TO: All Councilmembers

FROM: Councilmember Yvette M. Alexander, Chairperson, Committee on Health and Human Services

DATE: March 11, 2015

SUBJECT: Report on Proposed Resolution 21-28, the "Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015"

The Committee on Health and Human Services, to which PR 21-28, "Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015" was referred, reports favorably thereon, and recommends approval by the Council.

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1. BACKGROUND AND NEED

PR 21-28, the "Director of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015," was introduced on January 27, 2015 by Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services for consideration. The purpose of the legislation is to confirm the Mayoral appointment of Laura G. Zeilinger as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

A. Department of Human Services
The mission of the Department of Human Services (DHS), in collaboration with the community, is to provide temporary support and assistance to low income families and individuals while helping them maximize their potential for economic security and self-sufficiency. There are two administrations within DHS that provide services and benefits to District residents, the Economic Security Administration and the Family Services Administration.

The Economic Security Administration (ESA) determines eligibility for benefits under the following programs:

- Temporary Cash Assistance for Needy Families;
- Medical Assistance;
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program;
- Child Care Subsidy, Burial Assistance, Interim Disability Assistance;
- Parent and Adolescent Support Services; and
- Refugee Cash Assistance.

ESA also provides grants to vendors that provide educational and vocational training programs and employment opportunities for low-income adults.

The Family Services Administration (FSA) provides protection, intervention and social services to meet the needs of vulnerable adults and families to help reduce risk and promote self-sufficiency. FSA administers several social service programs including the:

- Homeless Services Continuum;
- Adult Protective Services;
- Emergency Rental Assistance Program;
- Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program;
- Office of Refugee Resettlement;
- Permanent Supportive Housing Program;
- Strong Families; and the
- Veterans Administration Supportive Housing Program.

B. Nominee’s Qualifications

Ms. Zeilinger is an attorney with a long-standing commitment to underserved populations. Most recently, she served in the Obama Administration as the Executive Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, where she was responsible for coordinating the Federal response to homelessness through the implementation of Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. The Open Doors initiative included the coordination of federal homelessness policies among 19 federal departments and agencies, as well as partnerships with state and local communities, non-profits, and the private sector. She joined USICH in 2011, and prior to her appointment as Executive Director in 2014, she served as Deputy Director.
From 2008 to 2010, Ms. Zeilinger served as the Deputy Director of Programs at the District of Columbia Department of Human Services. In this role, she led the creation of more than 1,000 units of permanent supportive housing in the District as part of the Homeless No More Plan. She also designed and implemented the District’s Housing First Initiative, which connected 500 individuals and 80 families to housing stability in its first year. Prior to her work with DHS, Ms. Zeilinger served as the Mayor’s liaison to DHS and the Office of Disability Rights. She has also led international economic development efforts, managing a technical assistance project to reform the pension system in the Republic of Kazakhstan as Regional Manager at the International Management and Communications Corporation.

Ms. Zeilinger received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Sarah Lawrence College and her Juris Doctorate from the Washington College of Law at American University. She is a member of the District of Columbia Bar and the State of Maryland Bar.

C. Committee Recommendation

The Committee finds that Ms. Zeilinger is highly qualified and has demonstrated a commitment to excellence in public service throughout her career. Her experience and proven management capabilities suggest that she will provide valuable leadership to the agency. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the Council approve the nomination of Laura G. Zeilinger as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

II. LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

- **January 27, 2015**
  - PR 21-28, the "Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015" is introduced by Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor.

- **February 3, 2015**
  - PR 21-28 was referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services.

- **February 6, 2015**
  - Notice of Intent to Act on PR 21-28 is published in the *D.C. Register*.

- **February 6, 2015**
  - Notice of public roundtable is published in the *D.C. Register*.

- **February 27, 2015**
  - The Committee on Health and Human Services held a public roundtable on PR 21-28.

- **March 11, 2015**
  - The Committee on Health and Human Services considers and marks up PR 21-28.

III. POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE
The Mayor has nominated Laura G. Zeilinger to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

IV. COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

The Committee received no testimony or comments from Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.

V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

On February 27, 2015, the Committee held a confirmation hearing on PR 21-28. The following public witnesses appeared before, or provided written testimony to, the Committee in support of the nominee. A summary of the testimony provided is below. A copy of each testimony submitted to the Committee is attached to this report.

