



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A

“Serving the Foggy Bottom and West End communities of Washington, D.C.”

June 2, 2021

Councilmember Elissa Silverman
Chair, Committee on Labor and Workforce Development
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 402
Washington, DC 20004
esilverman@dccouncil.us

RE: Department of Employment Services’ Budget Priorities

Dear Councilmember Silverman,

At its regular meeting on May 19, 2021, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A (“**ANC 2A**” or “**Commission**”) considered the above-referenced matter. With seven of seven commissioners present, a quorum at a duly-noticed public meeting, the Commission voted unanimously (**7-0-0**), after a motion made by Commissioner Patel and seconded by Commissioner Causey, to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, in May of 2020, ANC 2A voted 7-0-0 in favor of prioritizing FY 2021 budget funds to update the Department of Employment Services’ (DOES) antiquated IT infrastructure,

WHEREAS, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, new unemployment insurance (UI) claims in the District of Columbia, as of May 14, 2021, have reached an unprecedented level, with 201,430 new claims¹,

WHEREAS, DOES needs to immediately prioritize the backlog of 13,000² unemployment claimants who had their benefits interrupted when DOES adjusted for the America Rescue Plan,

WHEREAS, these challenges are due to some of the following reasons:

- lack of properly trained DOES staff,
- incorrect and conflicting information by DOES staff, and
- outdated IT structure,

WHEREAS, 1 in 5³ unemployment insurance claimants have had their benefits interrupted since March of 2021 with no resolution as of today,

¹ [DC DOES \(@DOES_DC\) / Twitter](#)

² https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/dc-unemployment-council-morris-hughes/2021/05/12/3dd202de-b337-11eb-9059-d8176b9e3798_story.html

³ Ibid



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WHEREAS, DOES still has several thousand claimants who have not received back UI claims when their benefits were interrupted in September of 2020 when claimants were transitioned to Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation due to having combined wages from working in neighboring states in the tri-state region, and

WHEREAS, DOES should match in scale their response to the urgency that this crisis has inflicted upon claimants with regards to food and housing insecurity.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 2A urgently encourages the DC Council’s Committee on Labor and Workforce Development to allocate funding for the modernization of the DOES unemployment insurance system and comprehensive training for all staff.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 2A urges the DC Council to introduce legislation to cut through the red tape so that thousands of unemployment insurance claimants may receive their direly needed funds.

Commissioners Trupti Patel (2A03@anc.dc.gov) and Jeri Epstein (2A06@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission’s representatives in this matter.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION.

Sincerely,

Jeri Epstein
Chairperson