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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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*******PRESS RELEASE*****PRESS RELEASE*******

COUNCILMEMBER CHEH INTRODUCES “OPEN GOVERNMENT ACT”

(Washington, DC) Councilmember Mary M. Cheh (Ward 3) announced today that she will introduce the “Open Government Act of 2010,” a sweeping reform measure that will increase the accountability and transparency of the District government. Cheh announced the measure in a video on her website and called on interested persons to contribute their ideas.

Among the reforms included in the legislation are:

- The creation of an Open Government Office that would be responsible for enforcing and assisting both the public and the government in effectively implementing the District of Columbia’s Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”)
- Increasing public access to public records by making significant changes to FOIA
- Requiring agencies to develop biennial transparency plans
- Overhauling the District’s rulemaking processes
- Reforms in District official and lobbyist disclosures
- Increasing budget and spending transparency through the creation of a spending transparency website

The Councilmember also announced a tentative schedule for the bill’s consideration, including four working groups and a public hearing:

- May 6, 2010—Working Group #1 (Titles 1 & 2)
- May 13, 2010—Working Group #2 (Titles 5 & 6)
- May 20, 2010—Working Group #3 (Titles 3 & 4)

- May 27, 2010—Working Group #4 (Title 7)
- June 7, 2010—Public Hearing

“This legislation cuts to the very core our government’s operations,” Cheh said. “For too long, the promise of our freedom of information, administrative procedure, and disclosure laws has gone unfulfilled. The introduction of this bill represents the beginning of a new era of transparency in District government.”

A copy of the introduced legislation can be found on Councilmember Cheh’s website at opengovernment.marycheh.com.

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