

CHAIRMAN PHIL MENDELSON

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Phil Mendelson was first elected to the Council in November 1998 as an At-Large Councilmember. He served the District in that role until June 2012 when, following the resignation of the previous Council Chairman, Phil was selected by his colleagues to take over that role. In November 2012, 2014, 2018 and 2022 District voters elected and re-elected Phil as Chairman of the Council.

As Chairman, Phil leads the Council on all legislative matters. Phil also presides over the Committee of the Whole which has purview over matters concerning the DC Auditor, the District's budget, federal relations, planning and zoning, Statehood, the Department of Buildings (previously DCRA) and the District's public education system.

Prior to becoming Chairman, Phil served eight years chairing the Council's Committee on the Judiciary (2005-2012). In that role he was responsible for all legislation affecting criminal laws in the District, as well as oversight over the District's public safety agencies, including the Metropolitan Police Department, Fire & Emergency Medical Services, the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Corrections, and the Office of the Medical Examiner.

During his tenure on the Council, Phil has authored hundreds of laws including: establishing an elected attorney general and an independent Department of Forensic Science (the city's crime lab); authoring Budget Autonomy, the District's gun control laws (post-*Heller*), marriage equality, Universal Paid Leave, and the District's tree canopy protection law; recrafting Mayor Gray's plan to build the DC United Soccer Stadium; coordinating an increase in the minimum wage with Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties; Co-introducing the Neighborhood Engagement Achieves Results (NEAR) Act to emphasize mental health approaches to public safety; Breaking up the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs into two agencies to better focus on illegal construction and housing and code enforcement; and Approving the Racial Equity Achieve Change (REACH) Act to require racial equity impact assessments for most legislation.

Phil has also been a regional leader, serving twice as Chairman and three times as President of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG). Four times he has chaired the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board. He is also a Past President of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO).

Phil believes that government should be an honest, efficient deliverer of services, that helps those least able to help themselves to develop the skills to become self-sufficient and end poverty. He also believes that government can accomplish this without increasing the tax burdens shouldered by our residents. Throughout his years of public service, Phil has maintained that the nation's capital, should be a model of service delivery in public education, public safety, and public health.

Phil has been an active participant in District politics since 1975, when he became an officer of the McLean Gardens Residents Association. In that role he was a large part of the effort to save that 43-acre housing complex from destruction. In 1979, Phil successfully ran for a seat on the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) and continued to serve as an ANC Commissioner until he took office as an At-Large Councilmember.

Phil came to the District from Cleveland, Ohio in 1970 to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from American University. He grew up in a family dedicated to public service. His mother was a national crusader for nursing home reform. His grandmother, who had been President of the Michigan State League of Women Voters, was appointed by President Roosevelt to the Federal Office of Price Administration, and was a founder of the Grand Rapids Urban League.

Phil has a daughter, Adelaide, who graduated from DC Public Schools. He lives in Southeast DC.