

**Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary
Notice of Public Hearing**

1350 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004

**COUNCILMEMBER PHIL MENDELSON, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE JUDICIARY ANNOUNCES A
PUBLIC HEARING**

on

Bill 18-482, Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Equality Amendment Act of 2009

on

**Monday, October 26, 2009
3:30 p.m., 5th Floor Council Chambers, John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004**

Councilmember Phil Mendelson, Chairperson of the Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary, announces a public hearing on Bill 18-482, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Equality Amendment Act of 2009. The public hearing will be held at 3:30 p.m. on October 26, 2009 in the 5th Floor Council Chambers of the John A. Wilson Building.

The stated purpose of Bill 18-482 is to amend the law to permit same-sex couples to marry in the District of Columbia; to ensure that no priest, minister, imam, or rabbi of any religious denomination and no official of any non-profit religious organization authorized to solemnize marriages shall be required to celebrate any marriage if doing so violates his or her right to the free exercise of religion; to protect religious freedom with respect to doctrine and public accommodations; and to amend the Health Care Benefits Expansion Act of 1992 to discontinue the registration of new domestic partnerships after January 1, 2011 and to allow any existing domestic partners to either continue their domestic partnership or convert their domestic partnership into a marriage without paying an additional fee.

Those who wish to testify should contact Ms. Deborah Kelly, Legislative Clerk, at (202) 724-7808, by fax at (202) 724-6664, or via e-mail at dkelly@dccouncil.us, and provide their name, address, telephone number, organizational affiliation and title (if any) by close of business Thursday, October 22, 2009. Persons wishing to testify are encouraged, but not required, to submit 15 copies of written testimony. If submitted by the close of business on Thursday, October 22, 2009 the testimony will be distributed to Councilmembers before the hearing. **As it is anticipated that a large number of witnesses will testify, witnesses will be limited to three minutes of testimony.** The Committee will continue this hearing at a later date if the number of witnesses exceeds what can be reasonably accommodated in a single day.

If you are unable to testify at the hearing, written statements are encouraged and will be made a part of the official record. Copies of written statements should be submitted either to Ms. Kelly, or to Ms. Cynthia Brock-Smith, Secretary to the Council, Room 5 of the Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004. The record will close at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 9, 2009.