West End Citizens Association
Washington, D.C.
Boundaries: 15th Street on the East • Potomac Park on the South
Rock Creek and the Potomac on the West • N Street on the North

WECA Comments for
10/26/26 Hearing of Committee on Housing on
B26-0831, ANCs Functions Modernization Amendment Act of 2026

The West End Citizens Association (WECA) herein provides comments on B26-0831, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions Functions Modernization Amendment Act of 2026. The WECA, which began in 1910, is the oldest citizens organization in the Foggy Bottom-West End area and the second oldest in DC. One of the WECA's principal goals is maintaining the quality of life for the residential community in Foggy Bottom-West End. Unfortunately, the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC-2A) has been dysfunctional for many years and has been unable to adequately protect the quality of life for the residential community in Foggy Bottom-West End.

At least one of the proposed amendments in B26-0831 is in response to problems in ANC-2A. For example, there is Subsection 2(d)(2) which amends Section 14(e)(2)(B) of DC Code § 1-309.11(e)(2)(B) to state "If, within 30 days after the request, the Chairperson has not scheduled the meeting, the vice-chairperson shall schedule the meeting" (p. 5). This is an attempt to remedy the willful violation of this legislative provision by the Chairperson of ANC-2A who refused to call a Special Meeting of ANC-2A to consider her removal upon the June 17, 2026, written request of more than half (4 out of the 6 seated) of ANC-2A's elected Commissioners. Despite this request and the fact that there is no process (or apparent willingness) to enforce this violation on the part of OANC, OAG, or BEGA, the current Chairperson remains in place (still without any explanation for her failure to call a Special Meeting) until a new Chairperson is elected in 2027.

The bill's "attempt" to remedy the violation is not sufficient. The language needs to be further amended to ensure that the ANC-2A vice-chairperson or another ANC-2A officer (if the vice-chairperson also refuses to call the requested Special Meeting) can do so. Finally, given that there is currently no penalty in place to discourage this unlawful action in the future, any amendment to this Section should provide for censure (or removal) *ipso facto* upon such failure by the chairperson.

The rest of the proposed amendments are not in response to specific problems in ANC-2A. Some are poorly considered and should be removed in their entirety. First, amendments to DC Code §1-309.01 *et seq*. (and DC Code § 1-1041.01) are an unwarranted intrusion into the Council's establishment of single-member districts after each US Census and implies that the Ward task forces may not be able to properly formulate their draft proposals taking into account neighborhood cohesiveness and viability. The WECA questions how OANC has any special expertise to do a better job than Ward task force individuals individually appointed by the Ward Councilmembers. Fortunately, WECA has considerable experience and expertise.

A WECA officer successfully led the last four DC redistricting teams for Foggy Bottom-West End (after the 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2020 Censuses). The WECA believes that redistricting teams composed of long-time residents in a specific ANC are uniquely suited to consider redistricting changes in Single Member Districts (SMDs) in that ANC and that OANC has no such unique knowledge to make any informed redistricting recommendations for SMDs in any of the 46 ANCs and surely should not "be given

great consideration by the Council in the establishment of such single-member districts" (pp 2-3, Section 2(a)).

Second, providing for an ANC Commission to "transfer a portion of their annual allotment to a District agency that provides food, shelter, or healthcare assistance" (p. 6, Subsection 2(f), which amends Sec. 16 of DC Code § 1-309.13) is a completely inappropriate legislative proposal. It would undermine the Council's and Mayor's specific roles in the budgeting process, which ensures the most effective use of all taxpayer funds. In fact, it probably would result in disparate treatment in these 3 service areas. Each of the 46 ANCs represents a small segment of DC and should not be allowed to redirect taypayer funds in this way.

The WECA recommends that this bill be seriously amended or that it not be further considered by the Council.