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

Good morning, Chairman Mendelson, and members of the Committee. My name is Makenna Osborn. I am a Policy Attorney at Children's Law Center and a resident of the District. Children's Law Center believes every child should grow up with a strong foundation of family, health and education and live in a world free from poverty, trauma, racism and other forms of oppression. Our more than 100 staff – together with DC children and families, community partners and pro bono attorneys – use the law to solve children's urgent problems today and improve the systems that will affect their lives tomorrow. Since our founding in 1996, we have reached more than 50,000 children and families directly and multiplied our impact by advocating for city-wide solutions that benefit hundreds of thousands more.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the Mayor's proposed FY25 budget for the Department of Buildings (DOB). An effective housing code enforcement agency is essential for promoting safe, healthy and affordable housing across the District.¹ Each year Children's Law Center works with hundreds of families living in poor housing conditions that are negatively impacting their child's health because their landlord has failed to maintain a safe and sanitary property in compliance with the District's housing code.² These families need a well-funded, properly staffed DOB that can successfully secure prompt correction of code violations and incentivize landlords to invest in regular repairs and maintenance to prevent violations in the first place.

As the Council makes difficult decisions about how to allocate the District's limited resources in the FY25 budget, we urge Councilmembers to remember that adequately funding DOB is an investment in the health and safety of DC residents that will lower costs to the District over time.³ My testimony details why the Council should prioritize 1) funding the legislation it has already passed to improve DOB's rental housing inspections and 2) protecting the District's investments in housing code inspections and enforcement personnel in DOB's FY25 budget.

The Council Must *Fund* the Legislation it Has Passed to Improve the District's Housing Code Inspections and Enforcement

As the Council is well aware, legislation is only as good as its implementation. In the District, many laws face the extra hurdle that implementation cannot even begin until the legislation's underlying costs have been funded.⁴ Children's Law Center greatly appreciates the Council's commitment to creating a more effective housing code enforcement agency for District tenants.⁵ We have supported the Council's passage of legislation aimed at addressing the health-harming rental housing conditions many low-income DC tenants experience, including the Residential Housing Environmental Safety Amendment Act of 2020⁶ and the Proactive Inspection Program Act of 2023.⁷ We are concerned, however, that both of these laws, which were thoughtfully crafted by the Council, housing advocates, and tenants, remain unfunded and therefore unimplemented.⁸ Especially in a year where the District is navigating a challenging fiscal environment, Children's Law Center encourages the Council to prioritize funding the

laws it has already passed to follow through on its efforts to meaningfully improve the living conditions of DC tenants.

The Council Should Fund the Residential Housing Environmental Safety Amendment Act of 2020 to Require DOB Inspectors to Enforce the District's Mold Laws

Mold in rental housing is a serious health equity issue in the District. Exposure to indoor mold has been linked to increased incidence and severity of respiratory problems, including asthma.⁹ In fact, doctors have identified indoor mold as one of the primary factors contributing to the District's childhood asthma epidemic.¹⁰ Low-income households and people of color are more likely to live in rental housing with indoor mold, causing disproportionate harm to their health.¹¹ For example, a child with asthma living in Ward 7 or 8 – the areas of DC with the highest proportions of Black and low-income households – is 20 times more likely to end up in the emergency room due to their asthma than a child living in Ward 3.¹² Despite the Council's action to require safe and adequate remediation of indoor mold, mold remains one of the top housing condition complaints for low-income tenants and a continued barrier to controlling childhood asthma in the District.¹³

In 2014, the Council passed the Air Quality Amendment Act, becoming one of the first jurisdictions in the country to formally recognize indoor mold as a significant health hazard.¹⁴ The Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) was charged with implementing the law and under this authority, DOEE licenses mold professionals to operate in the District, sets indoor mold remediation standards, and responds to

residential mold complaints from District residents.¹⁵ While DOEE does a commendable job with each of these responsibilities, the agency has simply never had enough qualified mold inspectors¹⁶ nor the enforcement infrastructure¹⁷ needed to ensure the District's indoor mold law effectively protects the health of low-income tenants.

Placing responsibility for residential mold enforcement solely with DOEE has also created a duplicative and unnecessarily confusing process for tenants seeking assistance to address poor conditions in their rental housing. The District messages to tenants that if they are concerned about unsafe or unsanitary conditions in their rental housing, they should contact the Department of Buildings to request a housing inspection.¹⁸ However, if one of the housing conditions they are concerned about is mold, the tenant also needs to contact DOEE to schedule an inspection just for mold. As a result, a family may have two separate inspection and enforcement processes going on at once with two separate agencies and sets of staffs.