Patricia Fugere, the Executive Director of the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, testified in support of the nominee. Ms. Fugere recalled Mrs. Zeilinger's collaboration with the Legal Clinic during the Fenty Administration when she staffed the then-newly established Interagency Council on Homelessness with energy and dedication. She stated that Ms. Zeilinger has the vision and passion to effectively address the homelessness crisis in the District.

Richard Bradley, Executive Director of the Downtown DC Business Improvement District, testified in support of the nominee. He stated that Ms. Zeilinger brings a wealth of knowledge and an understanding of national best practices, as well as the managerial competency to address the matters of chronic homelessness. Mr. Bradley reiterated his support of Ms. Zeilinger's nomination, and urged for her immediate confirmation.

Linda Kaufman, National Movement Manager for Community Solutions, testified in support of the nominee. She recalled Ms. Zeilinger's work in the City Administrator's office, in which she led efforts to end homelessness in the District using brilliant bureaucratic strategies, intentional community building, and by strategically deploying resources. Ms. Kaufman concluded her testimony by expressing her pleasure that the same skills seen in Ms. Zeilinger's local and national work to end homelessness will now be focused on the issues that impact tens of thousands of people in the District.

Ed Lazere, Executive Director of the DC Fiscal Policy Institute, testified in support of the nominee. He testified to Ms. Zeilinger's efforts in helping the District create its permanent supportive housing program, in addition to helping the city secure federal funding and implement efforts to address veteran's homelessness. He noted that past collaborations between DCFPI and Ms. Zeilinger proved to be a testament to how well she works well the advocacy community. He concluded his statement by describing Ms. Zeilinger as being committed, practical, and collaborative.
Waldon Adams, Ward 4 Resident, provided testimony about his experience participating in the Permanent Supportive Housing, Housing First Program, as well as his advocacy for investment in the program by the District. As a sufferer of bipolar disorder and survivor of drug addiction, Mr. Adams expressed his belief that the Housing First model is what saved his life and is the answer to chronic homelessness.

Marvin Turner, Field Office Director for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, testified in support of the nominee. Mr. Turner highlighted Ms. Zeilinger’s leadership through her efforts heading the Interagency Council on Homelessness, in which she facilitated the launching of initiatives such as the 100,000 Homes Campaign and the Mayor’s Challenge to End Homelessness.

Adrienne Todman, Executive Director of DC Housing Authority, testified in support of the nominee. She described Ms. Zeilinger as being intelligent, tough, and possessing the knowledge necessary to address the issues of homelessness in a compassionate way.

Eric Sheptock, Founder of Shelter, Housing And Respectful Change (SHARC), testified in support of the nominee. He praised how assessable and responsive Ms. Zeilinger was during her previous tenure at DHS and expressed his belief that she is the best candidate for the position.

Kelly Sweeny McShane, CEO of Community Hope, submitted written testimony in support of the nominee. She stated that Ms. Zeilinger has both the expertise and skills to succeed as the Director of the Department of Human Services. Having worked closely with Ms. Zeilinger in her role as Deputy Director of DHS, she expressed that Ms. Zeilinger has extensive expertise in the area of homelessness, both from her previous experience working in the District as well as working at the national level. Ms. McShane described the integral role she played in implementing DHS’ successful Permanent Supportive Housing Program and leveraging resources needed to make programs within the Housing Authority and Veterans Administration happen.

Laura Zeilinger, Nominee. Ms. Zeilinger thanked the Council for consideration of her nomination, and Mayor Bowser for having the confidence in her to help confront some of the District’s most difficult challenges: affordable housing, chronic homelessness, and the issues that accompany them. Ms. Zeilinger acknowledged that through the provision of income and nutrition supports, and a range of programs and services, DHS has an essential role in supporting, strengthening, and improving the well-being of District residents. She described this role as being critically important because it provides the foundation from which there are opportunities to meaningfully support people to overcome crises and strengthen their families and get on a path to employment and/or permanent housing.

