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**OFFICE OF MARY M. CHEH**

COUNCILMEMBER, WARD 3

CHAIR, COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & THE ENVIRONMENT

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**SUBJECT:** One Page Summary of the Healthy Schools Act

**DATE:** February 18, 2010

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**I. SUMMARY**

The Healthy Schools Act will substantially improve the health, wellness, and nutrition of our public and charter school students. It complements the existing educational reforms enacted by the Mayor and the Council and supports DCPS, OSSE, and SBOE. Specifically, this bill would (1) make school meals healthier and more nutritious; (2) increase the amount of local and fresh fruits and vegetables served in schools; (3) increase exercise and physical activity in our schools; (4) promote school gardens, recycling, energy reduction, and other green initiatives; and (5) improve school nurse, asthma, and allergy programs. We are working closely with DCPS, OSSE, and many community groups to develop the most effective legislation possible.

**II. KEY HEALTH STATISTICS**

- The District has the highest rate of adolescent obesity in the nation. According to the CDC, 18% of our high school students are obese and 35% are overweight. According to the *Washington Post*, nearly half of the children in some neighborhoods in the District are overweight.
- According to the Surgeon General, childhood obesity increases the risk of diabetes, heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, asthma and cancer.
- 70% of high school students in the District failed to meet the CDC's recommended levels of physical activity.
- In the District, 81% of high school students do not eat the recommended five daily servings of fruits and vegetables.
- Because 32% of children in the District live in poverty (and 19.2% live in extreme poverty), access to medical care is limited for many students.
- According to the DOH, "The District of Columbia has one of the nation's highest asthma rates." More than one-in-six children in the District has asthma.

**III. SCHEDULE**

- Public Hearing: March 26, 2010 at 11:00 a.m.
- Effective Date: August 2010