



Healthy D.C. & Me. Leadership Coalition  
1629 K St. N.W., Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(240)274-9436

From the desk of Dr. Rhonda L. Hamilton, President

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February 6, 2023

Greetings Madam Mayor, as well as Members of the Council,

As we settle into a new year as leaders, please allow me to share with you the ongoing, and documented issues that are of continued concern for members of our mental health advocacy organization, members of our professional medical community, and for many citizens of DC. In reference to “DC’s Comeback Plan”, unveiled recently, DC is striving to become “*a city where every neighborhood offers its residents - of all races -, genders, and backgrounds - the chance to achieve their full potential*”. Theoretically this sounds wonderful. Our agency is however concerned with the state of the District’s current and evidential “disconnect” regarding matters of community. Although, I’m hopeful that there are “well intentioned” efforts pertaining to the messaging, policies, and programming, the fact remains that many of the city’s orchestrated endeavors continue to introduce District citizens to poor living environments, and mental wellness challenges, without accountable oversights to protect the living standards and economic divides for too many District residents.

Dr. Edwin C. Chapman, MD a renowned, local “Addictions Medical Expert”, and advisor to the Healthy DC & Me Leadership Coalition states the following in regards to the realities for many District residents, “*the revolving door treatment outcomes are predictably the same whether (1) one is mentally challenged and homeless in a tent or (2) a returning citizen suffering from a substance use disorder discharged back into the community without health insurance, access to healthcare, and safe housing! Without systematic treatment these individuals will either (1) be unnecessarily hospitalized, (2) get (re)incarcerated or (3) suffer a premature death.*”

As advocates for matters affecting all DC citizens on the community level, we seek immediate engagement from your office regarding available solutions for the following enclosed citizen concerns that were registered with our agency within the past 14 days. Please also note that we will continue to hold your offices to the standard of ensuring that our community members’ well-being and mental wellness realities remain “high priority” as you seek to fulfill the promises made in “DC’s Comeback Plan”. DC citizens, and their mental health, can no longer be “sacrificial” pawns in the city’s “failed” attempts at achieving a balanced, fair distribution of resources, and equitable outcomes for all. (Please reference the enclosed “chart of concerns” that have been derived from our “newly” implemented“, and circulated amongst all 8 Wards of the District, community “citizen participated” report card”, on the next page.)

Much of what is contained within this correspondence has been brought to the attention of applicable District agencies, and recognized persons in charge, to also include your office. Please note that members of the community and our agency of advocates are seeking accountable solutions from your offices immediately. We stand ready to progressively move forward. District residents no longer wish to succumb to reactive responses and measures regarding their living and accesses. Our citizens are requesting more hearings, more on-site, community presence of their elected officials, more transparency prior to the allocation and release of program funding per ward and overall, higher standards for matters involving their living and that are impacting their mental wellness realities, to include the eradication of slumlords, gun violence, youth crime, low performing school curriculums, healthcare inequities, saturated drug & alcohol resources, more sustainable housing options, as well as increased, intentional, accountable efforts to diminish the present economic divide across our city.

We look forward to receiving your timely response, and proactive follow-up. We are aware that many of these complaints have already been placed on your radar by the citizens themselves. If in fact “DC’s Comeback Plan” is to deliver authentic results to the citizens of DC, then perhaps it is time to truly be accountable to the citizens of DC.



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**“Community Report Card” week ending 2/5/23.  
 Ratings Scale: 1 - 5 (1 is low, 5 is high.)**

“See Citizens’ “Actual” Comments & Ward Ratings Below.”