After highlighting her previous experience serving as DHS’ Deputy Director for Program Operations and the Executive Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Ms. Zeilinger expressed that the challenge before her and the agency is to ensure that customers have access to resources through local and federal programs that ensure
workforce development. She shared her goal of shifting from operating an array of programs to operating a system that can seamlessly connect people to the supports and services they need.

Ms. Zeilinger outlined the following immediate priorities she plans to address within the agency:

- Improving the internal business processes at DHS to efficiently deploy agency resources;
- Taking immediate steps to improve the delivery of services and supports to homeless singles and families to ensure a faster exit from homelessness,
- Working on a longer term strategy to improve homeless services;
- Evaluating progress on efforts to develop the DC Access System and actions needed to ensure its successful implementation;
- Taking steps to ensure service centers are appropriately staffed and equipped to improved customer service and decrease wait times; and
- Increasing access to employment programs for TANF recipients.

Ms. Zeilinger spoke to the need to change the great lack of parity across the city resulting from decades of disparate access to opportunity. She expressed that she will be entering the position with a respectful, direct approach and with the purpose of advancing social justice in the District of Columbia.

Following her testimony, Chairperson Alexander asked and received responses, as indicated below, to the following required questions.

1. Are you a resident of the District of Columbia and, if so, in which Ward of the District do you resident? **Yes, I reside in Ward 3.**

2. If no, when do you plan to become a District resident? **N/A**

3. Do you own any real property in the District of Columbia? If yes, please list all holdings and investments, including property for which you are part-owner. **Yes, I own my home.**

4. Are you presently a member of any board or commission connected with the District government? If so, please list the names of such boards or commissions, and length of service.
   **I am a member of the Interagency Council on Homelessness, the DC Workforce Investment Council, and a non-voting member of Healthcare Exchange.**

5. Do either you or any member of your immediate family hold an ownership interest in any firm that is now doing or has ever done business with the District of Columbia government? If so, please identify the firm, the extent of your or your family members' ownership interest, and the firm's contracts or other business relationships with the District of Columbia government. **No**
6. Are you presently an officer or director of any corporation, partnership, or other organization in the District of Columbia, either For-profit or non-profit, which is doing business with the District of Columbia government? If so, please list such positions. No

7. Do you have any outstanding liability for any taxes, fees or other payments to the District, federal or other state or local governments, either contested or uncontested? If so, please provide documentation of attempts to pay the amount owed or to resolve the disputed claim. No

VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

PR 21-0028 is in accordance with section 2 of the Confirmation Act of 1978 (D.C. Law 2-142; D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01)

VII. FISCAL IMPACT

Pursuant to section 4(a) of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975 (DC Official Code §1-301.47a(c)), the requirement of a fiscal impact statement for confirmation resolutions does not apply.

VIII. SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1: States the short title of PR 21-0028.

Section 2: Approves the appointment of Laura G. Zeilinger as director of the Department of Human Services.

Section 3: Transmittal of the resolution.

Section 4: Provides the effective date.

IX. COMMITTEE ACTION

On March 11, 2015, the Committee on Health and Human Services met to consider PR 21-28, the "Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015." The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m. and PR 21-28 was the second item on the agenda. After ascertaining a quorum, Councilmember Alexander opened up the floor for discussion, in which there was none. The vote on the print and report was unanimous. (Chairperson Alexander and Councilmembers Cheh and Nadeau voting "aye." Councilmember Grosso was absent.). The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.
X. ATTACHMENTS

A. PR 21-28 as Introduced.
B. Copies of Written Testimony.
C. Legal Sufficiency Memorandum.
D. Committee Print of PR 21-28.
ATTACHMENT ONE
Memorandum

To: Members of the Council

From: Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

Date: January 29, 2015

Subject: Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Office of the Secretary on Tuesday, January 27, 2015. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

TITLE: "Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015", PR21-0028

INTRODUCED BY: Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor

The Chairman is referring this legislation to the Committee on Health and Human Services. This resolution will be deemed approved on Thursday, May 14, 2015 without Council action.

Attachment

cc: General Counsel
Budget Director
Legislative Services
A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Chairman Phil Mendelson, at the request of the Mayor, introduced the following resolution, which was referred to the Committee on _____________.

To confirm the Mayoral appointment of Laura G. Zeilinger as the Director of the Department of Human Services of the District of Columbia.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this resolution may be cited as the “Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015.”

