



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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Chairman

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The Honorable James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Accountability
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Accountability
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Via E-Mail

Dear Chairman Comer and Ranking Member Raskin:

I write to express my opposition to H.R. 10062, the Freedom to Petition the Government Act, which I understand your committee will consider tomorrow. H.R. 10062 is a solution in response to an unclear problem. It is also an affront to the authority Congress has delegated to the Council of the District of Columbia to legislate on local affairs. I appreciate efforts made in Chairman Comer's proposed substitute amendment to narrow and clarify the scope of the underlying bill but must urge committee members to vote against reporting it to the House floor.

Importantly, H.R. 10062 was only recently introduced, and while Chairman Comer's amendment would be an improvement, it is even newer. There has been no public hearing or any sort of scrutiny. It is impossible to understand, then, just what impact the bill, even as amended, will have in areas like enforcement, competitiveness, workplace safety, or consumer protection.

H.R. 10062 assumes the District is hostile to individuals or groups who come here to lobby or work with Congress and federal officials. Nothing could be further from the truth. The District spends significant resources facilitating free speech and lobbying activity nearly every day. We welcome visitors from around the country who come here to make their voices heard. We encourage them to do so, regardless of the views being advocated. I am not aware of anything any District agency or regulator has done to prevent Americans from interacting with Congress or the federal government. To the extent that our business regulations create a burden on non-profits or other entities operating here, it is our job on the Council to hold hearings and craft an appropriate legislative response. And we will do so.

I appreciate your interest in this issue and invite you to work with the Council proactively if there are any questions or concerns about local policies.

Sincerely,

Phil Mendelson
Chairman