

**Government of the District of Columbia  
Office of the Chief Financial Officer**



Natwar M. Gandhi  
Chief Financial Officer

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** The Honorable Vincent C. Gray  
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

**FROM:** Natwar M. Gandhi  
Chief Financial Officer 

**DATE:** December 17, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Fiscal Impact Statement – “Billboard Blight Removal Approval Resolution of 2009”

**REFERENCE:** Draft Resolution to be Introduced—No Bill Number

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**Conclusion**

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2010 through FY 2013 budget and financial plan to implement the proposed resolution.

**Background**

The proposed resolution would approve the proposed rules to amend Chapter 3107A (Signs)<sup>1</sup> of Title 12A (Building Code Supplement) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations to authorize the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) to offer Special Signs permits to billboard owners as compensation for the removal of existing billboards.

Under current law, only thirty two Special Signs are allowed in the District. A Special Sign permit can be bought and sold and can be moved from location to location within limited boundaries. Billboards are different from Special Signs—only those billboards in existence as of December 31, 1971<sup>2</sup> are authorized to remain in place, so long as they are not located on lots within 200 feet of a residential district. No changes in size or location are allowed for authorized

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<sup>1</sup> By amending Section 3107.17.1 (Definitions), and adding to Section 3107.17.12 (Moratorium on Issuance of Special Signs)

<sup>2</sup> This list, available at

[http://dcra.dc.gov/dcra/frames.asp?doc=/dcra/lib/dcra/1971\\_authorized\\_list\\_of\\_billboards.pdf](http://dcra.dc.gov/dcra/frames.asp?doc=/dcra/lib/dcra/1971_authorized_list_of_billboards.pdf), lists approximately 100 billboards of specific sizes at specific locations. However, it is now known at this time how many billboards exist in the city.

billboards. Unlike Special Signs, a demolished billboard could not be rebuilt or relocated to another site.

### **Financial Plan Impact**

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2010 through FY 2013 budget and financial plan to implement the proposed resolution. Allowing DCRA to provide Special Sign permits to owners of existing billboards would not have an impact on the District's budget and financial plan. Given the moratorium over the issuance of billboards, switching billboard permits to Special Sign permits would not have a negative fiscal impact.

Expanding the universe of allowable Special Signs could have a small positive fiscal impact on the General Fund. Because the Special Sign permits would be compensation towards previous billboards, the District would not be able to charge the new owner a permit fee; however, DCRA would be able to collect a \$500 fee each time the artwork on the Special Sign is changed. Given the turnover of the displays, each Special Sign typically generates \$4,000 per year. Without knowing the number of billboard permits that would be converted to Special Sign permits, it is not possible to reliably estimate the total impact from these fees at this time.