

Christine Miller
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
Tuesday, February 27th, 2024

Thank you, Chairperson Pinto and committee members, for your work and continued leadership in our communities and the city. I appreciate you taking the time to hear my testimony today.

My name is Christine Miller; I'm a longtime PAVE parent leader and Community Chair of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A's Committee on Education, Youth, and Family, which serves the residents of Columbia Heights. Over the past year, my committee has conducted numerous community engagement events with local partners, including PAVE, community based organizations (CBOs), and our schools. These events were designed to reach residents in our neighborhood and across Ward 1, including simultaneous translation for Spanish speakers. These engagements have provided invaluable feedback from our community members, guiding advocacy efforts to improve the education system and safety for our students.

ANC 1A represents Columbia Heights, a neighborhood that has seen a 39% increase in violent crimes in the past three years. In the middle of this is the Columbia Heights Education Campus. Because of the continuing violence, our 14th Street Corridor has been a Safe Passage Priority Area since the initiative began in 2017. Recognizing these ongoing challenges, we strive to create a safer environment for students that will reduce the risk and improve the quality of life. Ensuring funding in these areas allows for better service and increased community safety. With the transfer of Safe Passages to the Deputy Mayor of Public Safety and Justice, we look forward to building on existing strategies and finding new and innovative ways to be proactive in keeping our young people safe.

In a recent conversation with Deputy Mayor Appiah, she used the phrase "safety ecosystem." This concept underscores the importance of a holistic approach to safeguarding the well-being of our community, particularly its youth. Embracing this vision entails providing comprehensive care and ensuring that initiatives like the Safe Passage Program engage diverse groups directly impacted by violence and crime. This allows us to develop and implement safety measures and support services tailored to our neighborhoods, building a sense of ownership and collective responsibility.

To this end, I ask that the Council ensures the Safe Passage program has **resources dedicated to improved communication with all residents and greater coordination between schools and agencies:** The safety of our students necessitates a whole government *and* a whole community approach. Further, this must be done in strategic partnership with those who work most closely with our students daily - school staff and teachers.

Successful implementation requires thoughtful consideration of key stakeholders and engagement with trusted community partners. It will require continuous community outreach and education for residents, schools, and families and must include resources in a language accessible to the layperson and our NEP/LEP communities. This strategy should include dedicated funding to develop that shared vision for community safety.

I have attached resolutions voted on at publicly noticed meetings and passed unanimously by Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A.

- On February 9th, 2022, [Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A voted unanimously at a publicly noticed meeting to support B24-066, the Safe Passage to School Expansion Act](#)

[of 2021, to improve the overall safety of students across the District.](#)

- On November 8, 2023, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A voted unanimously at a publicly noticed meeting on [LTR23-0018, Letter to Lindsey Appiah, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, Concerning Implementation of Safe Passages and Safe Streets for Students Amendment Act of 2022 for Public Safety and Justice.](#)

Thank you for your attention and consideration.



SMD 1A01 – Layla Bonnot SMD 1A02 – Dieter Lehmann Morales SMD 1A03 – Vacant SMD 1A04 – Chris Hall SMD 1A05 – Christine Miller SMD 1A06 – Brandolon Barnett SMD 1A07 – Mukta Ghorpadey SMD 1A08 – Kent C. Boese SMD 1A09 – Michael Wray SMD 1A10 – Rashida Brown SMD 1A11 – Dotti Love Wade SMD 1A12 – Vacant

Commissioner Christine Miller
ANC 1A05

Resolution Supporting B24-0566 , “ Walk Without Worry Amendment Act”, and B 24-565 , “ Safe Routes to School Expansion Regulation Act”

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2021, 2021 Bill 24-565, “Safe Routes to School Expansion Regulation Act” was introduced by Councilmembers Lewis George, Cheh, Pinto, Bonds, Allen, Henderson, Nadeau, McDuffie, Silverman, Gray, R. White, T. White, and Chairman Mendelson to enhance public school safety infrastructure and enforcement, expand school zones, reduce speed limits and provide additional traffic calming measures within a quarter mile of both DC Public Schools (DCPS) and DC Public Charter Schools (DCPS) along with improved data collection, internal reporting, traffic safety investigations and crossing guard deployment;

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2021 Bill B24-0566, “Walk Without Worry Amendment Act”, was introduced by Councilmembers Nadeau, R. White, Pinto, Allen, Cheh, Silverman, Gray, Henderson, Bonds, Lewis George, McDuffie, and Chairman Mendelson to require the Department of Transportation to define the standards on the installation of continuous sidewalks, raised crosswalks, and raised intersections and to incorporate those into contracts for paving or resurfacing of streets and sidewalks;

WHEREAS, ANC 1A has continued to support efforts to implement infrastructure that improves pedestrian, rider and bicycle safety within ANC 1A, and has urged DDOT to improve traffic calming measures throughout Columbia Heights and Park View;

WHEREAS, ANC 1A promotes transportation action that is proactive and prioritizes the mobility and safety of pedestrians over vehicles;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT: ANC 1A strongly supports proposed Bills B24-565 and B24-566, and thanks councilmembers for their work in addressing the epidemic of traffic violence in Washington, DC;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: ANC 1A requests that language be added to Bill B24-0566, “Walk

