

Todd Introduces Variety of Legislation At March 20th DC Council Meeting

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Washington, DC – At today’s DC Council legislative meeting, Councilmember Brandon Todd (D-Ward 4) introduced three bills on a variety of topics.

The “**Warnings Before Citations Amendment Act of 2018**” would require the District Department of Public Works (DPW) to give a warning to residents before issuing a \$75 citation related to residential trash cans being improperly stored in alleys. Councilmember Todd introduced this legislation after writing a letter to DPW Director Christopher Shorter on the subject. The push comes in response to significant concern among Ward 4 residents about the apparent sudden increase in citations.

“Given the widespread insistence from residents – many of whom have lived in the District for 20 years or more – that they cannot recall these rules being enforced and were therefore not aware of their obligations, I believe that some leniency and flexibility are in order,” said **Councilmember Todd**. “It is unfair to penalize residents for failing to abide by a rule that they did not know existed. While I fully understand the importance of enforcing the law, DPW has been overly-aggressive in their enforcement techniques and this bill would mandate a more sensible approach.”

Councilmember Todd also introduced the “**Injured Public Workers Fairness Amendment Act of 2018**,” which would restructure the District’s public sector worker’s compensation program to be more equitable and fair. The legislation would institute a number of changes to the existing program. It repeals the ban on compensating public workers for emotional injuries, such as post-traumatic stress disorder; establishes that an employee’s health care benefits shall not be terminated while they receive workers compensation benefits; extends the time for case closure from one year to three years; gives preference to the opinion of the injured worker’s treating physician; and clarifies that attorney compensation shall be based on medical and indemnity benefits secured both retroactively and in the future.

“The District Government employs tens of thousands of people, several hundred of whom sustain work-related injuries every year and apply for workers compensation benefits. As the system has evolved and financial conditions forced a reduction in benefits, our injured workers have seen increasingly unfair treatment. It’s time they get a fair shake,” said **Councilmember Todd**. “Council has already agreed that many of these measures are needed – some of the changes proposed in this bill were passed in the Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Support Act, but were never funded. Our public employees do the work of the people, and if they’re injured in the line of duty, they deserve fairer treatment and fuller benefits than they currently receive.”

Finally, Councilmember Todd introduced the “**Newborn Screening Amendment Act of 2018**,” which adds the test for Adrenoleukodystrophy, better known as ALD, to the list of newborn screenings that District hospitals must offer. ALD is a rare genetic brain disorder, affecting approximately one in every 18,000 people, which impairs nerve function and results in physical and mental deterioration.

“Requiring newborn screening for ALD is a commonsense way to save lives through early detection,” said **Councilmember Todd**. “In 2016, the Federal Government added ALD to their recommended list of screenings, and to-date six states have made this a requirement. The District must follow suit. We must do anything in our power to save families the pain of learning about this diagnosis after it is too late to medically intervene.”

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