



WARD 4  
**MURIEL**  
BOWSER COUNCILMEMBER

**FOCUS ON**



*February 4, 2009*

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**Dear Neighbors,**

I am happy to report that President Obama's stimulus bill, which has been approved by the U.S. House of Representatives and is currently under consideration by the Senate, contains substantial funding for the District of Columbia for transportation projects, education, and clean water.

Specifically, for transportation, the package includes \$110 million for public transit funding, \$124.5 million for highways and bridges development and repairs in the District, which can be used for two priority projects, the South Capitol Street Bridge near the Nationals Ballpark and the 11th Street Bridge, and \$275 million for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). For education, the District stands to gain \$48.1 million for school modernization, \$19.3 million for special education, and \$47.5 million in Title I funding for disadvantaged children. For clean water, the bill contains \$28 million for the District in the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which will fund projects that will help to fix the combined sewer overflow that dumps waste into the Anacostia River.

I am also pleased to report that the District received its 12th consecutive balanced budget and clean audit. On Monday, the District's Chief Financial Officer released the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the 2008 fiscal year. The audit reported that the general fund has an \$87 million balance of unreserved funds, which together with the \$46 million the Council set aside in November, will be sufficient to balance the District's 2009 fiscal year budget. As states across the country struggle to balance their budgets, I believe that the Council has done great work to prepare the District to weather this economic storm better than most.

*Muriel*



## Legislative Corner

Here are some highlights from Tuesday's legislative session.

At the Council of the District of Columbia's second legislative session, Councilmember Bowser introduced two bills, which were both referred to the Committee that she now chairs. The first bill, "The Mortgage Lender and Broker Amendment Act of 2009," is a permanent version of legislation that the Council of the District of Columbia enacted in December on an emergency basis. This legislation will ensure that the District remains in compliance with Title V of the Federal Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA). Title V of HERA requires that all states and the District's mortgage regulators become members of the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System (NMLS), which will ensure that when District residents apply for a mortgage, they are working with brokers that follow a national standard. This measure was co-sponsored by Councilmembers Marion Barry, Jack Evans, David Catania, Mary Cheh and Yvette Alexander. The second bill, "The Demolition or Raze Permit Community Notification Amendment Act of 2009," would require that 30 days prior to the demolition of a structure in the District of Columbia, the owner would post notice on the exterior of the property stating that the structure will be demolished. The notice must be in place 30 days before any demolition could take place and should be visible from the street 30 days prior to demolition. This measure was co-sponsored by councilmembers Marion Barry, Jack Evans, David Catania, Kwame Brown, Mary Cheh, Harry Thomas and Michael Brown.

The Council also unanimously passed emergency legislation that would require motorists to clean snow and ice from their vehicles prior to driving. The measure is intended to make our roads and streets safer during and after winter storms. As an emergency bill, its provisions are only good for 90 days, which should take us through the remainder of this winter. The introduced version of the bill included a fine for those motorists not in compliance, but after a lengthy debate, the provision for a fine was changed to a warning. It is likely that the Committee on Public Works and Transportation, which Councilmember Bowser sits on, will take this issue up later in the spring.

## Around the Ward!

Councilmember Bowser attended the Lamond Riggs Athletic Association's 2007-2008 awards banquet on Saturday, January 31. The awards banquet was held at our recently opened Riggs-LaSalle community recreation center. Councilmember Bowser encouraged young players and their families, charging them with keeping their eye on the prize and congratulating them on a successful year and many more to come. She also greeted the players and dozens of friends and family members who were in attendance at Saturday's awards banquet.

Councilmember Bowser also attended the grand opening of the Davis Center school of Dance located at 6218 3rd Street NW. "The Davis Center is breathing life into this small business corridor," said Councilmember Bowser. She brought congratulatory remarks to nearly 65 students, parents, Ward 4 residents, and local business owners. She also enjoyed performances by the students and toured the facility with friends and Ward 4 residents. Since 1969, the Davis Center has provided dance instruction and related arts education to Washington metropolitan area residents of all ages and varied backgrounds. Using dance and music as tools, the Davis Center aims to instill in its students an enduring appreciation for the arts while at the same time helping them to develop perseverance, self-confidence, respect for others and the ability to work as a team. For information about the Davis Center visit, [www.thedaviscenter.net](http://www.thedaviscenter.net) or call 202-545-8008.

On Monday, February 2, 2009, Councilmember Bowser along with Mayor Adrian Fenty gave remarks at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Spanish Education Center SED located at 4110 Kansas Avenue NW. This new Center features an industrial grade kitchen to provide students two hot meals a day; a sunlit reception space to greet students as they arrive to school, three distinct teaching venues for infants, children and adults; and a community activity and multi-purpose area. The new center can increase current capacity from 88 to 120 children and introduce infant care for up to 40 newborns, plus expand programs for continuing adult education in a dedicated space. "We want to be a ward that attracts growing families," said Councilmember Bowser. "The SED Center is a much needed addition to a growing Petworth."

## Free Tax Filing

The DC Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign (DC EITC) is offering free tax filing for individuals earning less than \$22,000 or