



Healthy DC & Me Leadership Coalition
“Human & Civil Rights” Citizen’s Protest Proposed Legislative Agenda

Historically, the nation’s seat of governance has been divided by race, income, jobs, and opportunity. This divide has further been perpetuated by institutionalized racism, and economic corporate enslavement practices that have to date, contributed to an unfair distribution of wealth, living, and healthcare inequalities. Statistically Washington, DC’s youth poverty rates are higher than the national average. News reports in 2023 listed DC as “housing” the nation’s third largest drug problem and represents three times the national rate for HIV cases, disproportionately rising homicide rates in its Eastern region, where the burden of poverty and social distress are the highest. Citizens residing in the Eastern region of the Nation’s Capital consistently have lower graduation rates, worse health outcomes, and less access to quality health care than those who live in the Western region of the city. As of January 2024, data reports suggest that the biggest and smallest wealth gaps by race or ethnicity in the U.S. found that DC is the most financially unequal place to live, with Caucasian residents earning approximately 66% more than Black residents. The average median household income for Caucasian residents is \$149,734, compared to \$49,652 for Black residents.

Healthy DC & Me Leadership Coalition provides daily mental health, and trauma related outreach services as well as programming for marginalized and low-income citizens plagued with insurmountable social determinants. As mental health advocates we have observed that the living and governing standards in Washington, DC are too low.

No more low standards! Today we build a network of community oversights with a pipeline to the offices of all elected DC officials, and to the press that says “no more” will we watch you ignore the needs of all of DC’s people! “No more” will you mismanage money meant for us, and then claim to not have enough money to help save us! “No more”!!! Today we fight for the restoration of our human & civil rights! Today we come forward to take back DC! Today we set higher standards and force DC elected officials to recognize our power as the people of DC!

Civil rights include protection from unlawful discrimination. In communities where low income, predominantly African Americans reside in DC, there has been an egregious level of reporting regarding inhumane, unhealthy, and unsafe housing environments where landlords continue to either falsely evict individuals and families or collect full rent for subpar living environments. Retaliatory behavior is disguised with questionable, outstanding rental calculations, unscrupulous “red-letter” eviction notices, and threats of charging market rate rent instead of the allocated subsidized rental

amounts. Environments that house our seniors are done so without adequate security, and low-rate management practices, which are placing our senior populations at further risk of emotional distress, and undignified levels of stress and depression.

On July 8th, the DC Office of Attorney General was provided the following list of apartment communities that have been found to be in violation of the DC Tenant Bill of Rights. A formal request by our coalition was made to conduct property wide inspections, as well as to suspend any pending evictions in these communities until such time that the violations at these properties were appropriately addressed. To date there has been no follow-up from this office identifying “enforcement” actions that would be taken. All of the communities listed below are predominantly occupied by low-income African American residents, and to date still remain in violation of the DC Tenant Bill of Rights.

1. Wingate - CIH Properties Inc.

- Infestation of rodents, roaches, and other pests.
- Mold
- Water leaks
- Peeling Paint
- Enhanced Crime to include "open-air" drug activity
- Inoperable washing machines & dryers
- Toxic management personnel
- No internal/external cameras or effective security deterrents.
- Questionable rent ledger amounts
- Inoperable A/C

2. Marbury Plaza - MP PPH LLC - Noble Realty Advisors

- Failed security measures.
- Inoperable external / no internal cameras or effective security deterrents
- Mold
- Water leaks
- Peeling paint
- Rodent infestation
- Enhanced crime to include automobile thefts, & robbery
- Squatters sleeping in the building and stairwell

3. Triangle View Senior Residences - E&G Group

- Atrocious, unhealthy carpeting (Decades old flooring that is beyond repair.)
- Mold
- Peeling paint
- Squatters sleeping in the building
- Rodent infestation
- Inoperable entrance doors
- No security
- No internal cameras or effective security deterrents
- Retaliatory management personnel
- Inoperable A/C conditions
- Inoperable fire system panels

- Enhanced crime to include automobile thefts
- Cruel & unjust treatment of seniors by management
- Ineffective emergency maintenance personnel
- Water leaks
- Laundry room fire hazard

