

For Immediate Release
March 5, 2007

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COUNCIL PASSES BALLPARK PUBLIC SAFETY BILL

(Washington, DC) Yesterday, the Council voted unanimously to approve the “Ballpark Public Safety Emergency Amendment Act of 2008.” Introduced by Councilmember Phil Mendelson (D, At-Large), the legislation would put forth a number of provisions that would serve to protect those who are employed by, or attend games at, the new Washington Nationals ballpark in Southeast. The need to pass this legislation on an emergency basis is directly linked to the need to maintain order at the facility beginning on opening day.

This legislation amends District law, extending provisions already in place to preserve public order at the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium and the District of Columbia National Guard Armory.

The legislation also provides the Metropolitan Police Department with authority to establish barriers or restricted zones to control movement in and around the stadium. Further, it also prohibits the possession of certain containers within the new ballpark, and criminalizes the unauthorized entry onto the playing field. These provisions help ensure the safety of the public during events at the new ballpark.

“As we gear up for a successful inaugural season at the new ballpark, and we must make sure that those who are employed by as well as visit the facility are properly protected,” stated Mendelson. “The passage of this legislation is necessary to ensure that safety, and I applaud my colleagues for their unanimous support.”

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Currently serving in his third term as At-Large Councilmember, Phil Mendelson is also Chairman of the Council's Committee on Public Safety & the Judiciary. For more, visit <http://www.dccouncil.us/mendelson/index.htm>.