



THE BROWN BULLETIN

February 2012

Click the video below to hear about plans for iGaming, jobs and community schools.

February Message from Councilmember Michael A. Brown



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Development
Statehood and Self
Determination

Co-chair
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Committees
Finance and Revenue
Human Services
Government Operations
Small and Local Business
Development

Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments Member

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New Student Intern

I am pleased to introduce you to Dominick Daly. Dominick is a senior at McKinley Technology High School where he is very involved in school activities. He is a Captain on both the Baseball and Basketball Teams, and serves as Chairman on the school's Student Government Association. He has maintained grades that have placed him on the honor roll throughout his entire high school career. Dominick assists the office with administrative duties and constituent services concerns.



**Councilmembers Michael A. Brown and Jim Graham
call for an investigation of the
Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)**

MEDIA ADVISORY:

January 28, 2012

For more information contact: 202-724-8190

Washington, DC-

Councilmember Jim Graham and I are deeply concerned by evidence that has been uncovered pointing to unethical behavior and possible criminal malfeasance and collusion between contractors and current and former employees of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

Through my role as the Chair of the Council's Committee on Housing and Workforce Development, on Monday July 12, 2010, I convened a public oversight roundtable on the "*Peaceholics Construction Project at 1300 Congress St. SE*". This roundtable was held to determine the circumstances that led the previous administration to award the Peaceholics more than \$4.4 million to acquire and rehabilitate several properties including the Congress Street site. The information provided from the roundtable left many questions unanswered, especially in relation to entities with little or no housing experience receiving these District housing funds. Despite additional inquiries; these unanswered questions were never adequately addressed by the previous leadership of DHCD.

More recently, the current DHCD leadership has become a willing partner, and in cooperation with recommendations from my office, has instituted more stringent quality controls in the awarding of funds. Also, at my request, the DHCD has conducted new reviews of existing projects that are currently being funded. This review has uncovered evidence, we expect, will show the brazen abuse of authority from multiple employees at the agency to financially enrich themselves and outside entities. We believe this investigation has prompted administrative action against one high level DHCD employee yesterday and we expect additional personnel actions to follow.

This alleged malfeasance by District government employees and the repeated instances of certain outside individuals and entities have surfaced on numerous property records dealing with land transfers. Property records show that certain individuals and entities have repeated appeared in several questionable sales, purchases and land transfers, including the 1300 Congress St. SE property.

This troubling situation has spurred me and Councilmember Jim Graham, who has researched this issue, to request the Inspector General and the Attorney General to launch immediate investigations into this matter.

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

MICHAEL A. BROWN, CHAIRMAN

Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Performance Oversight Hearing:

DC Housing Authority

Department of Housing and Community Development

DC Housing Finance Agency

Monday, February 13, 2012 beginning at 2:00pm

John A. Wilson Building, Room 412

1350 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20004

Those who wish to testify should contact Carol Sadler at (202) 724-8198 or csadler@dccouncil.us, and provide your name, organizational affiliation, and title of organization by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 9, 2012. Witnesses should bring 20 copies of their written testimony to the roundtable. The Committee allows each individual 3 minutes to provide oral testimony, in order to permit each witness an opportunity to be heard. Additional written statements are encouraged and will be made part of the official record. The official record will close ten days following the conclusion of the hearing.



For immediate release:

For more information contact: 202-724-8190

Councilmember Michael A. Brown to correct mandatory retirement withholding

On Tuesday, February 7, 2012, Councilmember Michael A. Brown introduced the “**Targeted Retirement Distribution Withholding Amendment Act of 2012**”. This bill amends Chapter 18 of Title 47 of the DC Code by limiting the retirement distributions subject to mandatory tax withholding to only lump-sum distributions.

As part of the Mayor’s FY2011 Budget Support Act, a provision was passed mandating that early distributions from retirement plans already subject to mandatory federal withholding would be required to also have DC taxes withheld at the highest income tax rate. It was understood at the time that this would only affect a targeted group of retirees and was in response to the failure of many paying their taxes on an annual basis.

Later, in December of 2011, the OCFO requested that the “**Retirement Distribution Withholding Emergency and Temporary Acts of 2011**” be passed, claiming that it was only making technical corrections to the code. However, this bill in fact removed important language that has now led to far more retirees being hit with this withholding than was ever intended.

Other than the serious cash flow concerns that this type of withholding creates, it has also been accurately described as a legally mandated zero interest loan coming from retirees on fixed incomes to the District government. This is wrong and creates an unnecessary burden on our city’s eldest residents. Furthermore, it seems unfair that this withholding is being taken out at a marginal tax rate reserved only for those making over \$350,000 a year, regardless of the retirees actual annual income. This is why Councilmember Michael A. Brown will be correcting this unjust policy and why limiting the scope of individuals who this withholding will apply to is absolutely critical.



Left Picture- Michael A. Brown joins women from www.THCCdc.org to discuss transitional housing issues.

Right Picture- Councilmember and a little dragon enjoying the Chinese New Year Parade.



