

FY 2022 Budget Oversight Hearing
Department of Small and Local Business Development
June 8, 2021

testimony submitted by Leonard S. Greenberger,
Advisor to the PFFC Downtown DC Public Restroom Initiative

Committee on Business and Economic Development Chair McDuffie, Committee members of the Committee on Business and Economic Development, Department of Small and Local Business Development Director Whitfield:

My name is Leonard S. Greenberger. I am a former D.C. resident and business owner and I serve as an advisor to the People for Fairness Coalition (PFFC) [Downtown DC Public Restroom Initiative](#). Our research and advocacy inspired and informed the introduction of [Bill 22-0223, Public Restroom Facilities Installation and Promotion Act of 2018](#) which was passed by unanimous vote by the DC Council in December 2018, became [Law 22-280](#) in April 2019, and went into effect on October 1, 2019.

I write to say thank you to the Committee for its work in helping to see that the pilot program related to the installation of public restrooms in the city can now resume. I'm particularly pleased that Mayor Bowser and the Committee have worked together to reinstate the \$66,000 in the DSLBD's FY 2022 budget for the program.

This pilot is an important step towards ensuring that the people of D.C., as well as the millions of visitors who are beginning to come back to the city, have access to safe, clean public restrooms. Like you, I want Washington, D.C. to be a truly world-class city. But the lack safe, clean public restrooms stands in the way. I've traveled all over the world, including to very out-of-the-way destinations in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Even in those remote locations, public restrooms are widely available – if not as sanitary as those found in more developed countries.

Even here in the United States we stack up poorly. During a recent trip to Miami Beach, Fla., I was struck by the number of clean and well-lit public restrooms along the city's main roads. One didn't have to travel more than a few blocks between them; in fact, I took advantage of one during an early morning run when nature suddenly called. I firmly believe that those public restrooms make Miami Beach a much safer and cleaner place to live and to visit.

Although I've moved out of the District, I lived and worked there for more than 30 years, and I still care about the city. On behalf of myself, my fellow residents and business owners, and the visitors, runners, cyclists, housing insecure, and delivery people who need safe, clean access to public restrooms, thank you for your support of this important pilot program.

And thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony.