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Robert A. Malson
President

July 13, 2010

The Honorable Mary Cheh
Chair, Committee on Government Operations
and the Environment
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 108
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Madam Chair:

I am writing on behalf of the District of Columbia Hospital Association (DCHA) to provide comments relative to the June 30th hearing on the *District Resident Employment and Trade Stimulus Amendment Act*. DCHA is a non-profit organization with 17 member hospitals and 36 Associate Members whose mission is to provide leadership in improving health care in the District of Columbia. DCHA members employ approximately 30,000 people who are on the front lines for delivering quality health care and for responding to any medical emergency in the District of Columbia. We provide over 720,000 days of patient care annually with an annualized occupancy rate of approximately 75 percent. The emergency room visits exceed 410,000 and, collectively, we provide over \$220 million in uncompensated care annually. Clearly, we play a critical role in the District's health care delivery system.

We would like to ask that the Committee carefully consider the impact of the *District Resident Employment and Trade Stimulus Amendment Act* before voting to bring the bill before the full Council. The bill's language invites confusion as to which projects would be impacted. The bill does not provide any definition of a "government assisted or government-subsidized construction project," therefore, businesses have no clarity as to the bill's applicability. For instance, hospitals receive payments from various District agencies for services provided via Medicaid and other programs. These types of payments for services rendered should not qualify as government assistance or subsidy, but the legislation is unclear on this point. In addition, the legislation is silent on its application to ongoing renovation and repair projects and, if intended to be applicable, how the projects' total cost would be calculated.

Regardless of its intended application, this bill would make it very difficult to get competitive bids and quality contractors for District-funded construction projects due to the large percentage requirements for District residents in the skilled trades. Despite best intentions, this bill may stifle construction in the District because the required number of District residents in the skilled trades simply may not be available, making the completion of planned projects impossible.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill. Please feel free to contact me or Stefanie Jones, Government Relations Analyst, at DCHA at (202) 289-6212 if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert A. Malson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert A. Malson
President