4. Capitol Gateway Senior Residences - E&G Group

- No security
- No internal cameras or effective security deterrents
- Squatters sleeping in the building
- Inoperable fire system panels
- Mold
- Animals crawling in walls and ventilation system
- Rodent and flying insect infestation
- Enhanced crime to include unwarranted solicitors on property
- Garage door inoperable and accessible by the general public
- Restricted access to the resident "organizing/community" room
- Water leaks at window
- Inoperable appliances
- Faulty flooring and carpeting

5. Milestone Senior Residences - E&G Group

- No security
- Ineffective emergency maintenance personnel
- Ineffective senior support and management services
- Squatters sleeping in the building

6. Nash Place - E&G Group

- Rodent infestation
- Peeling paint
- Damaged ceilings and walls
- Ineffective emergency maintenance personnel

7. The Residences at St. Elizabeth's East - GCS-SIGAL - Flaherty & Collins Properties

- Sewage & rain flooding
- Lead pipes
- Inoperable windows
- Broken locks
- Rodent infestation
- Enhanced Crime to include car thefts, and robberies
- Toxic & retaliatory management personnel
- Questionable rent ledger amounts

8. Woodberry Village - The Capital Realty Group

- Rodent, bug, and flying insect infestation
- Safety issues
- Unsecured building entrances
- Enhanced Crime to include open air drug activity
- Inoperable A/C units
- Faulty wood flooring

A 2024 Systemic Snap Shot of Low Standards

Renowned drug addiction specialists, Dr. Edwin C. Chapman, a private practice physician in the District of Columbia writes the following, “based on the cumulative information and ongoing egregious behavior of our city’s health plans, I plan to file a formal grievance on **September 25, 2024** with the DC Board of Medicine illustrating how our United Care-Optum-Rx and AmeriHealth Caritas DC have contributed and continue to contribute to the deaths of our most vulnerable patients.”

In August 2024 the Ward 8 Councilmember, Trayon White was arrested by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for allegations of taking a bribe in lieu of fraudulently awarding \$5 million dollars’ worth of violence interruption contracts.

In July 2024 the current director of DC Housing Authority (DCHA), Mr. Keith Pettigrew cited internal turmoil, financial mismanagement, political interference, and conflicts of interest—not to mention the decrepit and, in some cases, dangerous living conditions in the public housing that it manages as existing problems within his agency, to also include having the attorney general, OIG, and the FBI on his back.

In June 2024 members of the Healthy DC & Me Leadership Coalition along with members from the community met with members of the OAG’s office to discuss the road forward, however to date we have not received the additional follow-up that was communicated would happen. Meanwhile communities on our watch continue to make the headlines for unhealthy living environments and landlords that are violating the rights of DC citizens.

[Residents at St. Elizabeths East complain of building issues - The Washington Informer](#)

In May 2024 – Healthy DC & Me Leadership Coalition oversaw the transition of an 81-year-old senior with health ailments from his 1 year stay in DC’s shelter system located in SE DC, to a home in NE DC. The reality of following the rules and adhering to DC’s systemic program requirements did not keep this elderly citizen from being exposed to increased levels of toxic stress, anxiety, and depression due to his original housing application being approved, and then lost by the system? Officials in the Mayor’s office could not provide sufficient oversight and thus he sat in a shelter with diabetes, Parkinson’s disease, and a determined will to live. The care provided to our marginalized and senior citizens in DC needs to be addressed with civil actions on behalf of the DC citizens who are forced to endure such mismanagement.

<https://youtu.be/YEOg4xEOZXA?si=kpnCIS7O1xx2JJbG>

In April 2024 CBS news reported on the “race-based” equation that delayed the diagnosis of organ failure and evaluation for a transplant, exacerbating other disparities that already make Black patients more at risk of needing a new kidney but less likely to get one.

DC’s Ward 7 exceeds the national projections for citizens with chronic kidney failure by approximately 44%. Currently citizens in DC are living under siege with dialysis centers intentionally operating in targeted low-income areas where “check cashing, liquor store, & carry-out food settings exist.

DC needs proactive measures in place that impede corporate and government affiliated relationships from fraudulently profiting off from the demise of DC’s underserved populations. Healthy DC

advisor Dr. Chapman writes, “I would like for us to have a meeting with Melissa Byrd, Medicaid Director and her medical director, Dr. Chimene Liburd. I believe compensation for the complexity (e.g. mental health issues and Social Determinants of Health) and risk in dealing with this patient population has been a major barrier to care. Healthy DC & Me Leadership Coalition is seeking proactive governmental solutions that will immediately address the unhealthy outcomes of our marginalized community members.

[How a biased test kept thousands of Black patients from getting a new kidney - CBS News](#)

In March 2024 – Former DC Interim Director of the Office of Unified Communications (OUC) speaks with the media regarding her allegations of agency mismanagement and DC leadership cover ups. Currently, DC’s OUC agency has been reported to be approximately 88% understaffed. District cameras have been reported to be non-functional. The rapid gunfire, and loss of babies, youth, and young adults in DC appear to occur daily. The mayor’s office has reported that crime rates in DC are down, however, the DC systems and reporting appear to be questionably non-transparent, to include the recent arrest of the Councilmember for Ward 8 for bribery. Matters of public safety remain of issue for residents of DC and especially those residing in Wards 7 & 8.

[Deeper look into allegations against DC mayor for 'covering up' problems at 911 \(wjla.com\)](#)

In February 2024 – The Washington Post wrote an article about companies embracing the benefits of DEI policies. Mayor Bowser established in 2021, the Office of Racial Equity, which focuses on developing an infrastructure to ensure policy decisions and District programs are evaluated through a racial equity lens; the office also carries forward the implementation of the Racial Equity Achieves Results “REACH Act” (D.C. Act 23-521). The Chief Equity Officer reports to the City Administrator is responsible for collaborating with District agencies, residents, and external stakeholders to make meaningful progress toward a more equitable city. (Copied from the Office of Racial Equity website.)

[Companies Continue to Embrace the Many Benefits of DEI Policies | Washington Post Jobs](#)

Why are Black, Low-Income Citizens, & Workers Under Attack in the Nation’s Capital?

Just recently Healthy DC & Me Leadership Coalition has been contacted by employees of the DC Circulator and the Unity Healthcare’s ongoing failed union contract negotiations.

Unity Healthcare DC worker wrote:

“I’d like to work with community members on the unjust and inhumane manner in which we had over 40 staff members laid off a week before a union vote. Mostly women, and Black and POC, were told day off they no longer had a job. No communication sent to rest of staff until we reached out about how poorly this is done. Statements by leadership made that this doesn’t impact providers or patient care made. Our hearts are breaking for our staff and our anger is rising for our community. We need to move and action now. Otherwise, it will just be another case of injustice that’s allowed to happen because people stayed silent.”

DC Circulator Workers are demanding accountability for the terminated 5-year DDOT contract that was awarded in October 2023.

Local 689 Union Rep wrote:

“Thanks so much for reaching out. I really appreciate you bringing this to me. I will say that unfortunately the Mayor and District Department of Transportation blindsided us with much of their recent actions. Although they told us that Circulator would be cut, we were assured that there would be a plan to transition Circulator workers over to WMATA and keep them whole. What we see now is that those claims were simply lies. Those same lies were also repeated to DC Council during the budget process, as they repeatedly assured lawmakers that there would be a transition and not a complete liquidation. To make matters worse, we were barely given even a few hours’ notice of the arbitrary decision to shut down service 3 months earlier than expected. In short, I will say that what has been done to our members at Circulator by DDOT and Mayor Bowser is outrageous and we will be fighting back. I share their frustration.

Namely, we just launched this week an action to have people write letters to DDOT and the Mayor, viewable here: <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/ddot-and-bowser-cut-out-the-games-with-circulator>. We are asking everyone and anyone to share far and wide. So far, we have gotten over 770 letters written and even more calls made. We are also working on plans to escalate further should this pressure not suffice. In sum, I hear the frustration and anger of my Union siblings at Circulator and want to mobilize to ensure that we hold those in powers' feet to the fire until they are made whole.”

