

Testimony of Marc Friend
Department of Health Oversight Hearing
February 19, 2020

Committee on Health Chair Gray and members of the Committee on Health,

My name is Marc Friend and I live in Kingman.

I am here to thank you for voting Bill 22-0223 Public Restroom Facilities Installation & Promotion Act of 2018, out of Committee during the Fall of 2018. I testified last year on the importance of public restrooms, as someone who was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis, an inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) and who often needs a restroom urgently, but struggles to find one that is open in our city. And yet, these restrooms would be not just for me, but for those experiencing homelessness, runners, families, you name it.

[Law 22-280](#) calls for the formation of an Interagency Working Group, with participation from four non-profit organizations, to assess the feasibility of, and if considered feasible, recommending two public restroom pilots. \$400,000 was included in DC's 2020 budget to carry out the pilots: (1) two standalone public restrooms available 24/7; and (2) a program, to be carried out by a BID, to provide incentives to businesses to open their restrooms to the public.

In addition, I am pleased to inform you that two amendments that we proposed for the Comprehensive Plan have been incorporated into the latest draft of the Plan:

- Action PROS 2.1.C: Parks Restroom Inventory. Conduct an assessment of the existing parks restroom inventory, considering park size and usage to determine the needs for additional public restrooms.
- Action UD- 2.1.D: Public Restrooms in Streetscapes. When designing and upgrading streets and sidewalks in commercial areas, investigate opportunities to install attractive, clean, safe standalone public restrooms that are accessible at all hours.

We have heard from both DGS and DSLBD are starting to move forward on implementing the provisions of Law 22-280 for the standalone public restroom and the business incentives pilots, respectively, but I come before the Health committee because of the significant overlap with public health today to urge you to continue to follow up with the Administration to ensure that both the public restroom pilot and the business program move forward on time.

We cannot let the timeline slip if this is to become a reality.

Thank you very much