on Carl Craven and Braden Brech outside of Nellie's on U Street, NW, on June 16th, and three people stabbed inside the Fireplace on P Street, NW, also on June 16th. Sadly, violence like this is all too common in our community, and it is happening on your watch.

Furthermore, the Council continues to fail in its oversight role. There is institutional disrespect and homophobia/transphobia throughout our District government agencies, particularly toward transgender people. Yet you do nothing. Your silence condones this discrimination.

Words of friendship and support no longer ring true. Both as elected officials and your constituents, we call on you to act now. Money talks, and we need to hear a mighty roar from the Council by securing a minimum of \$5M in funding for the programs and agencies that support our community and make us safe.

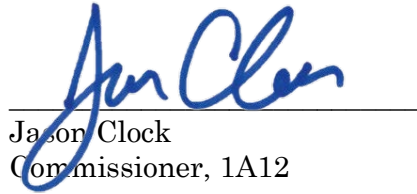
We look forward to your response and are committed to rolling up our sleeves to work together until every last one of us can walk down the street in safety and dignity.



Kent C. Boese
Commissioner, 1A08
Chair, ANC1A



Michael Wray
Commissioner, 1A09



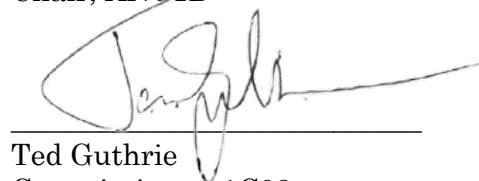
Jason Clock
Commissioner, 1A12



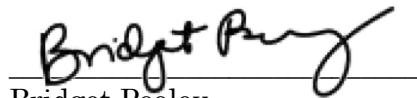
James Turner
Commissioner, 1B09
Chair, ANC1B



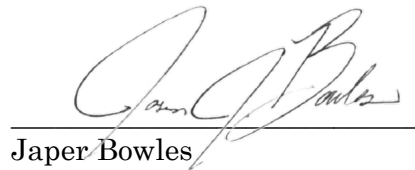
Robb Hudson
Commissioner, 1B11



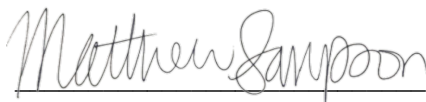
Ted Guthrie
Commissioner, 1C03
Chair, ANC1C



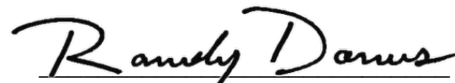
Bridget Pooley
Commissioner, 1C02



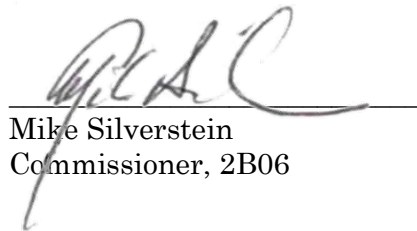
Japer Bowles
Commissioner, 1C07



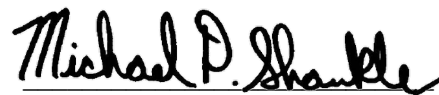
Matthew Sampson
Commissioner, 2B01



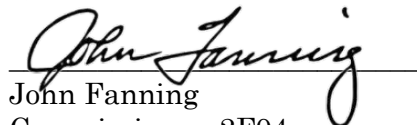
Randy Downs
Commissioner, 2B05



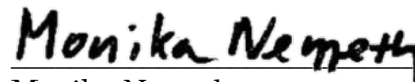
Mike Silverstein
Commissioner, 2B06



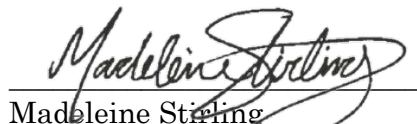
Michael D. Shankle
Commissioner, 2C01



John Fanning
Commissioner, 2F04
Chair, ANC2F



Monika Nemeth
Commissioner, 3F06



Madeleine Stirling
Commissioner-elect, 2F05