Recognizing these shortcomings in the implementation of the District's indoor mold law, in 2020 the Council passed the Residential Housing Environmental Safety Amendment Act (RHESAA) to expand responsibility for mold inspections and enforcement to DOB.¹⁹ Specifically, the RHESAA requires DOB rental housing inspectors to 1) become licensed mold assessors and 2) issue notices of violation for indoor mold and penalties to landlords who fail to do so.²⁰ The expansion to DOB was intended to

leverage DOB's existing enforcement infrastructure for a more efficient use of District resources and a streamlined experience for tenants.

However, the RHESAA was passed subject to appropriation and the relevant provisions remain unfunded so this important law has not been implemented.²¹ If the RHESAA is not funded in this budget, it could be repealed under Council Rule 736, forcing Council to start from scratch on the bill and further delaying crucial protections for tenants.²² The Fiscal Impact Statement (FIS) found that DOB would require an allocation of \$3.9 million in the first fiscal year and \$14 million over the four-year financial for implementation.²³ Along with our partners in the Fair Budget Coalition, Children's Law Center calls on the Council to fully fund the RHESAA in the FY25 budget to fulfill the Council's commitment to safeguard District residents from harmful indoor mold.²⁴

The Council Should Fund the Proactive Inspection Program Act of 2023 to Require DOB to Proactively Identify and Inspect Rental Properties with Health-Harming Conditions

Earlier this year the Council unanimously passed the Proactive Inspection Program Act bring DOB's existing proactive inspections program in line with nationally recognized best practices for promoting healthy housing and preserving naturally occurring affordable housing stock.²⁵ Children's Law Center has supported the Proactive Inspections Programs Act since its introduction in 2022 because we believe a data-driven, public health-focused proactive inspection program is needed to protect the health and safety of District tenants who are unlikely to request a complaint-based inspection.²⁶

Children’s Law Center appreciates that the law, as passed, addresses a long-standing weakness of DOB and its predecessor, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) by incentivizing landlords to voluntarily comply with the housing code.²⁷ The law rewards landlord voluntary compliance through a tiered and staggered inspection timeline. The law also requires more frequent inspection of rental properties that are most likely to have health-harming conditions, including properties where children are more likely to be exposed to lead hazards and asthma triggers.²⁸

We encourage the Council to fund the Proactive Inspection Program Act in the FY25 budget so it can be implemented as soon as possible. According to the FIS prepared for the bill, this will require the allocation of an additional \$2 million to DOB in FY25 and a total of \$7.2 million over the four-year financial plan.²⁹ Investing in an effective proactive inspection program now is crucial to ensuring the District has an equitable housing code framework that benefits all DC renters and promotes the maintenance and preservation of DC’s housing stock in the long run.

The Council Should Protect its Investments in DOB’s Housing Code Inspection and Enforcement Personnel

As this Committee has noted, “human capital is what drives agency performance. Without adequate staff support, even the most well-designed programs cannot reach their full potential.”³⁰ Recognizing that the Mayor’s FY23 proposed budget “d[id] not adequately invest in inspection staff for [DOB],” the Council appropriated funding for DOB to hire additional 29 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) housing code inspectors.³¹

Children’s Law Center applauded this important investment as it would have brought DC closer to the number of professional inspectors³² needed to respond to all tenant complaints, conduct the in-person re-inspections necessary for effective enforcement, and carry out a robust proactive inspections program.³³

Last year, when the Mayor’s FY24 budget proposed significant cuts to personnel in DOB’s Rental Housing Inspections Program – including the inspector positions previously funded by the Council in FY23 – and Office of Strategic Code Enforcement, the Council recognized the threat it posed to DOB’s ability to function as an effective code enforcement agency and restored funding for the cut positions.³⁴ Thankfully, the Mayor’s proposed FY25 budget does not make the same level of cuts to FTEs in these mission-critical DOB divisions.³⁵ It does, however, include a decrease of 2 FTEs in the Rental Housing Inspections Program³⁶ and 1 FTE in the Housing Rehabilitation Program, which manages DOB’s abatement of certain code violations when a property owner fails to act in a timely manner.³⁷ We urge the Committee to ask DOB for details on what positions would be cut and how the cuts would impact DOB’s ability to conduct complaint-based and proactive rental inspections and proactive abatement. Additionally, we sincerely hope that the Committee will maintain all other funded FTEs in these programs and the Office of Strategic Code Enforcement throughout the rest of the FY25 budget process.