<https://youtu.be/C-SWmX6qHKY?si=B25iy0EtMwwRcw8d>

In January 2024 – Healthy DC Leadership Coalition testified at the DC Council’s “DOB Rental Housing Code Inspection Process: Broken and In Need of Repair”, along with five apartment community representations. Healthy DC’s Dr Hamilton told both Mr. Mendelson and the Chairperson of the Housing Committee Robert White that DC citizens do not have the luxury of waiting for them to figure out what to do about the obvious failings of the system. To date DC citizens continue to live in communities with low standards and with violations to the DC Tenant Bill of Rights.

[Committee investigation reveals failings of housing code inspection \(streetsensemedia.org\)](https://streetsensemedia.org)



Community “Oversight” Manifesto

Legislative Framework

Civil, Equity, Ancestral, Safe, Environmental Act! (C.E.A.S.E. Act!)

Formal Request - Immediate Roundtable Review/Co-sponsored Legislative Support.



I. Housing Justice – Washington, D.C. citizens deserve access to clean, safe, and affordable housing.

The H.E.A.R.T. Act (Housing Equity Advance Repair Tax) proposed legislation was formally submitted to all members of the DC Council in November 2023. It has since been submitted to the DC Office of Attorney General, along with members of the press.

Federally “subsidized” constituents residing in public, and “non-public” housing settings, are living with “elongated” periods of exposure to rodents and their feces, mold, mildew, lead base paint, and or asbestos. Additionally, many have “no heat” in the winter, “falling” ceilings, bed bug and insect infestations, electrical hazards, ADA violations, leaking pipes, and egregious safety violations.

<https://streetsensemedia.org/article/tenants-say-landlords-dont-play-by-the-rules-heres-how-advocates-want-d-c-to-make-them/>

[The H.E.A.R.T. Act – Healthy DC & Me \(healthydcandme.org\)](http://healthydcandme.org)

- Passage of The HEART Act is requested.
- There needs to be a regulated rental rate scheme (with maximums, as to not promote rate collusion).
- Increased Inclusionary zoning regiment (definition: The Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) Program requires that most new (and some renovated) residential developments include some affordable homes. IZ homes are apartments for rent or condos/townhomes for sale.
- Set mandatory “Zero Homeless” goals.
- Concerted plan and effort to eliminate the subsidized housing “waiting list”.
- Create legislation to turn multi-cited property owner’s “neglected” properties over to the occupants (akin to a TOPA provision).
- Office of Attorney General and failed tenant advocate processes keep “scores” of DC subsidized tenants and seniors emotionally and psychologically distressed by “cherry picking” which “slumlords” to legally pursue, while allowing their victims to fall prey to continued “slumlord” housing code violations and “evictions” without recourse for the myriad of “imposed” civil and social justice violations.
- Inadequate, failed, and questionable leadership of the “Social Justice” section, Public Advocacy Division of the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia.
- DC constituents living in (non-public) housing settings are not satisfied with DC’s Office of Attorney General, DC Councilmember Housing Committees, Mayor’s Administration, and DC Housing Agency’s lack of transparent, and accountable governing, which has contributed to “lopsided” housing program funding allocations, and negligent oversight of Federal government monies, to include the Covid-19 “Stay DC” funding. Many constituents have “cried” foul regarding HUD monies that seem unaccounted for, housing and inhumane code violations that are not prosecuted, and for unacceptable, low standards of living that are financed by HUD.
- DC housing tenants living with inhumane, and failed safety housing conditions are stuck trying to navigate “TOPA” and “Bankruptcy” filings involving “slumlords”, and “imposed” receivership circumstances, without proper representations from city officials or agency accountability, and direction, and lacking the necessary money to retain proper legal assistance.
- “Homeless” encampment constituents are being “bullied” by members of the mayor’s office and left without adequate housing choices after being promised housing placements. They are left to stay in unsafe District managed shelter settings, have been sleeping at bus stops, in cars, under bridges, and in makeshift “doorway” havens, while “case management” representatives, and providers serve as social security “payee” to these “unhoused” citizens, with little or no oversight, or accountability.

- District families who depend on federal subsidies to sustain their families and well-being are being “robbed”. District housing agencies have been observed participating in the fraudulent sale of housing vouchers meant for District low-income, homeless, and marginalized families, to members of the general public.
- Eliminate “forced compliance” negotiations for District landlords in violation of the DC Tenant Bill of Rights and the SAFE Regulation Amendment Act.

