

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: November 2, 2010

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement – “District of Columbia Uniform Law
Commission Act of 2010”

REFERENCE: Bill Number 18-617, Draft Committee Print

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2011 through FY 2014 budget and financial plan to implement the provisions of the proposed legislation.

Background

The proposed legislation would establish a District of Columbia Uniform Law Commission (“Commission”) whose members would serve as the official Commissioners of the District of Columbia to the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws (NCCUSL). The Commission would consist of at least 6 Commissioners that were D.C. residents and members, in good standing, of the D.C. Bar. Three Commissioners would be appointed by the Mayor, one by the Chairman of the Council and one by the Chief Judge of the D.C. Superior Court. The 6th member would be the General Counsel to the D.C. Council. In addition, any District resident that has been elected as a life member of the NCCUSL would also serve on the Commission.

Each Commissioner would serve at least three years and would attend meetings of the NCCUSL. The Commissioners would advise the Mayor, the Council and other relevant parties concerning proposals to enact uniform or model acts, and would be required to submit a report to them after each annual NCCUSL meeting.

The District has been a member of the NCCUSL for 105 years, its five uniform law Commissioners are currently appointed by the Mayor for three year terms, and since 1984 the Commissioners have submitted an annual report. However, there is no statutory language that formally establishes the

Commission, its practices and the appointment of its members. The proposed legislation would fill that void.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2011 through FY 2014 budget and financial plan to implement the provisions of the proposed legislation. Although not explicit, there are two types of costs associated with the proposed legislation. First, the District must pay annual dues of \$27,500 in order to participate in the NCCUSL. The Office of the Attorney General historically paid these dues until last year when the Council assumed responsibility for them. The Council has confirmed that they will continue to pay these dues and has sufficient funds to do so.

The other costs are for travel to NCCUSL's annual conference, which are estimated to be about \$2,000 per person. In the past, these costs were borne by the appointee's respective appointment authority. In the case of Mayoral appointees, appointed government employees would typically have their travel costs paid for by their respective agencies and any appointed nongovernmental individuals would pay their own way. It is assumed that this practice would continue so that the Council¹ and the Mayor would each pay for two people, while the Superior Court would pay for just one. Given that this would amount to at most \$4,000 for each branch, funds are assumed to be sufficient.

Although costs are *de minimis*, it is important to point out that the inability to participate in the annual conference may lessen the effectiveness of the Commission, but it would not impede the implementation of the proposed bill.

¹ While the General Counsel to the D.C. Council would not be formally appointed by the Council to serve on the Commission, the Council has confirmed that they would pay travel costs for this person.