



Government of the District of Columbia
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3/4G
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**ANC 3/4G Resolution Urging the
Council of the District of Columbia to
Enact Legislation to Provide Incentives for
Private Establishments to Make Their Restroom Facilities
Available to the Public**

1. Everyone needs access to clean, safe, available public restrooms, including tourists, families with young children, women who are pregnant, the elderly, individuals with bowel or urinary incontinence, and people without housing.
2. A study conducted by the People for Fairness Coalition Downtown DC Public Restroom Initiative indicated that there are very few public restrooms in downtown Washington, DC, an increasing number of establishments do not allow people to use their restrooms unless they are customers, and in most downtown neighborhoods there are no restrooms available to the public late at night or early in the morning.
3. Many cities in Europe and Asia have clean, safe public restrooms that are easily accessible at any time of night or day, but this is not the case in Washington, DC.
4. If people in the District cannot find a restroom and have no other option than to relieve themselves in a public space, if cited, the penalty is a fine of up to \$500 or a jail term up to 90 days.

5. In April 2017, Councilmember Nadeau introduced The Public Restroom Facilities Installation and Promotion Act of 2017 (Bill 22-0223, available at <http://lims.dccouncil.us/Download/37807/B22-0223-Introduction.pdf>) which directs relevant DC agencies to establish a working group to “identify at least 10 locations in the District for installation of public restroom facilities” that are appropriate for installing stand-alone public restrooms that are clean, safe, and open 24/7 in areas of the District with limited access to public restroom facilities and to “establish a financial incentive program to encourage private establishments to make their restrooms available to the public free of charge.”
6. While some cities in the U.S. have begun to introduce a variety of restroom options, including the Portland Loo and Automated Public Toilets, legitimate concerns have been raised about the safety, security, cleanliness, accessibility, and initial and maintenance costs of these stand-alone public restrooms, particularly in the District where security considerations are critical.
7. As an alternative, some cities have adopted the London model, where the government provides financial incentives to private establishments if they maintain signs through their “Community Toilet Scheme” indicating that their restroom is open to all.
8. Some private businesses in the District have voluntarily begun to make their restrooms available to the public, but a publicized incentive program — coupled with signs and maps showing where restrooms may be used by the public and by standards for receiving incentive payments — would provide a safer, more secure, cleaner, more convenient, and less expensive alternative to the installation of public stand-alone restrooms.
9. If a financial incentive program does not fully address the needs for public access to bathrooms after a sufficient trial period, the issue may be revisited to consider other alternatives, but this least disruptive alternative should be tried first.
10. For these reasons, ANC 3/4G urges the Council not to pass Bill 22-0223 in its current form but to enact legislation: (1) to require the Mayor to establish and implement a program of financial incentives for establishments to make their restrooms available to the public free of charge; (2) to place limitations on the amount of the financial incentives like those in Bill 22-0223, Section 4; and (3) to require a report one year after the program’s implementation on the results of the program.

Approved by the ANC at its regularly scheduled and noticed February 12, 2018 meeting by a vote of 6 to 0 (a quorum being 4).

Randy Speck, Chair

Becky Maydak, Secretary