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia confirms the appointment of:

Laura G. Zeilinger
4319 Fessenden Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016
(Ward 3)

as the Director of the Department of Human Services, established by Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1986, effective January 3, 1987, and in accordance with section 2 of the Confirmation Act of 1978, effective March 3, 1979 (D.C. Law 2-142; D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01), to serve at the pleasure of the Mayor of the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution, upon its adoption, each to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.
ATTACHMENT TWO
Council of the District of Columbia  
Committee on Health and Human Services  
Notice of Public Hearing  
1350 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004

COUNCILMEMBER YVETTE M. ALEXANDER, CHAIRPERSON  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ANNOUNCES A PUBLIC HEARING

on

PR21-22, the “Director of the Department of Health LaQuandra Nesbitt Confirmation Resolution of 2015”

and

PR21-28, the “Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015”

Friday, February 27, 2015
11:00 a.m., Room 412, John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Councilmember Yvette M. Alexander, Chairperson of the Committee on Health and Human Services, announces a hearing on PR21-22, the “Director of the Department of Health LaQuandra Nesbitt Confirmation Resolution of 2015”, and PR21-0028, the “Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015”. The public hearing will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, February 27, 2015 in Room 412 of the John A. Wilson Building.

The stated purpose of Proposed Resolution 21-22 and Proposed Resolution 21-28 is to confirm the Mayoral appointments of LaQuandra Nesbitt as the Director of the Department of Health of the District of Columbia, and Laura G. Zeilinger as the Director of the Department of Human Services of the District of Columbia, respectively.

Those who wish to testify should contact Cory Davis, Legislative Assistant for the Committee on Health and Human Services, at (202) 741-0904 or via e-mail at cdavis@dccouncil.us and provide their name, address, telephone number, organizational affiliation and title (if any) by close of business on Wednesday, February 25, 2015. Persons wishing to testify are encouraged, but not required, to submit 15 copies of written testimony. If submitted by the close of business on Wednesday, February 25, 2015, the testimony will be distributed to Councilmembers before the hearing. Witnesses should limit their testimony to four minutes; less time will be allowed if there are a large number of witnesses.

If you are unable to testify at the hearing, written statements are encouraged and will be made a part of the official record. Copies of written statements should be submitted to Ms. Rayna Smith, Room 115 of the Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004. The record will close at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4, 2015.
COUNCILMEMBER YVETTE M. ALEXANDER, CHAIRPERSON COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ANNOUNCES A PUBLIC HEARING ON


AND


Friday, February 27, 2015
11:00 a.m., Room 412, John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

WITNESS LIST

The “Director of the Department of Health LaQuandra Nesbitt Confirmation Resolution of 2015”

1. Robert Malson, Esq.  President and Chief Executive Officer, District of Columbia Hospital Association
2. Jacqueline Bowens  CEO, DC Primary Care Association
3. Robert Brandon  Chair, Statewide Health Coordinating Council
4. Mark Vargas  Vice President, Aegis Health Security, Clinton Global Initiative
5. Mohammad N. Akhter, MD, MPH  Department of Family and Community Medicine, School of Medicine, Howard University
6. Feseha Woldu, Ph.D.  Associate Vice President for Clinical Affairs and Quality for Health Services, Howard University
7. Justin Palmer  
Chief Government Relations and Health Policy Officer, District of Columbia Hospital Association

**Executive Witness**

1. Dr. LaQuandra Nesbitt  
Acting Director, Department of Health

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**The "Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015"**

1. Patricia Fugere  
Executive Director, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless

2. Ed Lazere  
Executive Director, DC Fiscal Policy Institute

3. Richard Bradley  
Public Witness

4. Linda Kaufman  
Public Witness

5. Waldon Adams  
Public Witness

6. Marvin Turner  
Office Director for HUD

**Executive Witness**

1. Laura Zeilinger  
Acting Director, Department of Human Services
Testimony before the DC Council Committee on Health and Human Services Public Roundtable on PR 21-28, The Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015

February 27, 2015

Good morning, Chairperson Alexander and members of the Committee. My name is Patricia Mullaly Fugere. I have worked on affordable housing and homelessness issues in DC for nearly 35 years, and since 1991, I have served as the executive director of the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless. The Legal Clinic envisions a just and inclusive community for all residents of the District of Columbia, where housing is a human right and where every individual and family has equal access to the resources they need to thrive. We have extensive experience representing individuals and families experiencing homelessness and other low income community members struggling to maintain stability, and we long have been involved in advocacy to strengthen the District’s programs that support these residents. Many such programs are in the purview of the Department of Human Services.