II. Economic Divide

- Remove barriers to employment (i.e., credit prerequisites, prior minor misdemeanor convictions, etc.).
- Audit and corrective action on the implementation of The First Source Act.
- Eliminate taxes on tipped wages.
- End the concept of “forced compliance” regarding offending employers; employ a “Two Strikes and You’re Out” policy in offending the Wage Theft Prevention Act.
- Require solid/reachable addresses of employers; rescind licenses of employers using “obscured” addresses.
- According to D.C. Policy Center, in 2023 Black residents made up 67 percent of the unemployed and a little more than 80 percent of the long-term unemployed, which is associated with lower earnings in addition to diminished mental health and personal well-being.
- DC Fiscal Policy Institute reports that barriers such as housing instability, identifying as transgender, parenting, lack of mentorship, justice system involvement, mental health struggles, disability, and workplace discrimination as contributory factors to DC’s young Black workers’ struggle to get and keep employment.
- All students need 1) a skilled trade by graduation that translates to current job market needs or 2) college readiness. DC has heavily relied on outside labor to the detriment of DC residents.
- DC housing prices are at an all-time high, hindering district potential homeowners’ ability to compete with investors who have the ability to entice sellers with higher bids, and cash offers.
- Transparent and accountable budget cuts, in addition to proper oversight of private-sector unions for fraud, corruption, and embezzlement.
- Place District citizen needs above developer financial gains.

III. Public Safety

- Disband limited immunity for government officials, to include law enforcement personnel regarding accountability for violating DC citizens’ and workers’ constitutional rights.
- Implementation of an effective mental health community-based Mental Health Assistor and psychosocial support system to help individuals and communities to heal

- psychological wounds and rebuild social structures after an emergency or a critical event(s).
- Mandatory integration of mental health trained professionals for applicable 911 community emergency, police officer dispatched calls; remove law enforcement personnel's authorization and interventions to act as sole mental health oversight or responder while participating in an active-duty mental health related circumstance.
 - Mandatory investigation, accountability hearings, and legal enforcement for police officer related killings of persons with mental health identified distress or diagnosis.
 - Implement parental liability for criminal teen/youth offenders.
 - Implement school safety officers and mental health advocates at all District schools.
 - Criminal code enhancements for carjacking.
 - Mandatory enforcement of DC's SAFE Regulation Amendment Act for District rental property owners found to be in violation.

IV. Mental Health/Healthcare Outcomes – DC Citizens along with their advocates are requesting a formal meeting with applicable legislative members of the DC Council, Office of Attorney General, and Senior members of the DC Medicaid and Medicare offices to discuss a “healthier” plan for DC citizens void of the imposition of trauma and low healthcare standards that are being administered in the District of Columbia. We are seeking the implementation of community level oversights within DC government's care models. The current care models are gravely failing many DC citizens daily.

<https://www.mimotherskeeper.com/m-i-s-5-part-community-plan/>

[Dialysis Resilience Hub – Healthy DC & Me \(healthycandme.org\)](https://www.healthycandme.org/)

- Veterans, return citizens, and marginalized community member “mental health” service allocations, and lack of oversight leaves many DC citizens living in the street, in their cars, buying and using “addictive” street drugs purchased at one of many DC “open air” drug markets, and committing “unspeakable” crimes to support their habits, while in many cases being assigned to a DC “case managed” federally funded program and without a stable living environment or accountable means of access to rehabilitation.
- DC mental health, federally subsidized constituents are prematurely discharged from “crisis” management programs and left to navigate housing processes on the community level without properly allocated resources that place them in danger, as well as the community around them.
- DC mental health, federally subsidized constituents being cared for in “assisted living” “person centered” care models are placed in harm's way by providers who are instructed to simply “document” a citizen who is knowingly off their “meds” without proper interventions, or oversights to avoid allowing the individual to become a “danger” to themselves or others. These individuals are labeled as “unstable” and eventually are deemed unfit for the designated program.

