



PRESS RELEASE

March 2, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Phallan Davis 202-741-0915 direct or email [pdavis@dccouncil.us](mailto:pdavis@dccouncil.us)

**Councilmember Bowser introduces bills today to help residents facing foreclosure and places a cap to prevent insurance premium rates from skyrocketing**

Washington, DC – In today’s legislative session, Councilmember Muriel Bowser introduced the “Saving D.C. Homes from Foreclosure Act of 2010,” the “Reasonable Health Insurance Premium Increase Emergency Act of 2010,” and a “Sense of the Council that the District of Columbia should host the 4th Annual NHL Winter Classic.”

The “Saving D.C. Homes from Foreclosure Act” requires mortgage lenders and homeowners to engage in mediation prior to foreclosure and requires mortgage lenders that proceed with foreclosure to offer the house as a rental to the former homeowner at a market rental rate.

This bill was inspired by Fannie Mae’s recent decision to implement a program that it terms “Deed for Lease.” It works this way: homeowners are foreclosed in the usual fashion with the bank taking over ownership of the house – but the bank then offers the former owner the option of continuing to rent the same house at a market rate.

Councilmember Bowser said “The federal government’s Home Affordable Modification Program has resulted in only 116,000 permanent loan modifications out of 1.7 million cases thought to be eligible. In fiscal year 2010 alone, there have been 1,878 notices of foreclosure sale and 532 actual foreclosures in the District. That is why I believe that it is imperative for state and local governments to pick up the slack and pass laws that can be successful in the foreclosure context. To be able to “own to rent” would benefit both former homeowners and the broader economy.”

The “Saving D.C. Homes from Foreclosure Act of 2010” has been referred to the Committee on Public Services and Consumer Affairs.

The “Reasonable Health Insurance Premium Increase Emergency Act” places a cap on the amount that a health insurance provider may increase fees or rates. Premium increases above 10 percent would require a specific exemption. Rate increases of up to 15 percent, with proper support documentation, may be granted at the discretion of the Mayor and the Commissioner of the Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking.

Councilmember Bowser said, “Last month, President Obama announced that his health insurance plan would curb exorbitant rate hikes. His proposal would combat a practice that results in many people being priced out of health insurance. The “Reasonable Health

Insurance Premium Increase Emergency Act” protects District residents by guarding against Extreme premium increases.” This bill has been referred to the Mayor for his signature.

Also in today’s legislative session, Councilmember Bowser and her fellow members of the Council introduced a “Sense of the Council that the District of Columbia should host the 4th Annual Winter NHL Winter Classic.” According to reports in the Boston Globe, the District is being strongly considered to host the 2011 National Hockey League Winter Classic hockey game.

Councilmember Bowser said, “The District is the best city to host the Winter Classic because it is our nation’s capital, a world renowned city, a historic city, and a city with a strong hockey fan base. There is no team hotter right now than the Washington Capitals in our city. The Caps currently have the highest attendance rating in the National Hockey League. As a city, we should seize on this momentum.”

**-WARD 4-**

*A native Washingtonian and former ANC commissioner, Councilmember Muriel Bowser is Chair of the Committee on Public Services and Consumer Affairs. She is also a member of the Committees on: Economic Development, Human Services, Public Works and Transportation, and Public Safety and the Judiciary. Visit [www.murielbowser.com](http://www.murielbowser.com) for more information.*

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 110, Washington, DC 20004  
202-724-8052 phone 202-741-0908 fax

---

---