I come before you this morning to enthusiastically support the nomination of Laura Zeilinger to serve as the Director of DHS. For many of our clients, this appointment may well be the single most important personnel decision that Mayor Bowser has to make, and we believe that she has decided well.

The Legal Clinic first worked with Ms. Zeilinger in the early days of the Fenty Administration, when she was charged with staffing the then-newly established Interagency Council on Homelessness and with setting up the new Office of Disability Rights. It was Ms. Zeilinger’s energy and dedication to addressing the underlying issues of homelessness and disability rights that moved both the ICH and ODR forward.

We worked very closely with Ms. Zeilinger when she moved from the City Administrator’s office over to the Department of Human Services, ultimately serving as deputy director. Once again, it was her energy and dedication that drove the District government’s progress in addressing the needs of individuals and families who had no home. Mayor Fenty’s success in implementing the Housing First program rests with Ms. Zeilinger. She got the program up and moving and worked very hard to assure that those who’d long lived in shelter or on the streets finally had a decent and appropriate place to call home. The intensified move of families out of DC General and into housing in early 2010 when shelter capacity was inadequate to meet the need, is a success that can be put on Ms. Zeilinger’s ledger. To be sure, we did not always see eye-to-eye, but without fail, we found Ms. Zeilinger to be a colleague who was respectful and
responsive to our clients...including well beyond the typical work day. I can recall many
times hearing from our attorneys about late night exchanges with Ms. Zeilinger as she
worked diligently to assure that no family was left to stay in an unsafe or inappropriate
setting. I believe that it caused her great anguish to think of a parent with no alternative
but to lay down her child to sleep at night in a car, a stairwell or worse...and we could
always count on her to turn that anguish into action.

The position that Ms. Zeilinger has been appointed to fill is a big one and it comes with a
very long to-do list: end chronic homelessness; shift from a shelter-based approach to
one that emphasizes housing while still maintaining an adequate safety net; move
families out of shelter more quickly; close down DC General; improve contract
monitoring and contractor accountability; respond year-round to the needs of families;
emphasize the quality of case management; effectively tap private resources to
supplement government programs. This is just a partial list, and only in one area of Ms.
Zeilinger’s responsibility. To this list, we must at least add on the simple task of fixing
TANF.

It’s a big job, and a very long list. But I believe Ms. Zeilinger is up to the task. In my 24
years at the Legal Clinic I have seen many directors of DHS come and go; never have I
been as hopeful as I am now about the leadership of this important agency. In fact,
early indications from her mere month in office are leading me to move beyond feeling
hopeful to feeling optimistic that things will be different for our clients. Already Ms.
Zeilinger is working to improve the Rapid Rehousing program to assure it does not leave
families worse off than before. Already she has brought on-line additional motel
resources to be able to respond to the surge of families seeking shelter in freezing
temperatures. Already she is exploring how to assure that the government’s agents – its
contractors – strive for excellence and operate lawfully in delivering government
services.

Importantly, though, it’s not just what she is doing, but how she is doing it. She is open
to dialogue and collaboration. She sees the big picture and the interconnectedness of
the homelessness crisis with the affordable housing crisis and the unemployment crisis
and pressures of economic development. She is willing to own where the government
falls short and has failed its residents, and is eager to problem solve to assure that such
failings are minimized.

