

March 23, 2010

Testimony of Carlene Olobayo

Hi, my name is Carlene D. Olobayo. I have lived and worked in the Washington, DC area for most of my life, and for over 28 years I have worked as a Special Police Officer. Being in this profession I have seen a lot of companies come and go. They lose contracts to other companies, go out of business one month, change their names and are back up running with a new contract the next. They never intend to pay the old employees. Therefore, some employees pay for a lawyer in hopes they can get the money owed to them before two or three years pass.

That's why we need and want a strong procurement bill. So that it will ensure that security companies are mandated to treat their employees fairly by law, and that the employees are paid even if the company goes out of business. A good procurement bill will ensure that a security company will be thoroughly investigated to prevent bad companies with troubled business practices from getting city contracts, or from just changing their name to stay in business. In closing, I, on behalf of security officers across the District humbly request action.

Carlene Olobayo

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Dear Council Members:

I am a former employee of Hawk One Security, and am currently an officer for US Security Associates working at Judiciary Square. I have been doing security for the city for 20 years under DC security contracts. I had problems with payroll at each company, and most recently Hawk One folded suddenly leaving me without my last two weeks of pay.

Furthermore, a lot of the managers, including the project manager, who worked for Hawk One are now working for US Security. How can the new company avoid the same problems Hawk One had, when the same people are running the show?

When I applied to be a security officer, I had to go through a background check. Why does it seem like the security companies that have been contracted by the city over the years didn't go through a thorough background check as well?

I ask that you pass real procurement reform that includes bonding for security companies and requires that only responsible contractors can be granted city contracts.

Sincerely,

Marie Knight  
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