Ensuring that DOB is fully staffed in its rental housing inspection and enforcement divisions is vital for DOB to make progress toward securing more 1) timely correction of

violations and 2) payment of fines by landlords who violate the housing code – which will not only improve tenants’ living conditions but also increase the revenue the District collects from the negligent landlords who profit by operating as a housing provider in the District while flouting our laws.³⁸

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I welcome any questions the Committee may have and look forward to working with the Committee to ensure that DOB has the resources and oversight required to meaningfully and proactively enforce the District’s housing code to protect the health and safety of DC’s tenants.

¹ See, e.g., Kathy Zeisel, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council, Committee of the Whole (December 10, 2019), <https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Zeisel-OIG-DOBTestimony-Before-the-District-of-Columbia-Council-12.10.19final.pdf>; Christina M. Simpson, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council, Committee of the Whole (September 21, 2022), https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Simpson_9_21_22_DOB_Roundtable_Testimony_Final.pdf; Kathy Zeisel, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council, Committee of the Whole (February 23, 2023), <https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Childrens-Law-CenterTestimony-DOB-2023-Oversight-final.pdf>. See also Change Lab Solutions, *Up to Code: Code Enforcement Strategies for Healthy Housing*, 2015, p. 3, available at: https://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Up-tp-Code_Enforcement_Guide_FINAL-20150527.pdf (“Local code enforcement programs are often the first line of defense in ensuring safe and healthy housing for residents.”).

² Children’s Law Center’s innovative medical legal partnership, Healthy Together, places attorneys at primary care pediatric clinics throughout the city with Children’s National, Unity Health Care, and Mary’s Center to receive referrals from pediatric providers for assistance with non-medical barriers to a child’s health and well-being. See Children’s Law Center, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/our-impact/health/>. When unaddressed housing code violations are harming a child’s health, our attorneys represent clients in the Housing Conditions Calendar of the DC Superior Court, where tenants may sue landlords for housing code violations on an expedited basis and seek the limited relief of enforcing compliance with the housing code. See Housing Conditions Calendar, <https://www.dccourts.gov/services/civil-matters/housing-conditions-calendar>.

³ See, e.g., Health Impact Project, *10 Policies to Prevent and Respond to Childhood Lead Exposure: An Assessment of the Risks Communities Face and Key Federal, State, and Local Solutions*, p. 8, (August 2017), available at: hip.10-policies-to-prevent-and-respond-to-childhood-lead-exposure-english.pdf (nchh.org)

(every dollar invested in removing lead-based paint hazards from homes returns approximately \$1.39 in future benefits to society due to health and education cost savings and increased tax revenue from higher earning); Veronica Gaitán, *How Housing Affects children's Outcomes*, Housing Matter, an Urban Institute Initiative, (January 02, 2019), available at: <https://housingmatters.urban.org/articles/how-housing-affects-childrens-outcomes> (healthy homes make for healthier children and stronger foundations for their future stability and economic well-being).

⁴ D.C. Code § 1-301.47a. Fiscal impact statements. Bills and Resolutions.

⁵ In 2021, the Council took bold action to dissolve the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) into two new agencies, including the Department of Buildings. See DC Law B23-0091. Department of Buildings Establishment Act, <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Legislation/B23-0091>.

⁶ D.C. Law 23-188. Residential Housing Environmental Safety Amendment Act of 2020.; Evan Cass, Children's Law Center, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council Committee of the Whole and Committee on Transportation and the Environment, (December 9, 2019), available at: https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/41819/Hearing_Record/B23-0132-HearingRecord1.pdf?Id=58377; Makenna Osborn, Children's Law Center, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council Committee of the Whole, (February 22, 2024), available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/DOB-Performance-Oversight-Childrens-Law-Center-Written-Testimony-02.21.2024.pdf>.

⁷ DC Law B25-0048, Proactive Inspection Program Act of 2023; Kathy Zeisel, Children's Law Center, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council Committee of the Whole, (November 3, 2022) available at: https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/52108/Committee_Report/B25-0048-Committee_Report1.pdf?Id=183287.

