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Councilmember Bowser joined Mayor Gray, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and neighbors in June for the dedication of world-renowned artist Sam Gilliam's new mural in Takoma.



FROM THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER MURIEL BOWSER

**FOCUS ON 4**  
WARD 4 MID-YEAR REPORT



Friends,

It is a pleasure to update you on the progress we are making in Ward 4 and important achievements of the Council this year. In what has been a difficult budget year, I was able to protect operating and capital funding for important Ward 4 projects, push budget solutions, introduce important consumer protections and other solutions that can enhance the quality of life we enjoy in the District of Columbia.

As the **Chair of the Committee on Libraries, Parks and Recreation**, we gained valuable experience touring every ward and really came to better understand how to support and maintain our great facilities and staff. We're so proud to have joined with neighbors and the Friends of 16th Street Heights Parks to open the new Upshur playground in June; the new Shepherd Playground and Field in September; and the ground breaking for the new Raymond Recreation Center this fall.

This summer I was offered a new oversight role on the Council and was appointed by colleagues to Chair the Council's Committee on **Government Operations** and to represent the Council on Metro's Board of Directors. I am excited to dive into the work of the new committee with the opportunity to refocus on a citizen-oriented, ethical government. The Committee on Government Operations is responsible for matters relating to 21 District entities, including the Executive Office of the Mayor, Office of the City Administrator, Department of Human Resources, DC Board of Elections and Ethics, Office of the Inspector General, Office of the Chief Technology Officer, and the Office of Contracting and Procurement.

As a new Metro Board member, I look forward to bringing my regional transportation experience to bear on pressing issues facing our ward, city, and the region. I'll be focused on Metro's fiscal stability, improving the customer experience on bus and rail, increasing Metro's capacity by way of expanded bus opportunities, and replacing outdated bus facilities—all important to Ward 4 residents. I am so proud, for example, to have worked with my colleagues to save Metro's E6 Bus route from the chopping block this year. Buses connect people to jobs, shopping, and each other.

We learned this year what most of us knew already, Ward 4 is growing. Census figures show that we've gained population and become more diverse. With improving schools, safer streets, and excellent public facilities, families continue to stay and to choose our neighborhoods. The Council approved new Ward boundaries for the City in July; there was only a technical change to our boundaries affecting a small sliver of parkland. Though pleased that our boundaries are substantially unchanged, I was unable to support the final plan because of a gross inequity between the largest ward and the smallest one (Ward 4's population is almost exactly average). I also appointed the ANC redistricting task force this summer, which will make any recommendation for Single Member District changes to the Council in October.

We'll stay focused on our important legislative and oversight work here at the Council, and on delivering important projects and services to Ward 4. I look forward to seeing you in the community.

Warmest Regards,



Clients and staff help cut the ribbon at Mary's Center's new Ward 4 home on Georgia Avenue.

# 4 FOCUS ON FOUR MID-YEAR REPORT

## LEGISLATIVE SOLUTIONS

In just the last nine months, Councilmember Bowser has introduced or had passed a number of measures that she hopes will improve our quality of life. Below is a sampling.

The **Electric Company Extreme Weather Outage Reimbursement Amendment Act of 2011** would require electric companies (such as PEPCO) to reimburse residential electric customers the cost of reasonable hotel accommodations when the electricity supply has been continuously disrupted for a period of 24 hours during which time the official temperature for the District of Columbia reported by the National Weather Service is at or below 32 degrees or is at or above 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

Along with Chairman Brown, Councilmember Bowser introduced the **Petworth Safeway Alley Closing Improvement Act of 2011** to close a small portion of the alley that currently runs behind the existing Safeway store at Georgia Avenue and Randolph Street NW in order that the new store can be developed. The proposal promises a top-quality grocery store and new housing.

The **Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children 29 Establishment Act of 2011** will allow for the uniform treatment of military children transferring between school districts in the various states and the District of Columbia. It's not always easy for anyone to change school districts, but it's even harder for our military families who move from town to town, and school to school so frequently. This bill would create an agreement between participating states to ease the various filing, prerequisite, and enrollment requirements.

The **Public Notice of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions Resolutions Act of 2011** would require that resolutions adopted by Advisory Neighborhood Commissions be forwarded to the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions and to the Secretary of the Council, and to require the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions to keep a publicly accessible file of all adopted resolutions pertaining to legislation.

Two bills focusing on our parks, recreation centers and libraries were introduced and enacted into law:

The **Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Revenue Generation Amendment Act of 2011** permits DPR to contract for, pursuant to all applicable contracting and procurement guidelines, advertisements and sponsorship for recreation centers, fields, pools, and play courts within the Department's inventory. This measure will help offset recent budget and staffing reductions. The law requires a robust set of rules to govern the practice while allowing DPR to enter into beneficial advertising and partnership agreements. Ads for tobacco or alcohol will be forbidden.

The **Department of Parks and Recreation Friends Group Fundraising Amendment Act of 2011** will permit "Friends" groups to host fundraisers on DPR property and expend those funds for upgrades and maintenance of their adopted parks. Under current law, Friends groups can raise money on park property, but not control how it is spent, a barrier that has chilled efforts by Ward 4 Friends groups to contribute to the upkeep and improvement of our facilities. The idea for this legislation was initiated by the President of the Friends of Takoma Park, Gina Douglas, who, along with her counterparts in the Friends of 16th Street Heights Parks among others, have championed our parks system and sought ways to protect and preserve our open spaces.

