

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser**



Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Oversight Hearing on

**The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice**

Testimony of  
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Deputy City Administrator  
Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice

Before the  
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety  
Charles Allen, Chairperson  
Council of the District of Columbia

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1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW



Good morning Chairperson Allen, members, and staff of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety. I am Kevin Donahue, the Deputy City Administrator and Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice.

Last week, Mayor Bowser presented “A Fair Shot,” the Fiscal Year 2019 (FY 2019) Budget and Financial Plan, the District’s 23<sup>rd</sup> consecutive balanced budget. This budget does more to make Washington, DC a place where people of all backgrounds and in all stages of life are able to live and thrive by making key investments in infrastructure, education, affordable housing, health and human services, economic opportunity, seniors, and public safety. These investments reflect the key priorities identified by District residents at Budget Engagement Forums and telephone town halls held during the budget formulation process.

In my testimony, I will briefly discuss the work of some of the agencies under my purview, and then talk about my Office’s FY 2019 budget and the areas we will be focusing on in the next fiscal year.

### **FY 2019 Public Safety Highlights and Priorities**

I want to start by explaining some of the challenges that went into formulating the FY 2019 Budget, and then highlight several initiatives funded by the Mayor that will have a significant impact on public safety in the District.

For the public safety cluster, Mayor Bowser placed great emphasis on right-sizing agency budgets by focusing on their core operations. During FY 2018, three of our public safety agencies needed their budgets augmented with contingency cash funding. In developing the FY 2019 budgets, our goal was to minimize the likelihood of that recurring. We did that by increasing the base budgets of those agencies to better reflect the needs and services offered to our residents.

In developing the FY 2019 budget for the Department of Corrections (DOC), the Mayor included several enhancements to right-size their budget. First, DOC’s overtime budget will increase by \$6 million, from \$2.5 million to \$8.6 million. Second, to help address the agency’s overtime costs, the Mayor increased the DOC personal services budget by \$4.7 million, which will allow the agency to hire 80 additional FTEs. Third, in order to better reflect rising inmate services and healthcare costs, the Mayor included a \$9.4 million increase to DOC’s healthcare services budget and a \$1 million increase to its inmate services budget. With these critical modifications to its budget, I expect DOC to be in a far better position to fund the necessary personnel and services needed to maintain its core operations.

Another of Mayor Bowser’s priorities is the success of the Office on Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (ONSE). The Mayor’s FY 2019 Budget doubles down on ONSE by more than doubling its funding for community-based violence intervention contracts, grants, and programming, from \$750,000 to over \$2.1 million, and increasing ONSE staff by 60 percent. ONSE Executive Director Del McFadden will be providing testimony later today and can discuss these investments in greater detail, including our proposal to incorporate the Roving Leaders program into ONSE. Director McFadden leads the only agency in the entire District government

that is focused solely on preventing violence in our communities. I am incredibly proud of the work he and the ONSE team are doing in the year they've been in business.

I want to take a moment to highlight some of the Mayor's public safety cluster initiatives in her FY 2019 Budget. Over the past three years, the Mayor has asked agencies to respond to crime with more public health approaches so that we can address and treat the impact of trauma on victims and the community. As part of that effort, the Mayor's FY 2019 Budget provides \$440,000 for the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants to implement a multi-tiered approach to enhance cross-sector professionals' ability to recognize and effectively respond to trauma and increase access to trauma-specific mental health services. Additionally, the Mayor is funding an expansion of the Metropolitan Police Department's Cadet Program, which will allow the hiring of up to 100 cadets. This is a 40 percent increase from the program's current funding level and is nearly triple the number of cadets from 2014. MPD Chief Peter Newsham will be testifying later today and can speak more about this great program.

Finally, as our city's population has grown, we have seen a significant shift in transit options, with multiple modes of transportation including ride-sharing services like Lyft and Uber, car-sharing services like SmartCar, and bicycling. With that increase in options comes the need for consistent and increased enforcement of traffic laws so that all road users are safer. In FY 2019, the Mayor is proposing a strategic shift by merging MPD's Automated Traffic Enforcement program into the District Department of Transportation. In creating a unified transportation program within DDOT, we will have one agency responsible for the "three Es" of safe roads: Engineering, Education, and now, Automated Enforcement.