⁸ The Office of the Budget Director, DC Council, Legislation Passed Subject to Appropriation, (January 2024), available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024-01-18-Subject-to-Funding-Legislation-quarterly-report.pdf>.

⁹ Tiina Reponen et al., *Infant Origins of Childhood Asthma Associated with Specific Molds*, PubMed Central, (July 11, 2012), available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3432137/>; *Mold*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/>, (Last Updated November 14, 2022).

¹⁰ Morgan Baskin, *Doctors Blame D.C.'s High Asthma Rates in Part on Poor Housing Conditions*, Washington City Paper (May 22, 2019), available at: <https://washingtoncitypaper.com/article/180182/doctors-blame-dcs-high-asthma-rates-in-part-on-poor-housing/>. See also Kayla Benjamin, *The Air Inside the House: The Connection Between Our Homes and Asthma*, The Washington Informer (December 12, 2022), available at: <https://www.washingtoninformer.com/the-air-inside-the-house-the-connection-between-our-homes-and-asthma/>.

¹¹ Jacobs DE. *Environmental health disparities in housing*. Am J Public Health. 2011 Dec;101 Suppl 1(Suppl 1):S115-22. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2010.300058. Epub 2011 May 6. PMID: 21551378; PMCID: PMC3222490; *Racial Inequities in Housing Fact Sheet*, Opportunity Starts at Home, available at: <https://www.opportunityhome.org/resources/racial-equity-housing/>; Pacheco CM, Ciaccio CE, Nazir N, Daley CM, DiDonna A, Choi WS, Barnes CS, Rosenwasser LJ. *Homes of low-income minority families with asthmatic children have increased condition issues*. Allergy Asthma Proc. 2014 Nov-Dec;35(6):467-74. doi: 10.2500/aap.2014.35.3792. PMID: 25584914; PMCID: PMC4210655.

¹² Jess Arnold, *DC clinic says Black and African American kids still reporting most asthma cases*, WUSA9, February 27, 2022, available at: [https://www.wusa9.com/article/life/holidays/black-history-month/dc-clinic-black-african-american-kids-reporting-most-asthma-cases/65-eee708a6-7c3f-486a-859d-04101975f193#:~:text=Dr.%20Shilpa%20Patel%2C%20the%20clinic%27s%20medical%20director%2C%20said,coincide%20with%20the%20largest%20Black%20populations%20in%20D.C.](https://www.wusa9.com/article/life/holidays/black-history-month/dc-clinic-black-african-american-kids-reporting-most-asthma-cases/65-eee708a6-7c3f-486a-859d-04101975f193#:~:text=Dr.%20Shilpa%20Patel%2C%20the%20clinic%27s%20medical%20director%2C%20said,coincide%20with%20the%20largest%20Black%20populations%20in%20D.C;); BUILD HEALTH DC,

available at: https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CLC_BUILD_Brochure_IndvPgs.pdf.

¹³ At Children’s Law Center, over half of the families we assisted with housing conditions matters in 2023 – 216 out of 406 families – reported having mold in their home. Data compiled internally by Children’s Law Center using reporting from our case management software. An explanation of how we tracked and collected this information is available upon request. Mold is also one of the most common housing problems reported to other legal service organizations in the District. *See* Beth Mellen, Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, Testimony before the District of Columbia Council Committee of the Whole, (March 24, 2022), available at: <https://www.legalaiddc.org/media/273/download>; Eleni P. Christidis, Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, Testimony before the District of Columbia Council Committee of the Whole, (January 18, 2024), available at: <https://www.legalaiddc.org/media/3833/download?inline>.

¹⁴ D.C. Law 20-135. Air Quality Amendment Act of 2013.

¹⁵ D.C. Law 20-135. Air Quality Amendment Act of 2013. Sec. 304(a)-(d). Certification of mold assessment and remediation professionals.