The **Bullying and Intimidation Prevention Act of 2011** will establish policies to prevent bullying within District of Columbia Public Schools, District of Columbia Public Charter Schools, the Department of Parks and Recreation, District of Columbia Public Library, and the University of the District of Columbia. Bullying reduces morale, causes physical harm, and can be emotionally scarring. In some cases, targets of bullying shy away from school and extracurricular activities dampening their development. The bill seeks to curtail this epidemic by establishing bullying prevention programs and centralizing enforcement at those agencies that interact with our youth most frequently.

The **Unfair Insurance Claim Settlement Practices Enhancement Amendment Act of 2011** will enhance the authority of government to bring enforcement actions against insurance companies for single act violations of the unfair insurance trade practices provisions. Without this bill, insurance companies can be penalized only if a pattern of violations is found. The bill would also increase the penalties associated with violations of the unfair insurance trade practices laws.



Peter Robinson is honored on the occasion of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and for a lifetime of dedication to the District of Columbia.



Pictured at 13th Street and Missouri Avenue NW with Ward 4 State Board of Education Member D. Kamili Anderson and Carter Baron East Neighborhood Association President Sean Wieland is Councilmember Bowser who with residents and staff urged motorists to slow down on students first day back to school after the summer break.

## REVITALIZING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND SCHOOLS

We continue our commitment to funding **Clean and Safe Teams** on Kennedy Street and Georgia Avenue. With the support of her colleagues, city-wide funding was secured in the FY 2012 budget of \$1.8 million to save these valuable programs. On top of that, \$750,000 was secured to begin implementing streetscape improvements as part of the Kennedy Street Revitalization Plan.

Councilmember Bowser has backed millions of dollars in local and federal funding to replace what was once vacant and blighted with quality and preserved housing. **Affordable housing units** continue coming onto the market. **3Tree Flats** at Georgia Avenue and Randolph Street opened this year with 119 units of affordable rental housing. In addition, on the ground floor of this building, affordable health care and adult education services are now provided by the renowned **Mary's Center**. The **Fort View Apartments** located in Brightwood boasts 62 units of affordable housing and **Webster Gardens** in Petworth welcomes 52 units of affordable housing for Ward 4 residents.

The **14th Street Revitalization Strategy** work which was spearheaded by Councilmember Bowser is now complete. After almost a year of work with residents and businesses along the 14th Street corridor from Spring Road to Longfellow Street NW, the Planning Office is drafting a small area plan to submit to the Council. Upon Council approval, this plan will allow for investments by the city and to leverage private investment in the corridor.

Towards the end of last winter, Councilmember Bowser joined Mayor Gray, Congresswoman Norton, Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development Victor Hoskins and other District officials to announce the **new federal surplus boundaries for the Walter Reed site**. In four short years and after much negotiation, we've gone from having no part of the Walter Reed Medical Center site to having access to more than half of the campus and the **entire Georgia Avenue frontage**. This project will be a major economic driver that will revitalize the corridor with quality housing, retail and green space.

Councilmember Bowser works with Chief Cathy Lanier, and our local commanders Kimberly Missouri and Michael Reese, as the **safety of Ward 4 residents remains a priority**. She sought and received the support of her Council colleagues to appropriate \$750,000 in the FY 2012 budget to fund the **lighting of Sherman Circle, NW** – site of a tragic murder last summer. Councilmember Bowser is coordinating the work at Sherman Circle with Congresswoman Norton, the National Park Service and DDOT. Coming up this fall, the Council continues its discussion on a proposal to alter the city's Police District boundaries. As always, we'll work to make sure the needs of Ward 4 are represented in any decision making.

Working with Councilmember Cheh and her colleagues, Councilmember Bowser fought successfully to save **Metro's E6** bus line which connects Chevy Chase to the Friendship Heights Metro. This vital bus service will continue to serve residents and employees to work, medical offices, shopping and dining. We also pushed for many **pedestrian safety improvements**, including a much needed traffic light at Georgia Avenue and Taylor Street NW making a safer connection between the Yes! Organic Market and the Petworth Recreation Center.

Councilmember Bowser led a successful effort to fund the renovation of the **Takoma Education Campus**. Devastated by a fire in late December 2010, Takoma was allotted just \$154,000 when the funding legislation was originally drafted. However, the Councilmember worked with Mayor Gray and Chairman Brown to identify more than \$20 million in capital funds to renovate the school. Construction is underway and students will return to a newly renovated Takoma Education Campus by January 2012. Further, Councilmember Bowser was able to secure **\$9 million to enhance school facilities at LaSalle, Powell, Sharpe, and \$150 million more for a total renovation of Roosevelt and Coolidge Senior High Schools**.



3Tree Flats Apartments opened in April, 2011.



Neighbors help cut the ribbon on Upshur Park's new playground.



Brightwood neighbors participate in a community clean-up day this summer.



Volunteers at Sharpe Health School help spruce up the grounds prior to the school's reopening after summer vacation.