Ms. Zeilinger has vision and passion and seemingly boundless energy, and we couldn’t
be more enthusiastic about working with her in the days, months and years ahead to
finally bring an end to homelessness in the nation’s capital. Without reservation, I urge
your approval of her nomination.
Testimony in Support of Laura Green Zeilinger for Director of the District of Columbia’s Department of Human Services by Marvin Turner

Members of the Council, distinguished guests and friends. My name is Marvin Turner and I am here to provide testimony in support of Laura Green Zeilinger’s appointment as the Director of the Department of Human Services for the District of Columbia. I am speaking to you today in my personal capacity. The view expressed in this statement are my own and are not the opinion or viewpoint of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or its employees. As HUD’s Field Office Director for the District of Columbia, I am responsible for executing the directives of the Department as outlined in the HUD Strategic Plan. These directives include strengthening the housing market, supporting resilient communities, ensuring inclusive housing markets free from discrimination and working to prevent and end homelessness. As part of the Department’s strategic initiative to address homelessness, I was responsible for reestablishing an inter-agency council known as the Region III Interagency Council on Homelessness. It was through my work with the Interagency Council on Homelessness that I became acquainted with Ms. Zeilinger. At the time, Ms. Zeilinger was Executive Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, or USICH. The USICH was responsible for executing President Barack Obama’s strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness entitled, “Opening Doors.”

The Interagency Council on Homelessness involved 19 separate Federal agencies collaborating on various initiatives. As USICH’s representative on the Interagency Counsel on Homelessness, Ms. Zeilinger was able to keep the 19 signatory Federal agencies focused on the plan to prevent and end homelessness, and facilitated the launching of initiatives such as Dedicating Opportunities to End Homelessness, the 100,000 Homes Campaign, and the Mayor’s Challenge to End Homelessness. The success of the Interagency Council in these endeavors was due in no small part to Ms. Zeilinger’s leadership. It is my personal opinion that the energy, intelligence and dedication to mission that Ms. Zeilinger demonstrated as Executive Director of USICH while working with the InterAgency Council on Homelessness make her the ideal candidate to lead the District of Columbia Department of Human Services.
Good morning, my name is Richard Bradley and I am the Executive Director of the DowntownDC Business Improvement District. The Downtown BID has long been involved in providing assistance through clinically-based outreach teams for the chronic homeless in downtown. We have worked with our partners in the city and with our contractor, Pathways to Housing DC, to identify solutions to provide shelter, appropriate care, dignity and independence. Over the past decade the BID has invested over $6M providing essential outreach services as well as assisting in developing better public policies and practices to deal with chronic homelessness.

The DowntownDC BID most enthusiastically supports the nomination of Laura Zeilinger to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services for the District of Columbia.

She brings a wealth of knowledge and an understanding of national best practices, as a result of both her recent tenure serving as the head of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness for the city and as Deputy Director for the same department in 2008-2010. Laura was the architect of the city's first major efforts to provide permanent supportive housing and played a key role in closing the Franklin School Shelter, looking to move homeless into permanent housing and out of the unhealthy shelter environment. During her tenure as Deputy Director, approximately 1000 units of permanent supportive housing were established.
It is clear Ms. Zeilinger has the knowledge and the managerial competency to address the matters of chronic homelessness in balance with homelessness as it relates to struggling families; understanding each requires specific and separate strategic approaches.

While we would like to infuse Ms. Zeilinger with super human powers to immediately resolve all these issues, we know she will need a lot of help from the Administration, from the City Council, from us in the business community and from the citizens of the District of Columbia. It will take significant monies to provide the permanent supportive housing needed in the city as well as time to develop and implement a sustainable system that will provide those in dire situations an efficient program that will bring stability and the opportunity for independence.

We urge her speedy confirmation.
Testimony in support of Laura Green Zeilinger for Director of the Department of Human Services
Washington, DC
By
Linda M Kaufman

For the past thirty years I have worked in homeless services in the District of Columbia. I am currently working on a national campaign to end veteran and chronic homelessness in 71 communities around the country. Each community has committed to end veteran homelessness by the end of this year; chronic homelessness by the end of 2016. Washington, DC, is one of the communities which made that commitment.

In 2008 the conversation in the District of Columbia about homelessness and the reality of those who had no homes changed. We moved from talking about homeless services to a serious plan to end homeless. A huge part of that paradigm shift was the presence and leadership of Laura Green Zeilinger. During her time in the City Administrator’s office and subsequently in the Department of Human Services, Laura was a force of nature. She led us to success in the homeless arena that was never seen before in the District of Columbia and has not been seen since.

