



**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
SUITE 110
WASHINGTON, DC 20004**

Muriel E. Bowser
Ward 4, Councilmember
Chair, Government Operations

Committee Member

- Finance and Revenue
- Public Safety and Judiciary
- Public Services and Consumer Affairs
- Environment, Public Works and Transportation

January 6, 2012

Ms. Deborah Nichols
Chairperson, Board of Elections and Ethics
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 250 North
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Ms. Nichols,

As you know, today Councilmember Harry Thomas Jr. resigned his office. Holding the special election to fill the vacated seat at the same time as the April 3rd primary election has the dual benefit of ensuring the smallest gap in representation of the residents of Ward 5 and a represents a potential cost savings. We ask that the Board provide an analysis of the practical and legal difficulties of scheduling the special election for April 3, 2012 and available solutions.

Further, on December 20, 2011, the Council approved the "Board of Ethics and Government Accountability Establishment and Comprehensive Ethics Reform Emergency Amendment Act of 2011". Among other things, that measure contemplates two amendments to the Home Rule Charter, which are intended to be considered as separate and distinct referendums. However, it has come to our attention that the rule governing the referendum process—although not the Charter itself—may require the Board to treat the two amendments as one.

The Committee would be grateful if the Board could interpret the relevant law and rules with respect to the treatment of these two amendments. If it decides that it must treat the two amendments as one, we respectfully request the promulgation of emergency regulations that would effectuate legislative intent.

Lastly, would your office please confirm whether the Charter amendments will appear on the ballot of the April 3, 2012 primary election?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Muriel Bowser".

Muriel Bowser
Ward 4 Councilmember
Chairman, Committee on Government Operations