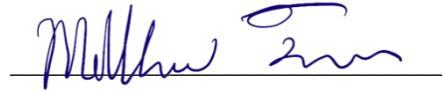


1 

2
3 Chairman Phil Mendelson



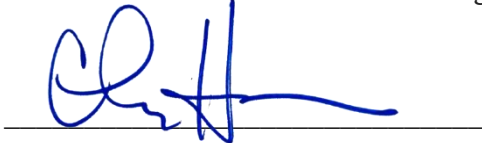
Councilmember Matthew Frumin

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5
6 Councilmember Janeese Lewis George



Councilmember Charles Allen

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10 Councilmember Christina Henderson

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14 A CEREMONIAL

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18 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

19
20
21
22 To recognize, honor, and celebrate the late Dr. Brent Blackwelder for his service to the District
23 of Columbia as one of its earliest, most successful environmental advocates who helped put the
24 city on an aggressive course to address the climate crisis and environmental challenges District
25 residents face.

26
27 WHEREAS, Dr. Brent Blackwelder was born in 1943 in Buffalo, New York to Evelyn
28 Hellen and the Reverend Francis Blackwelder;

29
30 WHEREAS, in 1948 the Blackwelder family moved to the District of Columbia where
31 Dr. Blackwelder attended John Eaton Elementary School and St. Albans School;

32
33 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder graduated from Duke University summa cum laude in
34 1964 and earned a Master of Arts in mathematics from Yale University and a PhD in philosophy
35 from the University of Maryland;

36
37 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder stated that his purpose in life was “to improve the health
38 and environmental protections in DC, the United States, and also internationally with global
39 treaties to safeguard the Earth’s atmosphere”;

41 WHEREAS, for his efforts Dr. Blackwelder has been proclaimed an icon in the United
42 States environmental movement, and a true champion for rivers;

43

44 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder believed that the District of Columbia should be a shining
45 example for cities and states working to create a healthier and more just urban environment;

46

47 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder, working with The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz
48 Foundation and other DC environmental leaders, created the DC Environmental Network to
49 channel the knowledge and expertise of national and environmental organizations based in the
50 District of Columbia toward the betterment of the District;

51

52 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder committed Friends of the Earth to coordinate, house, and
53 dedicate its staff and his time to make the DC Environmental Network a reality;

54

55 WHEREAS, the DC Environmental Network has been protecting the environmental
56 interests in DC for 28 years;

57

58 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder's warmth and mentorship offered support to other
59 environmental activists;

60

61 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder, as a member of Mayor Vincent Gray's Green Ribbon
62 Committee, contributed to the development of the District's first Sustainable DC Plan;

63

64 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder shared his strategic campaign and communications wisdom
65 while hosting the Coalition for Smarter Growth's monthly meetings for the first five years after
66 its founding in 1997;

67

68 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder brought together community conservation groups and legal
69 advocates in his pioneering of grassroots access to the courts and lawmakers to build toward
70 their shared environmental justice goals;

71

72 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder led Friends of the Earth in groundbreaking litigation under
73 the Clean Water Act to restore the Anacostia River into a waterway that the District can once
74 again enjoy for fishing, swimming, and recreation;

75

76 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder served with distinction on the board of directors for
77 Potomac Riverkeeper Network from 2009 through 2022;

78

79 WHEREAS, Potomac Riverkeeper Network successfully challenged Dominion Energy’s
80 leaking coal ash pits at Possum Point, compelling the Virginia General Assembly to pass
81 legislation requiring Dominion to clean up the point in 2019;

82
83 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder was a prominent and effective advocate for global
84 environmental protection for nearly five decades, testifying to Congress more than 100 times;

85
86 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder helped found and served as first Board Chair of the
87 American Rivers Conservation Council, dedicated to protecting and preserving the remaining
88 free-flowing rivers in the United States, headquartered here in Washington DC;

89
90 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder’s exuberant love of nature was reflected in his annual
91 Spring wildflower walks at Carderock that he led for St. Columba’s Episcopal Church;

92
93 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder’s more than 50 years of service to the local, national, and
94 global environmental movement has improved the lives of millions of people while protecting
95 rivers, species, ecosystems, and public health;

96
97 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder’s charge to us, stated in a 1997 profile, is to “keep up the
98 fight for justice and a healthy planet”; and

99
100 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackwelder passed away on November 23, 2023.

101
102 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
103 resolution may be cited as the “Dr. Brent Blackwelder Posthumous Recognition Resolution of
104 2024”.

105
106 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes, honors, and celebrates Dr.
107 Brent Blackwelder for his exemplary service to the District of Columbia and its residents as one
108 of its most impactful local environmental advocates.

109
110 Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
111 the District of Columbia Register.