During the time Laura was the lead for ending homelessness in Washington, DC, we were regularly housing 100 people a month. We were the first major city to be on track to end homelessness. Laura led this work by an amazing combination of skills: brilliant bureaucratic strategies, intentional community building, and lining up and strategically deploying resources. The interface between DHS, the DC Housing Authority, and The Community Partnership was seamless. I am still in awe of the brilliance Laura brought to that work.

The skills she had when she left to work for the federal government have been enhanced by her time there. She led the national movement to end homelessness. As head of the USICH, her portfolio included Opening Doors, the federal plan to end homelessness. Opening Doors was developed when Laura was doing the work of ending homelessness here in DC, and reflects our work.

I cannot think of anyone better to lead our City’s work to end homelessness. But, even better than having Laura back to take on and finally end homelessness, she is taking on the whole Department of Human Services. The same skills we saw in her local and national work to end homelessness will now be focused the issues that impact tens of thousands of people in the District. We are a better City having her prodigious skills refocused on people in the District of Columbia who are poor, some without homes, and some whose families are not stable.

We are lucky to have Laura Green Zeilinger back.
Chairman Alexander and other members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Ed Lazere, and I am the executive director of the DC Fiscal Policy Institute. DCFPI works to develop policy solutions to reduce income inequality and promote economic opportunity and widespread prosperity for all residents of the District of Columbia.

I am here today to offer my highest possible endorsement of the confirmation of Laura Zeilinger to be the Director of the District's Department of Human Services. I have worked with Ms. Zeilinger for nearly a decade, and I am impressed by her deep commitment to the dignity and stability of people who rely on government for their most basic needs, her understanding of what government services can accomplish and what their limits are, her roll-up-the-sleeves approach to tackling enormously challenging problems, and how she holds herself and everyone around her to the highest performance standards.

I first worked with Laura when she served in DHS under the Fenty Administration. Under her leadership, the District made enormous strides to tackle the problem of chronic homelessness. Ms. Zeilinger helped the city secure federal funding and implement efforts to address veteran's homelessness, and she helped the District create its permanent supportive housing program. As a result, thousands of residents have been stably housed and able to tackle long-time and complex personal challenges, such as severe mental illness, and it has save the District money by reducing reliance on emergency and band-aid services.

Last winter, the DC Fiscal Policy Institute sought Ms. Zeilinger's help as the District faced an explosion in family homelessness. Although Laura was working at the national Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness, and not for the city, she responded immediately with a clear desire to help. She offered advice and support from her staff as we worked to develop solutions.

And in just her first month on the job at DHS this year, the DC Fiscal Policy Institute has brought a number of issues to Ms. Zeilinger's attention, such as concerns about wait times at ESA service centers, and she has already started working on solutions. Her quick responses show that Laura works well with the advocacy community. She wants honest input on what is working well and what is not and she wants to know about problems before they get too large so that she can address them.

In short, Laura is committed, practical and collaborative. I have great confidence that she will lead the Department of Human Services well.
Her strong leadership is especially important right now. I am excited that Mayor Bowser has made it a priority to improve and reform homeless services in the District, and Ms. Zeilinger's background is perfectly suited to addressing this. However, there also are a number of other incredibly important issues that are time-sensitive that I hope Ms. Zeilinger and DHS will address. To do so, she will need the full support of the mayor and this committee.

Perhaps most important is the looming TANF time limit. Adopting common-sense reforms to the TANF time limit this year is perhaps the most fundamental human service issue the city faces. TANF provides a foundation of economic stability that is critical to keeping families together and ensuring children can succeed. Yet more than 6,000 District families are slated to lose all TANF cash assistance in October 2015 due to time limits.

The District has taken important steps in recent years to strengthen TANF, with improved employment services and exemptions to stop the 60-month clock for families in circumstances that make looking for work difficult. But only 7 percent of TANF recipients currently receive an exemption, which means most will be affected by the time limit, a policy that still has problems of fairness and that put children at risk of hardship.

