

	<p align="center"><b>ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3C</b>  <b>GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>  CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS • CLEVELAND PARK  MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE HEIGHTS  McLEAN GARDENS • WOODLEY PARK</p>
<p><i>Single Member District Commissioners</i>  01-Lee Brian Reba * 02-Gwendolyn Bole * 03-David Valdez  04-Arthur Barkmann * 05-Margaret Siegel * 06-Carl Roller  07- Victor Silveira * 08-Catherine May * 09-Nancy MacWood</p>	<p align="right">P.O. Box 4966  Washington, DC 20008  Website <a href="http://www.anc3c.org">http://www.anc3c.org</a>  Email <a href="mailto:all@anc3c.org">all@anc3c.org</a></p>

December 15, 2016

The Honorable Anita Bonds  
Chairman, Committee on Housing and Community Development  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Suite 110  
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Bill 21-0697 ANC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2016

Dear Councilmember Bonds:

On December 1, 2016 ANC3C wrote thanking you for your long and comprehensive efforts to revise the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) law, regretfully asking you to withdraw the omnibus bill and asking you to not schedule any vote on the bill in the 2016 calendar year. A copy of that letter is attached.

The ANC Omnibus Bill had been the result of a long, collaborative process involving many meetings and opportunities for revisions. Commissioners are alarmed that late amendments have been made to the bill and ANCs have been denied the opportunity to review and comment on those changes. Our December 1st letter was not considered at a public meeting because the late nature of the amendments arose after our November 21, 2016 meeting and before the December 6<sup>th</sup> first reading by the Council. At a regularly scheduled and noticed ANC3C public meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup> at which a quorum was present, Commissioners voted 8-0-0 to approve the December 1<sup>st</sup> letter and this letter so that the letters might be given great weight. The request that the bill be withdrawn and that no votes occur on the bill during the 2016 calendar year remains our strong recommendation.

Only hours before the December 12<sup>th</sup> public meeting, ANC3C was notified of at least two new amendments to be offered at the December 20<sup>th</sup> second reading of the bill. Again, ANC's have not had an opportunity to review or comment on these amendments nor do we know if there are further amendments of which we are unaware. Initial reading indicates that the language of the amendment offered by CM Grasso could be open to broad and varied interpretation and would substantially burden ANCs. It would undermine the capacity of the ANCs to give input or consider issues in a timely fashion. It is not clear whom the amendment is designed to protect as it would give more opportunity to challenge ANC comments. Particularly in ABRA matters this could result in the dismissal of a protest on a technicality, which would undermine the ability of the ANC to provide regulatory bodies and other government agencies with the viewpoint of constituents on significant matters.

**Again, ANC3C cannot support the substitute bill or the most recent amendments. We urge you to abandon its consideration by the Council and any vote on its passage, and introduce a clean bill for consideration during 2017 Council deliberations.**

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C May", followed by a vertical line.

Catherine May  
Chairman, ANC3C

CC: The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman  
The Honorable Brianne Nadeau, Ward 1  
The honorable Jack Evans, Ward 2  
The Honorable Mary Cheh, Ward 3  
The Honorable Brandon Todd, Ward 4  
The Honorable Kenyan McDuffie, Ward 5  
The Honorable Charles Allen, Ward 6  
The Honorable Yvette Alexander, Ward 7  
The Honorable La Ruby May, Ward 8  
The Honorable David Grosso, At Large  
The Honorable Elisa Silverman, At Large  
The Honorable Robert White, Jr. At Large

Attachment: 12/1/16 Letter from ANC3C to CM Bonds

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December 1, 2016

The Honorable Anita Bonds  
Chairman, Committee on Housing and Community Development  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Suite 110  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Councilmember Bonds:

ANC 3C thanks you for your long and comprehensive efforts to revise the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) law to clarify notice requirements and to improve implementation of “great weight.” We have appreciated the opportunity to meet with you to discuss aspects of the current law and to testify on the ANC Omnibus Amendments Act of 2016. It is with great regret that ANC 3C now urges you to recommend to your Council colleagues that the substitute bill 21-697, which replaces the omnibus bill you introduced, be withdrawn from the consent calendar and not be scheduled for any vote for the remainder of this year.

ANCs have not been given the opportunity to review and comment on significant changes to the omnibus bill which are contained in the substitute bill and which seriously diminish the role of the ANC and the provisions for notice and “great weight”.

Notice requirements and response to “great weight” authority are the two most significant means by which an ANC functions to represent citizens. The substitute bill diminishes the notice requirement and thus, the ability of ANC’s to exercise “great weight” on potential decisions that could significantly affect the neighborhoods ANC 3C represents. The intentional exemption of the Council and the Mayor from the requirement to extend “great weight” to properly and publicly approved positions on matters initiated by the Council or the Mayor which affect neighborhoods is both bizarre and an affront. It undermines the purpose of an Advisory Neighborhood Commission and diminishes the voice accorded to residents.

ANC commissioners are elected every two years, which affords residents the opportunity to continually evaluate how commissioners represent their interests and validate that commissioners are indeed representing their points of view. ANC commissioners represent the same residents as at-large and ward councilmembers do, but ANC commissioners are specifically charged with being the official voice of neighborhoods. Nonetheless, ANCs are advisory and cannot compel any

decision maker to follow an ANC's advice. The "great weight" required response to ANC positions has meant that the Council and Mayor - and agencies, boards, and commissions - must acknowledge that a recommendation comes from an ANC and then articulate why the Council or the Mayor has chosen not to follow the ANC recommendation on significant matters where the ANC was noticed that the matter was important. It is a small requirement that informs ANCs and our neighborhood residents why elected Councilmembers and the Mayor didn't agree with the ANC's position.

Rather than validating the role of ANCs, the substitute bill diminishes the ANC role in civic decision making. **ANC 3C cannot support the substitute bill. We urge you to abandon its consideration by the Council and any vote on its passage.**<sup>1</sup> We realize that the omnibus bill will die at the end of 2016 and that your enormous efforts to empower ANCs may not include introducing a new bill in 2017. However, we hope that you will continue to seek clarity on ANC notice requirements and provide ANCs with "great weight" influence on the full range of civic matters that greatly affect our residents.

Best regards,



Catherine May  
Chairman, ANC3C

CC: The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman  
The Honorable Brianne Nadeau, Ward 1  
The honorable Jack Evans, Ward 2  
The Honorable Mary Cheh, Ward 3  
The Honorable Brandon Todd, Ward 4  
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The Honorable La Ruby May, Ward 8  
The Honorable David Grosso, At Large  
The Honorable Elisa Silverman, At Large  
The Honorable Robert White, Jr. At Large

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<sup>1</sup> This letter was not considered at an ANC 3C public meeting because the issue arose between meetings. This letter will be placed on ANC3C's agenda for a formal vote at the December 12, 2016 public meeting.

