


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



Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer 

DATE: January 15, 2019

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement – Community Harassment Prevention
Amendment Act of 2019

REFERENCE: Draft Bill as shared with the Office of Revenue Analysis on January 10,
2019

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2019 through fiscal year 2022 budget and financial plan to implement the bill.

Background

Current law¹ makes it illegal to burn, desecrate, mar, deface, or damage a religious or secular symbol on public property or private religious, educational, residential, memorial, charity, or cemetery properties. The bill expands the protections to include all property in the District regardless of its use.

The bill also establishes a new offense of harassment of an entity where that entity is a group that is organized based on any common purpose.² The bill makes it unlawful for any individual to make any member, participant, or employee of an entity fear for her or his safety, suffer emotional distress, or feel alarmed or frightened. An individual who harasses an entity is subject to imprisonment of not more than twelve months, a fine of \$2,500, or both. The bill increases the penalties for an offender who has multiple convictions in any jurisdiction of harassing an entity, is subject to a legal order prohibiting contact with the entity, or causes more than \$2,500 in financial

¹ Omnibus Public Safety and Justice Amendment Act of 2009, effective December 10, 2009 (D.C. Law 18-88; D.C. Official Code § 22-3131 et seq.).

² Including, but not limited to a religious, social, educational, or recreational purpose.

The Honorable Phil Mendelson

FIS: "Community Harassment Prevention Amendment Act of 2019," Draft Bill as shared with the Office of Revenue Analysis on January 10, 2019

injury.³ If an act of harassment is continuous, each 24-hour period is considered a separate harassment action.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2019 through fiscal year 2022 budget and financial plan to implement the bill. The bill provides law enforcement with expanded powers to protect religious and secular symbols on all District property and establishes a new offense to protect the members, employees, or participants of protected entities. There are no costs associated with the bill's implementation.

³ The penalty is imprisonment of not more than five years, a fine of \$12,500, or both under these additional conditions except that two or more offenses carries a penalty of imprisonment of not more than ten years, a fine of \$25,000, or both.