¹⁶ Children’s Law Center believes the Chief Financial Officer’s recent estimate that the District should have the capacity to respond to 3,000 mold complaints per year – included in the FIS prepared for the RHESAA– is a reflection of the actual need. Fiscal Impact Statement – Residential Housing Environmental Safety Amendment Act of 2020, District of Columbia Office of the Chief Financial Officer (November 9, 2020), https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/41819/Committee_Report/B23-0132-Committee_Report2.pdf?Id=113438. DOEE would need far more mold inspectors to conduct that number of mold inspections per year. For example, in FY23 the agency’s mold inspectors received 456 mold complaints and conducted 173 inspections based on those complaints. FY2023 DOEE Performance Oversight Responses, responses to Q53 and Q54(d), available at:

<https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/299> (In addition to the 152 in-person mold inspections reported in Table 2, DOEE indicated that there were 21 virtual mold inspections conducted in FY23).

¹⁷ *See* Makenna Osborn, Children’s Law Center, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Committee on Transportation and the Environment (February 29, 2024), p. 10-11, <https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/2024-DOEE-Performance-Oversight-Hearing-Childrens-Law-Center-Written-Testimony-03.07.2024.pdf>:

Once a mold inspection is completed, DOEE also lacks the authority to penalize landlords who do not comply with the District’s mold law. DOEE takes essentially no enforcement action when property owners fail to clean and remove less than 10 square feet of mold within 30 days; inspectors merely provide the tenant and property owner with written guidance on how to safely address the mold. If a property owner fails to hire a licensed mold professional to abate 10 or more square feet of indoor mold within 30 days, DOEE’s mold inspectors can issue a Notice of Violation (NOV) to property owners but those NOVs are only a “warning.” According to the agency’s pre-hearing responses, “[DOEE’s] mold program cannot issue Notices of Infraction (NOI) until regulations establishing the fine amounts are in place.” The regulations DOEE requires to issue NOIs were proposed in August of 2022 and reportedly scheduled for adoption by the Director of DOEE but subsequently stalled with the Mayor’s office. In DOEE’s pre-hearing responses, they reported that an updated version of the regulations are again “under review by the Office of the Mayor.”

In Children’s Law Center’s experience representing tenants with poor housing conditions, we have observed that the worst landlords are motivated by profit margins above all else, including tenant well-being and compliance with District laws. They will

not invest in costly mold assessment and remediation unless they face a meaningful financial penalty for inaction. (Citations omitted).

¹⁸ See e.g., *Housing Code Inspections*, District of Columbia Department of Buildings, <https://dob.dc.gov/node/1616616> (“It is the mission of the Department of Buildings (DOB) to ensure your building and your unit is healthy and safe. DOB needs tenants to report any suspected housing violations. District of Columbia law requires your landlord to provide apartments that are in safe, habitable, and livable condition.”).

¹⁹ D.C. Law 23-188. Residential Housing Environmental Safety Amendment Act of 2020.

²⁰ D.C. Law 23-188. Residential Housing Environmental Safety Amendment Act of 2020. Sec. 2. The Quality Amendment Act of 2014. (e)(1), (c)(1)-(2).

²¹ The Office of the Budget Director, DC Council, Legislation Passed Subject to Appropriation, (January 2024), available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024-01-18-Subject-to-Funding-Legislation-quarterly-report.pdf>.

²² RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE FOR THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, COUNCIL PERIOD 25, Section 736. REPEAL OF LAWS SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION.

²³ Fiscal Impact Statement – Residential Housing Environmental Safety Amendment Act of 2020, District of Columbia Office of the Chief Financial Officer (November 9, 2020), https://lms.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/41819/Committee_Report/B23-0132-Committee_Report2.pdf?Id=113438.

²⁴ Fair Budget Coalition, *Safety is Investing in Community: Shifting Power and Resources to the People*, (2024), available at: <https://fairbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Desktop-View.pdf>.

²⁵ D.C. Law 25-141. Proactive Inspection Program Act of 2024.

²⁶ In Children’s Law Centers experience, tenants with limited English proficiency and low-income tenants and tenants of color who fear retaliation from their landlord and are understandably hesitant to bring the District government into their home, are often unaware of the complaint process, cannot successfully file a complaint, or do not wish to file a complaint. These tenants are underserved by the complaint-based inspection system. See also, *A Guide to Proactive Rental Inspections*, ChangeLab Solutions (2022), p. 10, https://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/A-Guide-to-Proactive-Rental-Inspections_FINAL_20221031A.pdf.

