



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER BROOKE PINTO
THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W., SUITE 106
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

September 18, 2023

Nyasha Smith, Secretary
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Smith,

Today, I, along with Councilmembers Mathew Frumin, Christina Henderson, Brianne K. Nadeau, Robert C. White, Jr., and Janeese Lewis George, am introducing the “Safe Commercial Corridors Amendment Act of 2023.” This bill will promote and support community innovation in public safety, and build on proven successes, in partnership with local leaders in our commercial corridors across the District. Based on feedback and collaboration with community organizations, the funding would allow organizations to develop community-driven, evidence-based proposals that respond to the hyperlocal needs of the communities they serve.

With increasing prevalence of theft and violent crime in commercial corridors across the District, we must think creatively about how to meet the various and particular needs of these areas. Businesses of all sizes across the District have experienced concerns regarding the impact of crime and violence on the health and safety of their employees and their ability to successfully operate their business.

The Safe Commercial Corridors Amendment Act of 2023 gives the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice limited grantmaking authority to establish an expanded Safe Commercial Corridors Grant Program that provides flexible funds directly to local leaders in our commercial corridors, like our Business Improvement Districts and Main Streets, to implement proven and innovative public safety solutions. Every community’s needs are different and these local leaders know what works best for their communities. Some possible uses of this funding are increased public safety patrols, improved lighting to deter crime, and enhancements to violence prevention efforts. The bill expands the Safe Commercial Corridors Pilot Program established through the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Support Act to allow grants to be distributed District-wide.

Should you have any questions about this legislation, please contact my Legislative Director, Linn Groft, at lgroft@dccouncil.gov or (205)440-7600.

Best,


A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "BE PINTO".


Brooke Pinto



Councilmember Matthew Frumin


Councilmember Brooke Pinto


Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau


Councilmember Christina Henderson


Councilmember Janeese Lewis George


Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.

AN ACT

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To require the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice to establish the Safe Commercial Corridors Program to distribute grants citywide.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Safe Commercial Corridors Amendment Act of 2023”.

Sec. 2. The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice Establishment Act of 2011, effective September 14, 2011 (D.C. Law 19-21; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.191), is amended by adding a new subsection 3023(c) to read as follows:

“(c)(1) The Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice (“Deputy Mayor”) shall establish a program, under which the Deputy Mayor shall have grantmaking authority to issue grants to eligible organizations, as described in paragraph (2) of this subsection, solely for the purpose of creating or augmenting a Safe Commercial Corridors Program, which shall promote public safety and health through evidence-based activities for residents, workers, and visitors within the area served by the organization and the surrounding area (“commercial district”).

“(2) To be eligible for a grant under this subsection, an organization shall:

“(A) Serve the District’s residents, workers, business owners, property owners, and visitors of a commercial corridor in the District; and

“(B) Engage in the maintenance of public and commercial spaces in the District.

“(3) An organization seeking a grant under this subsection shall submit to the Deputy Mayor a proposed Safe Commercial Corridors Program application, in a form prescribed by the Deputy Mayor, which shall include:

“(A) A description of the public safety and health problems faced in the commercial district;

“(B) A Safe Commercial Corridors Program Plan describing how the applicant proposes to spend the grant funds in evidence-based ways to address the public safety and health problems identified in the application and to promote improvements in public safety and health in the commercial district;

“(C) A Clean Hands certification; and

“(D) Any additional information requested by the Deputy Mayor.

“(4) A Safe Commercial Corridors Program Plan may include the following activities:

“(A) Relationship-building with residents, workers, businesses, and regular visitors;

“(B) Connecting residents, workers, visitors, and businesses with resources available through District government agencies and direct service providers:

“(C) Providing safe passage for individuals who request accompaniment walking to transit or their vehicles;

“(D) Assisting business owners with improvements to their security and safety systems and protocols;

“(E) Responding to individuals with substance use disorders and implementing harm-reduction strategies;

“(F) Implementing de-escalation techniques;

“(G) Deterring crime and public safety violations;

“(H) Liaising with residents, workers, businesses, visitors, District public safety and health agencies, direct service providers in the community, and others as appropriate;

“(I) Providing culturally competent services and programming; and

“(J) Implementing other innovative strategies to promote public safety.

“(5) Organizations receiving funds pursuant to this subsection shall endeavor to coordinate with other organizations receiving funds pursuant to this subsection and to share results and lessons learned from implementation of a Safe Commercial Corridors Program and other public safety efforts implemented by the organization.

“(6) A grant awarded pursuant to this subsection may be used to pay for the costs of:

“(A) Salary and fringe benefits for staff;

“(B) Equipment, training, training materials, uniforms, first aid and other medical materials and equipment, and other materials and equipment for purposes of implementing the Safe Commercial Corridors Program; and

“(C) Other costs that support improved public safety and health pursuant to the Safe Commercial Corridors Program Plan.

“(7) An organization receiving a grant pursuant to this subsection shall submit a report to the Deputy Mayor by the end of each fiscal year in which funds are received containing the following:

“(A) An evaluation of the success of its Safe Commercial Corridors Program, including a detailed description of the program activities;

“(B) A description of any training or support provided to program staff;

“(C) A summary of the number and types of interactions between program staff and residents, visitors, businesses, and other individuals;

“(D) Evidence indicating the impact of the program activities on public safety and health indicators; and

“(E) Any other data or information as required by the Deputy Mayor.”.

Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975, approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

Sec. 4. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(2) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)2)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.