<p align="center"><u>WARD 2</u> <u>Citizen(s) Complaint</u></p>	<p align="center"><u>WARD 7</u> <u>Citizen(s) Complaint:</u></p>	<p align="center"><u>WARD 8</u> <u>Citizen(s) Complaint</u></p>
<p>Drugs. One Stop Shop in my public housing community for looting, crime, and rat-infested housing environment.</p> <p>I have health concerns, and my housing unit is unfit. I witnessed rats come down from the ceiling in the community room.</p> <p>The services for Blacks in my Ward are not enough.</p> <p>I'm concerned about the homeless being removed from their encampments with nowhere to go.</p> <p><u>Ward Ratings vs.Services:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Landlord/Tenant matters? : 1</li> <li>-Crime/Safety matters? : 1</li> <li>-Youth Outreach/programs? : 1</li> <li>-Senior Outreach/support? : 1</li> <li>-Quality Food Sources? : 2</li> <li>-Young Adult program/support? : 1</li> <li>-Economic growth opportunities? : 1</li> <li>-Mental Health outreach &amp; resources? : 2</li> <li>-Homeless support &amp; outreach? : 2</li> <li>-Educational programming &amp; resources? 1</li> </ul>	<p>“Ward 7 is a dumping ground. Leaders overlook resident concerns to profit themselves.”</p> <p>“The city is throwing money into old models that do not work for this upcoming generation. The city is listening to people and leaders who have a history of taking money from youth programs.”</p> <p>“Trash collecting along Nannie Helen and 44th is out of control. There's a liquor bottle Memorial that needs to be discarded, and I would like to the current stores with a new facelift for the store front.”</p> <p>“Please give 4400 Block of Hayes St NE new streetlights. We residents over 60 who deserve to navigate in well-lit areas.”</p> <p><u>Ward Ratings vs.Services:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Landlord/Tenant matters? : 2</li> <li>-Crime/Safety matters? : 2</li> <li>-Youth Outreach/programs? : 2</li> <li>-Senior Outreach/support? : 2</li> <li>-Quality Food Sources? : 2</li> <li>-Young Adult program/support? : 2</li> <li>-Economic growth opportunities? : 2</li> <li>-Mental Health outreach &amp; resources? : 3</li> <li>-Homeless support &amp; outreach? : 3</li> <li>-Educational programming &amp; resources? 2</li> </ul>	<p>The "declining" Marbury Plaza property issue has been going on for me since 2020, and since 2012 overall, following court orders to improve. Each year it is getting worse than the last as issues are allowed to build and compound with no relief.</p> <p>Ongoing failure to maintain the property, and our living environments, as well as to service tenant's property needs, unacceptable rudeness to tenants by management staffing, not answering calls coming in at the desk, avoidance. No ability to work with tenants in concern of their needs.</p> <p>I'm seeking more aid for the homeless of my ward and Washington, DC in general.</p> <p><u>Ward Ratings vs.Services:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Landlord/Tenant matters? : 1</li> <li>-Crime/Safety matters? : 1</li> <li>-Youth Outreach/programs? : 2</li> <li>-Senior Outreach/support? : 2</li> <li>-Quality Food Sources? : 2</li> <li>-Young Adult program/support? : 2</li> <li>-Economic growth opportunities? : 1</li> <li>-Mental Health outreach &amp; resources? : 1</li> <li>-Homeless support &amp; outreach? : 1</li> <li>-Educational programming &amp; resources? 2</li> </ul>

WARD 2

Citizens' additional recommendations, comments, ratings, & areas of focus? :

Landlords should work for the people not for self.

Too many kids being killed.

Need more, & better programs for the youth so they won't be out in the streets.

Need to put seniors in better homes.

The main issue is poverty, they want to keep us down and won't give us the resources so we can get better and that will decrease the crime rate.

A lot of people have mental health because the lack of finances.

We need to build homes for the homeless instead of putting them in shelters.

We as black people need more resources so we can get out of poverty and make more money.

We are crying out for help and housing always puts black people in the dirtiest and low-poverty neighborhoods and put immigrant people that are not from here in good clean homes and with jobs and more food stamps.

WARD 7

Citizens' additional recommendations, comments, ratings, & areas of focus? :

Highest youth crime and murder rate in the city need I say more.

No community policing. Police walking the beat and knowing the residents they SERVE.

What programs?????? I'm aware of a collaborative but I've never seen them in action. Oh they did host elections once.

