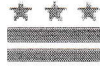


GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3B
GLOVER PARK AND CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS



July 12, 2019

The Honorable Brianne K. Nadeau
Chairperson, Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Anita Bonds
Chairperson, Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

RE: B23-0180 On-Site Services Act of 2019

Thank you for holding the hearing today and requesting comments on the proposed Bill 23-0180, the On-Site Services Act of 2019. Our ANC supports expansion of opportunities for residents to find affordable housing in our area, and has also been actively advocating for support services for individuals who have been facing homelessness and are moving into new housing.

After reviewing the information we have and all the testimony at the hearing, we have concluded that we cannot support the proposed legislation. Our major concerns are:

- Building owners do not have expertise on social services so it would not be well-advised to ask them to be the ones responsible for hiring social service providers and overseeing their work.
- The model of focusing on-site services in individual large apartment buildings may not be the most cost-effective or efficient. Residents with needs for services do not necessarily live in large apartment buildings; they could be in small apartment buildings or in homes that they rent or own. It would be more effective to identify areas where large numbers of individuals and families have service needs and find a location with easy access and space to serve those residents effectively.
- Identifying the buildings where services should be provided according to number of units and percentage of units occupied by residents using housing vouchers does not necessarily correlate with the areas that have people with the greatest needs.
- Linking provision of social services to buildings with a high percentage of households receiving housing assistance makes a not very subtle link between voucher recipients and need for social services, which is not justified and would add to the stigmatization of those receiving assistance.
- If implemented fully, the cost of the proposed bill would be extremely high; the cost estimate provided at the hearing indicated hundreds of millions of dollars, which would be unsupportable for the city or any private parties, including apartment building owners.
- Unless extremely well planned and coordinated, the on-site services proposed in the bill could duplicate services the city is already providing and undermine their work and/or their funding.
- If the Council wants to create a new model for social services located near residents with needs, the best approach would be to pilot an effort in a small number of locations, building on the knowledge and experience that has been gained from past experiments, and learn from those examples.

We hope the Councilmembers will continue to assess the comments submitted on this bill, the research available from other initiatives to provide site-based social services, the costs and expertise involved, and the organizations who are ready and willing to partner with the city to try this model. That would be the best start for assessing whether on-site services would be effective and efficient in filling gaps in meeting needs around the city.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Brian Turmail
Chairman

This letter was approved by a vote of 4-0 at a duly noticed public meeting of ANC3B at which a quorum was present. (Three of the five members constitute a quorum.)