

Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia
Fiscal Year 2009 Oversight Hearing, March 1, 2010

Testimony of Stephanie D. Scott, Secretary of the District of Columbia

Good morning, Chairman Cheh and other members of the committee. I have submitted answers to the Committee's questions, which I expect we will discuss, so I would like to begin with a summary of the Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia during FY09.

The Office of the Secretary provides protocol, authentication and public records management services to the Mayor and District government agencies. We have six units:

- the **Executive Office**, which manages and supports the other five offices, coordinates special programs, manages the office website, processes Freedom of Information Act requests for the Executive Office of the Mayor, and receives all legal service to the Mayor;
- the **Office of Documents and Administrative Issuances (ODAI)**, which is responsible for the publication of the District of Columbia Register, the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, and all other legal publications;
- the **Office of Protocol and International Affairs**, which serves as the Mayor's primary liaison to the diplomatic community and receives and greets official guests of the Mayor;
- the **Office of Notary Commissions and Authentications**, which authenticates documents for domestic and foreign use, commissions all District of Columbia notaries public, and accepts passport applications for the US State Department;
- the **Office of Ceremonial Services**, which processes all requests for ceremonial documents signed by the Mayor; and
- the **Office of Public Records Management**, which services the District's temporary and historic records, and provides document access to researchers, the public and District agencies.

In Fiscal year 2009 we made several improvements to the ways we serve the public, and we look forward to continuing to improve our efficiency and service delivery in FY10.

As you know, the biggest project for us in FY09 was the updating and digitizing of the DCMR, which was managed entirely by Andrea Garvey, Administrator of the **Office of Documents and Administrative Issuances**. On September 30, 2009, we published the newly updated titles on the web. This marks the first time in the history of the District of Columbia government that all of the city's rules and regulations have been compiled in one place, available free to all. As I am sure we will discuss, the compilation of the regulations has revealed more work to be done by all agencies, including my own. The further updates that this process has revealed demonstrate the importance of the entire venture. The process of compiling the complete DCMR has uncovered

the need to update, change, or delete policies, which will help all agencies improve their public service, transparency, and efficiency.

At the **Office of Public Records**, we successfully recruited an administrator with experience in the newest technological advances in Records and Information Management. After a nationwide search we selected Mark Mandel, a Certified Records Manager, with 30 years of experience and continuing education in the records management industry. Our focus on improving the OPR in FY 09 included cosmetic improvements to the office, as well as outdoor signage and a strategic planning conference attended by stakeholders including District records officers, NARA representatives, and industry experts.

At the **Office of Notary Commissions and Authentications**, we implemented electronic payments, offering customers the options of paying for services through credit and debit cards. We also began planning for the many ways we can improve the office's services, such as shortening the time required for the application process and online application submissions. In early FY10 (mid-October 2009), we debuted the first ever map of notaries public in Washington, DC, for which we have received many appreciative comments.

The **Office of Protocol and International Affairs**, staffed by Dr. Patricia Elwood, organized the convocation of the District's Twelfth Electoral College on December 15, 2009, during which time the District's three electors, Council Chairman Vincent Gray, Ward 4 Councilmember Muriel Bowser, and citizen-activist Jerry Cooper, cast their ballots for Barack Obama and Joseph Biden in the official vote for President and Vice President, respectively. FY09 also witnessed the completion of an important project for our sister city relationship with Beijing, China, in the renovation of the Chinatown Archway.

In the **Executive Office**, staff participated in the government-wide task force responsible for planning the 56th Presidential Inauguration, and I was pleased to work with Council Secretary Cynthia Brock-Smith in planning the festivities for the John A. Wilson Building during the inauguration and parade. We also celebrated the debut of a one-hour documentary on DC Emancipation Day, which is available for viewing on our website.

I will end my statement there, and I look forward to answering any questions you have.