



## **Press Release**

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## **Councilmember Bowser Addresses Public on Omnibus Anti-Crime Amendment Act of 2009**

Washington, DC - Ward 4 Councilmember Muriel Bowser attended a press conference yesterday held at the corner of 14th and W Streets NW in Ward 1 to highlight the rash of violence in the area. At the press conference Councilmember Bowser joined Mayor Adrian Fenty and Police Chief Cathy Lanier to encourage the Council of the District of Columbia to pass on June 2 "The Omnibus Anti-Crime Amendment Act of 2009," which was introduced by the Mayor. Officials at the press conference also highlighted the fact that as spring draws to a close the public will see an increase in the number of violent crimes in the District.

Also in attendance were Ward 1 Councilmember Jim Graham, Ward 2 Councilmember Jack Evans, Attorney General Peter Nickles and U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Jeffrey A. Taylor.

"Although the press conference was held in Ward 1, the increase in violent crimes affects every ward," Councilmember Bowser said. "The restlessness of summer brings an increase in crime. The time is now to press the case for this very necessary anti-crime bill. I stand with Mayor Fenty and Chief Lanier in urging the Council to pass this bill."

Councilmember Bowser continued "Recently a resident had a bullet hit the wall outside his bedroom window. Last year this same gentleman had a bullet go through his window. He now sleeps in his living room with furniture blocking the windows. We must not allow our residents to live in fear."

This bill is a proactive, not reactive measure. Bowser said "As a native Washingtonian, I know just how far our city has progressed in bringing the number of violent crimes down. But we cannot rest on our laurels. As summer approaches, I am reminded of three summers ago when the city passed emergency crime legislation in the aftermath of a violent crime wave. This bill allows us to face the problem head-on so we're not playing catch up."

Here are some highlights from the bill:

- \* Increases the penalty for a felon in possession of a firearm to a mandatory minimum of five years, if the person has previously been convicted of a violent crime.
- \* Creates a gun offender registry requiring gun offenders to register with the Metropolitan Police Department and verify their information and provides penalties for non-compliance.
- Creates the new charge of use of a stolen vehicle to commit a crime of violence with a minimum penalty of five years. (Judge must sentence the person to at least 5 years but can suspend execution of all or part of it and place the person on probation)
- \* Authorizes the issuance of civil injunctions against gangs declaring their public behavior a

nuisance and requiring specific prohibitions.

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