Without Worry Amendment Act”, to create a pathway for the prioritization of intersections as well as mechanisms to ensure that intersections identified as high-hazard Advisory

Neighborhood Commission 1A
3400 11th Street NW #200
Washington, DC 20010

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intersections, and that may have been recently repaved, should not be disqualified as candidates for these safety upgrades.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: ANC 1A requests continuous community outreach and education for local residents in language that is accessible to ensure understanding of long-term plans and potential neighborhood impacts and benefits on Bills B24-565 and B24-566.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: ANC 1A fully expects the DC Council to hold DDOT accountable for the efficient and equitable implementation of traffic calming measures outlined in these two Acts.

AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT: The Chair of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A, or any member of the Executive Committee or designee in their absence, shall be authorized to communicate this resolution to the members of the Council of the District of Columbia and all governmental agencies.



VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

November 8, 2023

Lindsey Appiah, Deputy Mayor
Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 533
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request for Safe Passage

Dear Deputy Mayor Appiah,

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A (“ANC 1A”) serves a diverse community with many families across a range of income levels and needs. Our commission recognizes the value of investing in robust programming and providing opportunities to support our residents, especially when we ensure that these serve their unique needs. Throughout the past year, ANC 1A’s Committee on Education, Youth, and Family held a series of community engagement events in partnership with local partners and targeted at residents across Ward 1, all with simultaneous translation to accommodate Spanish speakers.¹ The following requests reflect these

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conversations and highlight key areas of improvement identified by those we serve.

ANC 1A represents Columbia Heights, one of the city’s most densely populated areas in the city that includes the Columbia Heights Education Campus, which is identified as part of the SY 2023-2024 Safe Passage Priority Area. On February 9th, 2022, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A voted unanimously at a publicly noticed meeting to support B24-066, the *Safe Passage to School Expansion Act of 2021*, with the goal of improving the overall safety of students across the District. In the past two years, our students have continued to struggle with increases in violent crimes with a gun.^[2] ANC 1A looks towards your agency to set out strategies that will ensure action that is proactive steps toward keeping our young people safe.

¹ <https://www.dchealthmatters.org/demographicdata?id=131488§ionId=935>

As you work to draft your FY2025 budget submissions to submit to the Office of Budget and Planning, ANC 1A requests the following priorities for the city’s young people, families, and communities:

- **Funding for implementing a Safe Streets for Students Master Plan** as required by the *Safe Streets for Students Amendment Act of 2022*. This critical initiative holds the potential to significantly enhance the safety and well-being of students in our community, and we are seeking your support to make it a reality. The *Safe Streets for Students Amendment Act of 2022* represents a vital step forward in our commitment to ensuring the safety of our students while traveling to and from school. The Master Plan, as outlined in the legislation, will serve as a comprehensive blueprint to address safety concerns and create a more secure environment for our students and their families.
- **Resources dedicated to improved communication with all residents and greater coordination between schools and agencies:** As noted in Deputy Mayor Paul

Kihn in his FY23 Budget Oversight Hearing, there is a need to increase [meaningful coordination and collaboration across government, non-profit, and employer organizations and to engage with the community](#). The Safety of our students necessitates a whole government and a whole community approach that must be done in strategic partnership with those who work most closely with our students daily - school staff and teachers. cross-agency or other strategic plan or similar collaborative planning document focused on safe passage.

Successful implementation requires thoughtful consideration of key stakeholders and engagement with trusted community partners. This strategy should include dedicated resources to work with residents and families to develop a shared vision for community safety (including shared passage) and to facilitate communication of proposed changes to infrastructure, streetscapes, or other facilities that contribute to that shared vision in the longer term. Success requires continuous community outreach and education for residents, schools, and families, and must include resources in a language accessible to the layperson and our NEP/LEP communities.

ANC 1A requests that these initiatives receive the investments required to implement this Act with fidelity. A safer environment for students will not only reduce the risk of accidents but also promote active transportation and a sense of security for families, leading to an overall improvement in the quality of life in our district. Ensuring funding in these areas allows for better service and increased community safety. We look forward to working with you to



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ensure we bring the resources into those spaces where we see the need and direct benefit to residents.

Sincerely,

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to be "Christine Miller", written in a cursive style.

Christine Miller
Community Chair, Committee on Education, Youth, and Family
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A

Cc: Deputy Mayor Paul Kihn, DME
Interim Director Sharon Kershbaum, DDOT
The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Brianne K. Nadeau, Ward 1 Councilmember

Certification:

On November 8th, 2023, at a properly noticed public meeting and with a quorum of Commissioners present, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A voted to adopt this letter and direct its transmittal to the addressed agency. YEAS 8, NAYS 0, AND ABSTENTIONS 0. Christine Miller, Chair of ANC 1A's Education, Youth, and Family Committee is authorized to communicate these actions to and testify before any agency of the Government of the District of Columbia or the members of the Council of the District of Columbia.



Dieter Lehmann Morales
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A

Anthony Thomas-Davis
Secretary, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A