²⁷ Makenna Osborn, Children’s Law Center Testimony before the DC Council Committee of the Whole, (February 22, 2024), p. 14, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/DOB-Performance-Oversight-Childrens-Law-Center-Written-Testimony-02.21.2024.pdf>; Kathy Zeisel, Children’s Law Center Testimony before the DC Council Committee of the Whole, (February 23, 2023), available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Childrens-Law-Center-Testimony-DOB-2023-Oversight-final.pdf>; Kathy Zeisel, Children’s Law Center Testimony before the DC Council Committee of the Whole, (November 3, 2022), available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Zeisel-CLC-PROACTIVE-INSPECTION-PROGRAM-ACT-OF-2022-Testimony-1.pdf>.

²⁸ D.C. Law 25-141. Proactive Inspection Program Act of 2024. Sec. 3. Program; purpose. (c)(1)(K),(L).

²⁹ Fiscal Impact Statement – Proactive Inspection Program Act of 2023, District of Columbia Office of the Chief Financial Officer (December 18, 2023), https://lms.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/52108/Other/B25-0048-FIS_Proactive_Inspection_Act_of_2023.pdf?Id=182227.

³⁰ Council of the District of Columbia, Committee of the Whole, Fiscal Year 2023 Committee Budget Report, p. 74, (April 21, 2023), available at: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bbd09f3d74562c7f0e4bb10/t/62606a3fc640af181295a34f/1650485824377/COW+FY23+Report+-+Draft++4.20.22.pdf>.

³¹ Per the Committee, 8 housing code inspectors were added in the Committee of the Whole’s initial budget, 12 more were added through the Local Budget Act, and 9 were added through the Budget Support Act. See Council of the District of Columbia, Committee of the Whole, Fiscal Year 2023 Committee Budget Report, p. 75, (April 21, 2023), *available at*:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bbd09f3d74562c7f0e4bb10/t/62606a3fc640af181295a34f/1650485824377/COW+FY23+Report+-+Draft++4.20.22.pdf>; See also DC Law 24-0167. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Support Act of 2022, p. 107, *available at*: https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/49079/Signed_Act/B24-0714-Signed_Act.pdf.

³² Meaning those employed by DOB rather than the independently contracted resident inspectors the agency has also started using to fill gaps in demand. To learn more about DOB’s Resident Inspector Program visit: Department of Buildings (DOB), Resident Inspector Program, *available at*: <https://dob.dc.gov/node/1616641#:~:text=Put%20simply%2C%20DOB%20trains%20District%20residents%20to%20perform,trained%20inspectors%20whenever%20they%20successfully%20complete%20an%20inspection.>

³³ A survey of comparable jurisdictions conducted by Children’s Law Center and Legal Aid determined that those jurisdictions the following ratios of housing inspectors to rental units: Montgomery County, Maryland (1:3,500); Cleveland, Ohio (1:3,359); Des Moines, Iowa (1:2,221); Trenton, New Jersey (1:2,063); Syracuse, New York (1:2,577); Rochester, New York (1:1,390). DOB would ideally have between 59 and 104 full-time professional inspectors — dedicated to inspecting rental housing units.

³⁴ Council of the District of Columbia Committee of the Whole, *Fiscal Year 2024 Committee Budget Report*, p. 69-70, (April 27, 2023), *available at*:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bbd09f3d74562c7f0e4bb10/t/6449b0d8272ca0042663d43d/1682551006257/COW+FY2024+Proposed+Budget+Report+Recommendations.pdf>.

³⁵ Mayor’s Proposed FY 2025 Budget and Financial Plan, A Fair Shot: Strategic Investments and Shared Sacrifice, *available at*: <https://mayor.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-presents-fiscal-year-2025-budget-proposal-fair-shot-strategic-investments-and#:~:text=The%20FY25%20budget%20and%20financial,billion%20in%20capital%20improvement%20funds.>

³⁶ Mayor’s Proposed FY 2025 Budget and Financial Plan, Volume 4 Agency Budget Chapters – Part III, Human Support Services, Operations and Infrastructure, Financing and Other, and Enterprise and Other, p. F-12.

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ As Children’s Law Center raised in the testimony submitted to the Council for DOB’s Performance Oversight hearing earlier this year, DOB’s lengthy and ineffective enforcement process for uncorrected housing code violations is resulting in tens of millions of dollars in possible revenue going uncollected. See Makenna Osborn, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council, Committee of the Whole (February 22, 2024), p. 14-16, <https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/DOB-Performance-Oversight-Childrens-Law-Center-Written-Testimony-02.21.2024.pdf>.