

A RESOLUTION

22-515

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

June 5, 2018

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the Helicopter Landing Pad Public Nuisance Act of 1987 to permit the operation of a singular helicopter landing pad at a hospital that is certified as a Level One Trauma Center as of the date of the construction of the helicopter landing pad, to require the Mayor to conduct an analysis of newly constructed helicopter landing pads used for more than 175 round-trip flights in a calendar year and to take further action as appropriate, to require the Mayor to determine whether to curtail helicopter flights between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. from newly constructed helicopter landing pads at hospitals that are certified as Level One Trauma Centers, and to grant the Mayor rulemaking authority.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Helicopter Landing Pad Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2018”.

Sec. 2. (a) There exists an immediate need to amend the Helicopter Landing Pad Public Nuisance Act of 1987, effective October 9, 1987 (D.C. Law 7-40; D.C. Official Code § 9-1211.01), to allow a hospital that is certified as a Level One Trauma Center to commence construction of a helicopter landing pad.

(b) Under current law, it is considered a public nuisance to operate a helicopter landing pad that was not in operation prior to July 14, 1987 in any area zoned residential. Consequently, George Washington University Hospital (“GW Hospital”), which is certified as a Level One Trauma Center and a Comprehensive Stroke Center, is prohibited from operating a helicopter landing pad.

(c) MedStar Washington Hospital Center is the only other hospital in the District that is certified as a Level One Trauma Center and a Comprehensive Stroke Center. Further, MedStar Washington Hospital Center has a helicopter landing pad.

(d) Currently, a medivac helicopter that transfers a patient to GW Hospital must land at the South Capitol Street Heliport (“Heliport”), which is located by Nationals Park. From there an ambulance is used to transport the patient to GW Hospital. The Heliport is over four and a half miles from GW Hospital. Depending on the time of day and the traffic, the time it takes an ambulance to transport a patient can be substantial.

**ENROLLED ORIGINAL**

(e) In response to the need to ensure that District residents have greater access to life-saving care and to help the District be better prepared for mass casualty events, the Council has passed on first reading the Helicopter Landing Pad Amendment Act of 2018, passed on 1st reading on May 1, 2018 (Engrossed version of Bill 22-579) (“Permanent Act”). The Permanent Act is scheduled to have its second and final reading before the Council on June 5, 2018.

(f) Passage of emergency legislation similar to the Permanent Act is necessary because, even though GW Hospital has been given initial approval by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to operate a helicopter landing pad, the helicopter landing pad must be fully constructed and ready for inspection by the FAA by June 13, 2019 to receive final approval.

(g) As time is of the essence, and the Permanent Act most likely will not become law until the fall, emergency legislation will allow the construction of the helicopter landing pad at GW Hospital to commence as soon as possible.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the Helicopter Landing Pad Emergency Amendment Act of 2018 be adopted after a single reading.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.