- DC Department of Behavioral Health was reported to have “empty” drug rehabilitation “beds” during the city’s “opioid”, and “fentanyl” crisis, and after being cited for its documented failure of its use of federally allocated drug treatment program monies.
- DC's black youth face significant disparities in accessing mental health services. These disparities are multifaceted, including limited availability of culturally sensitive services, inadequate funding, and a lack of proper outreach programs. The absence of adequate care and support increases the risk of untreated mental health conditions, leading to negative outcomes such as academic struggles, involvement in the criminal justice system, and a higher likelihood of substance abuse.” This places DC federally funded endeavors “at risk” of the ongoing crime and continued misuse of federal dollars meant for the proper rehabilitative, preventative, and healthy transformation of District youth.
- Federally funded, and co-sponsored District program contracts have been awarded to “failing” District vendors without proper oversight. This has placed District citizens in unhealthy, life-threatening environments without proper systems of accountability, and dignifying recourse.
- DC, like many other major metropolitan centers has seen a dramatic increase in homelessness (12%) —> increase in open air drug markets —> disorganized homeless encampments —> and increase in associated overdose deaths (~ 30%). Proposed solutions submitted by Dr. Edwin C. Chapman, (1) Immediately implement the U of Buffalo “MATTERS” (Medication Assisted Treatment Electronic Records System) to register and track opioid treatment outcomes including the Social Determinants of Health; (2) Expansion of the Howard University College of Pharmacy Genomic Database for buprenorphine treatment to include data from (A) the DC CME and (B) a subset of our surviving patients who test positive every week for fentanyl (+/- cocaine +/- amphetamines +/- xylazine) without overdosing; and (3) REMOVE payment for Medicaid MCOs and Medicare Advantage plans and the failed CMS E&M System —> to be REPLACED by a “Carveout” (direct payment) to a dedicated network of MOUD Providers-Pharmacies-Peers-Social Workers who actually care about these patients.
- Overhaul/Reform of Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) existent Core Service model.

V. DC Government & Program Funding Allocation Audits

- Amend DC’s current internal audit policy for District agencies to “mandatory bi-annual audits, and quarterly when significant changes occur” within the current year of operation, as opposed to the current listed protocol of “at least once a year.
- Independent audit review policy to be amended to occur bi-monthly during the current year of operation.
- The District of Columbia audits of the government’s accounts and operations should occur bi-annually during the current year of operation.
- Performance audits should be amended to occur bi-annually during the current year of operation.

- OIG annual DCHA inspections and audits should be amended to occur bi-annually during the current year of operation, and provide applicable reports.
- There should be no exceptions to these audit amendments.
- All grant funding allocations must be done via transparent, arm’s length protocols with mandatory fraud, waste, and abuse guidelines along with designated 3rd party certified grantee authorizations conducted prior to each grant funding cycle.
- Waive FOIA requirements and provide requested non-protected information without charge to citizen representatives of citizens residing in rental properties that are in violation of the DC Tenant Rights Act, or SAFE Regulation Amendment Act.
- All DC Council committees are to be audited annually to assess proper community impact, oversight, and access for DC citizens across all economic and ethnic backgrounds.
- All DC government agencies’ “DEI” protocols and procedures are to be reviewed quarterly to assess compliant and effective outcomes.

In closing, District citizens are requesting relief from the overwhelming presence of fraud, waste, and abuse that continues to harm as well as hinder their ability to survive and “escape” the current mismanagement of DC government agencies, policies, budgets, and lack of proper enforcements that have proven to also be detrimental to their right to healthy living, working, economic, safety, and educational outcomes.

All members of the DC Council, Office of Attorney General, and the DC Mayor acknowledge receipt of this manifesto as a formal request on behalf of District citizens who are seeking a transparent, transformative and equitable driven governing body, that is inclusive of citizen input and publicly informed roundtable discussions to begin no later than 30 days from its formal deliverance date of Tuesday, September 3, 2024.

The C.E.A.S.E. Act roundtables will be attended by members of the Healthy DC & Me Leadership coalition of advocates on behalf of DC citizens and designated members of the DC Council appointed by the DC Council Chairperson, along with representatives from the DC Office of Attorney General.

Signed by the citizens of DC, their advocates, and supporters.

True and original copy delivered by,

Dr. Rhonda L. Hamilton,
 President
 Healthy DC & Me Leadership Coalition

Perry Redd,
 Executive Director
 Sincere Seven

Cc: All members of the DC Council,
 DC Office of Attorney General,
 Office of the Mayor.