Education Series

Attention: Tenants, Landlords & Realtors
Here's your opportunity to learn everything you need to know about



When: Tuesday, February 21, 2012 - 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Where: 1800 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE
Washington, DC
DHCD Housing Resource Center

*(Metrobus routes 90, 92, B2, V5, W6, A42, A46, A48, U2: 8 blocks from the Anacostia Metro station;
DC Circulator, Potomac Avenue Metro - Skyland via Barracks Row route)*

Seminar topics will include:

- The Registration Process: Registration of Rental Units with DCRA and DHCD
- Exemptions from Subchapter 2 (the Rent Stabilization Program) and Exclusions from the Act
- Substantial Compliance with the Housing Regulations ■ Disclosure Requirements to Tenants
- CPI-W and Vacancy Increases
- Other Rent Adjustment Procedures (e.g. 70% Voluntary Agreements, Hardship Petitions)
- Types of Notices to Vacate ■ Relocation Assistance Requirements
- Reauthorization of the Rental Housing Act of 1985

Underground Parking Available

RSVP by Monday, February 20, 2012
Call (202) 442-7251 | email: dhcd.events@dc.gov

A sign language interpreter will be provided upon request by calling (202) 442-7251 five days prior to the training.
Residents who require language interpretation should specify the language (i.e. Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese-Mandarin/Cantonese, Amharic, French or other). Professional interpretation services will be provided to pre-registered persons only.



RECENTLY PROPOSED LEGISLATION BY **COUNCILMEMBER MICHAEL A. BROWN**

“Targeted Retirement Distribution Withholding Amendment Act of 2012”

When implemented, this bill will ensure that DC residents receiving annuities or other periodic distributions will not be subject to immediate withholding, and will shield thousands of retirees from this withholding requirement. Instead, the bill will target the much smaller group of people who it was originally intended to affect, mostly those who are making significant withdrawals from their retirement accounts.

“Ward Redistricting Congressional Review Emergency Dec and Act of 2012”

Maintains the changes made in the first ward redistricting emergency act which was passed by the Council on November 1, 2011. The bill made corrections and clarified ward boundaries; however, it expired on February 2, 2012, and a temporary version is not projected to complete its Congressional review and become law until February 24, 2012. The purpose of this Congressional review emergency is to prevent a gap in legal authority.

“Tenant Security Deposits Clarification Amendment Act of 2012”

Amends the Housing Regulations of the District of Columbia to clarify that the Office of Administrative Hearings may adjudicate complaints for the non-return of tenant security deposits as well as the nonpayment of interest on tenant security deposits; and to clarify that any housing provider who in bad faith fails to return a security deposit rightfully owed to a tenant, or fails to pay the interest on the security deposit, is liable to the tenant for treble damages.

“Car Wash Employee Overtime Act of 2012”

Amend the District of Columbia Minimum Wage Revision Act of 1992 to remove the exemption prohibiting car wash employees from receiving the protections of the District’s overtime law. The Committee finds that restricting a targeted group of wage earners ability to receive overtime is an outdated vestige that must be corrected.

“Unemployment Compensation Funds Appropriation Authorization Act of 2012”

To enact the permanent version of emergency and temporary legislation previously passed by the Council to authorize the allocation of \$27.6 million from the funds distributed to the District of Columbia pursuant to section 903(f) of the Social Security Act to improve the administration of the Unemployment Compensation Program. The District is currently in the process of replacing the current outdated legacy unemployment compensation operating system, to creating a new system that fully integrates the benefit, tax contribution, and reemployment functions of the unemployment compensation program.

“Workforce Job Development Grant Making Authority Emergency Resolution and Act of 2012”

Will enable the Department of Employment Services to issue grants directly using funds appropriated to or received by the Department for workforce and job development purposes. This will help improve the speed and efficiency of the grant process for training and other services for unemployed District residents.

“Workforce Job Development Grant Making Authority Temporary Act of 2012”

To allow the temporary bill to conform to the emergency bill above. Again, this amendment was suggested by the General Counsel’s office and it simply specifies the appropriate code citations affiliated with the intended grant making authority.

For more information on Council of the District of Columbia legislation visit <http://dclims1.dccouncil.us/lims/>

THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of Councilmember Michael A. Brown
Invites You to Join Us
For Our



11th Creative Economy Brown Bag Lunch Forum

With

Special Guest

Peter Corbett, CEO, iStrategyLabs

Peter Corbett is the founder and CEO of iStrategyLabs – an interactive agency that develops creative solutions to clients' challenges and brings them to life in the digital and physical world. He's widely known for his creative marketing approaches coupled with a deep technical background, and a focus on civic innovation through community building.

In Government 2.0 circles, Peter is widely known for co-creating Apps for Democracy with Vivek Kundra and DC's Office of the CTO, and the Apps for the Army program for the US Army.

Wednesday February 15, 2011

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

John A. Wilson Building, Room 104

1350 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

This is the **eleventh** in a series of "Brown Bag Lunch - Creative Economy" forums

Please Bring Your Own Refreshments

Space is Limited. Please RSVP at DCBrownBagLunch@gmail.com

For more information please email DCBrownBagLunch@gmail.com

or call George Koch at 202-607 0879

Follow us on Twitter: [@CCCEinDC](https://twitter.com/CCCEinDC) or on Facebook at [Center for the Creative Economy](https://www.facebook.com/CenterfortheCreativeEconomy)