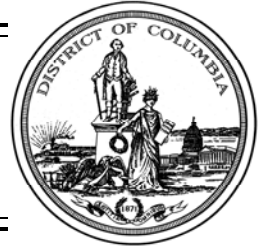

**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

MARY M. CHEH, CHAIR



March 27, 2009

Mr. David Gragan
Director
Office of Contracting and Procurement
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 700 South
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Director Gragan:

It has come to my attention that the Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) has issued an emergency rulemaking with the intent to distribute surplus District property to the town of Sosua in the Dominican Republic. Under the proposed rules, OCP would transfer an ambulance and an FEMS firetruck to Peaceaholics, Inc., who would then donate the property to the town of Sosua.

The purpose of the DC surplus program is to generate needed cash flow from these sales for the District. In return, funds are deposited directly into the treasury to cover the costs of other government services. The Office of Contracting and Procurement has been entrusted by the residents of the District of Columbia to manage all sales under this program. Donations made through intermediaries to foreign nations under emergency rulemakings and without sufficient justification threaten the image of the agency and the District. Furthermore, this rulemaking is contrary to the information available to the public on the OCP's website, specifically listing Police, Fire and EMS vehicles as items sold for surplus revenue.

Recent reports have suggested that the value of this property may exceed \$350,000. While a humanitarian effort of this level is commendable, in these rough economic times we must maintain strict fiscal discipline with our stewardship of taxpayer dollars. In an effort to better assess this emergency, I ask that you provide a response to the following questions no later than Wednesday April 1, 2009.

1. Please describe the emergency nature of this rulemaking.
2. In how many cases has the District provided surplus goods to a non-profit organization or foreign jurisdiction? And how often has OCP given property to an organization and then allowed it to transfer the property immediately to a third party. Please provide any information on past donations of substantial value.

3. What relationship if any does Peaceaholics, Inc. have with the town of Sosua? Why and how was Peaceaholics, Inc. selected as the intermediary for this donation? And how was Sosua selected as the third party beneficiary.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions or require clarification, please contact Jeremy Faust, Committee Clerk, at jfaust@dccouncil.us or Charles Sumpter, Policy Analyst, at csumpter@dccouncil.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary M. Cheh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a distinct "C" at the end.

Mary M. Cheh, Councilmember, Ward 3
Chair, Committee on Government Operations and the Environment

Cc: Peter Nickles, Attorney General of the District of Columbia