Placing the largest halfway house in the US less than 50 feet from housing, 200 feet from a high school and 300 feet from elementary schools is insane. But ward 7 leaders care about our kids. And you wonder about our children. They are a symptom... not the problem. Look in the mirror.

I know there is a new MBI but Minnesota Ave, Division Ave, Benning Road all look the same and some worse to me. So what are they doing for Ward 7. It's just a convenient location.

Ward 7 is locally known as the Ward of wrap around services for everyone else but Ward 7

I would never send my child to a school in this Ward. We commute 45 minutes one way for school.

I've requested DC support for seniors on my block and nothing has happened. Thank God for East Friendship Baptist Church and AME

Ward 7 Central NE is a food desert. I must drive to other wards to buy groceries.

WARD 8

Citizens' additional recommendations, comments, ratings, & areas of focus?

Property is left in filth with no attempt to sanitize when COVID threats are in high alert. Failure to handle tenant problems (i.e., following up on tenants who leave garbage un-bagged, left in the garbage room when should be put in shoot, failure to pick up dog excrement, violence, fighting and noise issues. No response emergency calls. No way to reach desk, or security.)

Underground parking deplorable conditions, doors left open, garage entrance/exit pathway blocked, now with garbage rats. Pests inside the property including rodents as well as roaches. Inspections take place, but no follow up. Wiring exposes to leaking running water, High air toxicity from mold and asbestos that has been disturbed and job not completed.

Tenants are falling out, suffering from exasperated conditions due to mold exposure. Failure to keep disability props functioning. Failure to keep elevators functioning. No organized method for move ins and move outs with no freight elevators, no ability to reserve elevators, non-dependable working elevators. Deep infra-structure issues. A plan needs to be derived to relocate tenants while repairing structural issues properly, not cosmetically, and then move them back in when the work is properly achieved.

My health is continuing to suffer, and I believe the living conditions here at Marbury Plaza contribute to my health and wellbeing in major ways.

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>WARD 7</u></p> <p>Our children are a symptom of our failures and lack of commitment to them. Ward 7 leadership does nothing to show concern for our youth.</p> <p>We show how much we care about them by continuing to traumatize them daily.</p> <p>Dumping programs with no metrics or data of success in Ward 7. Just want to say you're doing something.</p> <p>Government vehicles dropping off people daily to sit in lawn chairs on the sidewalks all day.</p> <p>Allowing the BOP to place the largest halfway house in Ward 7 and placing the BOP next to Children's hospital clinic in Ward 8. I have witnessed children and parents traumatized as they walk onto the clinic and watch police arrest someone. Systemic!!!!</p> <p>All Landlords should be held accountable for their property upkeep on a monthly</p> <p>We want safer streets in all 8 wards.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>WARD 8</u></p> <p>Remedy is taking so long I am realizing that trying to stick it out, even though I'd love to be able to do that, could be ultimately detrimental to my health and wellbeing in ways from which I may not be able to recover.</p> <p>There are not enough youth outreach programs. There is too much crime.</p> <p>The city required disability features are often not met at Marbury Plaza, and the city, doesn't seem to force the issue.</p> <p>Unaware of any growth opportunities in our community for seniors.</p> <p>Have had difficulty scheduling mental health services.</p> <p>I see what appears to be a huge need for housing. There are many homeless people that find shelter in our laundry rooms, hallways, stairwells, at Marbury Plaza.</p> <p>Landlords are not accountable.</p>
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Respectfully, Submitted,

Dr. Rhonda L. Hamilton

Cc: Cedar Heights Apartment Manager/Owner  
Woodberry Village Apartment Manager/Owner  
Marbury Plaza Apartment Manager/Owner  
Claridge Towers Public Housing Manager  
Department of Public Works  
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DOB)  
Department of Health & Human Services  
Office of the Tenant Advocate  
Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia  
Members of the Press  
Healthy D.C. & Me Leadership Coalition "Managing" Board.