### **FY 2019 Budget for the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice**

Now I want to discuss the Mayor's FY 2019 budget for the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice. My Office is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the work of public safety agencies in the District. To that end, my Office has daily interaction with the agencies under its purview: the Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the Metropolitan Police Department, the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department, the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, the Office of Unified Communications, the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the Department of Forensic Sciences, and the Department of Corrections. My Office also interacts and coordinates regularly with independent agencies, federal entities, the court system, and our partners in the region. My staff and I have almost daily contact with each of the other Deputy Mayors, as they all have a substantial impact on public safety.

Mayor Bowser's FY 2019 Budget includes a 1.1 percent decrease in my Office's operating budget and a reduction of one FTE. My Office's proposed FY 2019 budget is \$1,596,270, made up entirely of Local funds, and an authorized FTE count of 10.

Providing the necessary oversight of the public safety cluster requires extensive coordination to manage the flow of information being relayed between agencies, other District agencies, federal and regional partners, and a wide range of outside experts, advocates, and affected community members. Each of my Office's analysts is responsible for developing and maintaining a detailed understanding of the agencies' overall missions, as well as their day-to-day operations. This

allows the analysts to troubleshoot and advise the agencies as they navigate the daily challenges with limited budgets and a growing population.

My staff also manages the Concealed Pistol License Review Board, which handles appeals by concealed carry applicants – a number that has grown significantly in the wake of recent court decisions. And my Office is responsible for drafting public safety-related legislation (such as the criminal record sealing bill, SAVRAA 2.0, and the bump stock ban) and implementing inter-agency pilot programs (such as the Nurse Triage Line, the pre-arrest diversion program, and Portal of Entry). My staff and I are in constant communication with the nine agencies within my cluster and conduct thorough oversight to ensure our agencies are performing effectively and are on track to implement Mayor Bowser’s vision for serving District residents and visitors.

### **Priorities for FY 2019**

I want to discuss some of the initiatives my Office is working on that will have a long-lasting impact on the District.

*Re-establishing the D.C. Parole Board:* Twenty years ago, the District was essentially bankrupt and had to give up control over most of its criminal justice functions. One of those functions was the Board of Parole, which was transferred to the U.S. Parole Commission. Re-establishing local control over parole would be an important advancement for justice-involved residents because the board’s members would have a deeper understanding of District issues and re-entry opportunities. However, because there are many potentially long-lasting financial consequences of taking over this federal function, we need to closely study its feasibility and develop a well-thought out strategy on how it should be implemented. In FY 2019, my Office will be commissioning a study to examine this issue and research best practices for a re-established D.C. Parole Board.

*Community Outreach:* I believe it is important to not only perform substantive work through our agencies, programs, and legislation, but it is essential to properly communicate to the community the work being done. To do this, I will be repurposing an FTE from the Concealed Pistol License Review Board to serve the function of an outreach coordinator. Communicating with our communities is just as important, if not more so, than communicating within our cluster. We want to make sure our residents know what is going on within the public safety cluster and the reasons behind what is happening. This transparency and community partnership builds the foundation for a trusting relationship between residents and their government.

*Data analysis:* One of the priorities for my Office, and the agencies I oversee, is the collection and analysis of high-quality data. We need this data to make smart, transparent decisions about what works for our city. In my Office, I have one FTE, funded as part of the NEAR Act, dedicated to data collection and analysis. In the last year, we have taken several significant strides forward, including partnering with The Lab @ DC, to run some of the most sophisticated policy experiments ever conducted by a city and the first public release of anonymized felony arrest data. I am committed – and I am committing my agencies – to improving the quality and reliability of the data we collect, undertaking open and transparent research projects, and breaking new ground by developing data sharing partnership across local and federal agencies.

This is how we will continue to implement smart policies that will build upon the steady decline in crime that we've seen over the last two years, that keep people out of the criminal justice system in the first place, and that help people get back on their feet.

*Police-Community Relations Survey:* One of the final pieces of the NEAR Act that is in the process of being implemented is this survey to be conducted by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). The CJCC survey will cost approximately \$200,000 and I anticipate it will be completed by January 2019. While most of this funding was in my Office's FY 2018 budget, the final \$70,000 of funding will come out of my Office's FY 2019 budget. We will make all survey-related data publicly available and look forward to the results.

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In closing, the resources allocated to my Office will play a critical role in supporting residents' efforts to create a safer, stronger DC. The Council and this Committee are critical allies in this effort and I appreciate your work to ensure we operate efficiently and effectively. I look forward to our continued work together to achieve our shared goals and give all residents a fair shot to benefit from Washington, DC's continued prosperity.

Chairperson Allen, I'd like to thank you for your leadership and support. I am available to answer any questions you may have.