



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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November 21, 2023

Nyasha Smith, Secretary
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Smith,

Today, I am introducing the Ward 5 Business Development Center Establishment Act of 2023. Please find enclosed a signed copy of the legislation. The goal of this legislation is to equip aspiring entrepreneurs and small businesses in Ward 5 with the skills and technical support to thrive economically in our city. There are provisions within the legislation to bolster support specifically for minority entrepreneurs and minority-operated businesses in Ward 5 given ongoing disparities relative to contractual opportunities and resource allocation.

The “Disparity Study¹,” commissioned by the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) and which investigated the extent to which disparities existed in the District’s contracting and procurement processes between 2016 and 2020, revealed alarming inequities in the utilization of government contracts by minority- and women-owned businesses. The Disparity Study suggests DC Government only awarded 37.0 percent of its relevant contract and procurement dollars to people of color- and woman-owned businesses. A primary objective of the Ward 5 Business Development Center is to provide direct support to minority entrepreneurs and minority-owned businesses, ultimately enhancing the utilization rate for contracts, not-for-profit initiatives, and small business development in the District of Columbia, specifically in Ward 5.

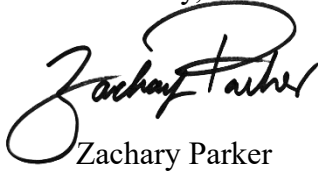
The proposed Ward 5 Business Development Center will serve as a vital connective hub between community business owners and the workforce, effectively bridging the gap between government entities, private industries, entrepreneurs, and small businesses. The programs and

¹ “Government of District of Columbia Disparity Study: Final Report;
https://dmped.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dmped/page_content/attachments/Government%20of%20the%20District%20of%20Columbia%20Disparity%20Study.pdf.

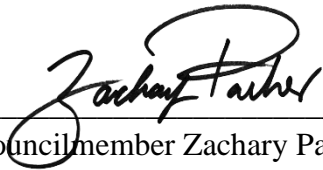
services outlined in the proposal – including technical assistance, business education, financial literacy programs, workforce development, and community reinvestment -- underscore my commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and economic prosperity in Ward 5.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Council and the Executive to establish the Ward 5 Business Development Center. Please contact my Legislative Director, Kendra Wiley, at kwiley@dccouncil.gov if you have any questions about this legislation.

Sincerely,



Zachary Parker


Councilmember Zachary Parker

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A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To establish a small business development center in Ward 5 to provide essential resources, guidance, and technical assistance to foster the growth and development of entrepreneurs and small businesses in Ward 5.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Ward 5 Small Business Development Center Establishment Act of 2023”.

Sec. 2. Ward 5 Small Business Development Center.

(a) The Executive shall establish a small business development center located in Ward 5 that:

(1) Hosts small business forums and summits for entrepreneurs and businesses located in Ward 5 focused on centralizing business resources, outreach, growth, and compliance;

(2) Provides technical assistance and education to aspiring entrepreneurs and newer small businesses through regular workshops and one-on-one counseling sessions for:

(i) business/staff management, goal setting, cash flow, certifications, licenses, insurance, payroll, contracts, succession planning, inventory control, and customer service;

(ii) Technical assistance in becoming a Certified Business Enterprise

33 (CBE) or 501(c) non-profit;

34 (3) Provides classes on business credit and money management that prepares
35 entrepreneurs and small businesses to establish and manage business and commercial loans, lines
36 of credit, financing, budgets, and community reinvestment;

37 (4) Creates a Business Juniors program to recruit and train the next generation of
38 entrepreneurs through matching youth with small business positions;

39 (5) Provides financial literacy education through workshops, counseling, and
40 seminars;

41 (6) Provides start-up support and technical assistance for aspiring minority
42 businesses and entrepreneurs located in Ward 5;

43 (b) Any funds deposited into the business development program shall be subject to a
44 yearly audit by the Office of the D.C. Auditor and Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

45 (c) For the purposes of this subchapter, the term “minority” shall include
46 underrepresented people identifying as African American or Black, Asian, Pacific Islander,
47 Native American, Hispanic or Latinos; women, and individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+.

48 Sec. 3. Reporting requirements.

49 (a) Starting September 30, 2026 and every two years thereafter, the Ward 5 Small
50 Business Development Center shall submit a report to the Mayor and the Council on the
51 operations and data on people and businesses utilizing the Center’s services.

52 Sec. 4. Fiscal impact statement.

53 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
54 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
55 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

56 Sec. 5. Effective date.

57 This act shall take effect after approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
58 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
59 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
60 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
61 Columbia Register.