- Many families accrued time on TANF before exemptions were adopted and before employment services were improved, thus reaching 60 months without getting the services they needed. In Maryland, the time clock does not run when families do not receive supportive services. Even today, DC families often wait months before there is an open employment services slot.
- The time limit will cut off assistance even when families are doing everything they are supposed to do.
- Unemployment among DC residents without a college degree remains high and has not recovered fully from the 2008-2009 recession. It is not an easy climate for 6,000 adults to find jobs.
- Most states offer extensions in various cases to ensure that time limits do not harm children, but the District does not.

Research from other states finds that many families reaching time limits face serious employment barriers such as physical and mental health problems or have very low levels of education. Without protections, thousands of DC families reaching time limits will fall into deep poverty, with neither a job nor cash assistance, resulting in worse outcomes in terms of homelessness, school success, and family health and well-being.

Beyond addressing TANF time limit issues, I am hopeful the Department of Human Services will focus on the following issues:

- **Wait times at social services centers**: DCFPI and the Legal Aid Society have documented over the past year that many residents wait inappropriately long times to sign up for public benefits or to re-certify them, and many must return for more than one visit because paperwork is lost.
- **Application assistance to apply for federal disability benefits**: Many parents on TANF and residents receiving Interim Disability Assistance face disabilities that prevent them from working and could benefit from federal disability assistance. But the application process is
complex and most applicants are rejected the first time. The District has attempted to provide assistance to improve the application approval rate, but more is needed. This year, for example, $500,000 in application assistance funding was provided by the Council but has not been put on the street by DHS.

- **Coordination with other DC job training programs**: New federal law (WIOA) encourages DC and the states to better coordinate its multiple adult education and job training programs. Given that many DC agencies provide these services – DHS, but also the Department of Employment Services and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education – taking full advantage of this opportunity is important to making our education and training programs as effective as possible. DHS will need to play a leading role, and with former DHS official Deb Carroll now at DOES, the collaboration could be especially fruitful.

DCFPI looks forward to working with Ms. Zeilinger to achieve these important goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I'm happy to answer any questions.
My name is Waldon Adams, I am a native Washingtonian, and a Ward 4 resident. I was housed in the Permanent Supportive Housing, Housing First Program almost 6 years ago. I have become an advocate for Permanent Supportive Housing Investment in the District not because of how well it has worked for me, but in memory of those who have lost their lives without ever knowing there was hope being developed in the form of Housing First for people like us.

I struggled with bipolar disorder and addiction from a young age and was homeless on and off for 32 years – I was chronically homeless. One of the symptoms of Bi-Polar disorder is extreme changes in mood, a lot of times for no apparent reason. At one point, I joined the U.S. Navy, not knowing how to swim, but reasoned that, since I was signing up for sub duty, if a problem came up, we would be so far down, I wouldn’t need to swim. They didn’t agree with me, and after a few such conversations, by now on a Psychiatric ward on a base in Great Lakes, Illinois, I was discharged, honorably, but discharged all the same. I was 17 at the time (my parents had to gladly, sign me in).

Two months later, I lost most of the fingers of my left hand in a dynamite accident. Add PTSD to the list of difficulties, and my spiral down began very early. I moved to a room, after getting a job with Woodward/Lothrop, through the Vocational Rehab program. From there, I made a stab at normalcy several times throughout my life, by going back to get my GED, and paying my way through a semester or 2 at UDC (You know I’m talking about a while ago, LOL). But, every time, I would end up bringing everything down on my head, from the combination of mood disorder, and drug, and alcohol usage. Being on a manic episode is like heating up a thermometer, and watching it rise with no way to stop, or reverse it after it starts. Anything I
did, or any thought I had would go straight to the extreme. The problem got extremely severe when I was introduced to cocaine, at age 21, and the mood swings became worse, resulting in loss of rooms, and places to stay, and the resulting check-ins in detoxes, treatment centers, and psych wards. A few years total, was spent in St. Elizabeth's Hospital where they would not discharge you if you were homeless. Once the federal government relinquished it, people started being discharged to the street to satellite agencies that were, mostly, ill-equipped to deal with such an on slot of people in need of places to stay.

Then began the journey of getting places that were getting increasingly out of range of my income. The next few years were spent going from detox to treatment, to psych ward, until one of those times, I was discharged to the street on a cold night, after the shelters were closed (I had begged to see a social worker to help me, but the list was too long, and I didn’t get an interview). That night walking from upper Northwest were I was just discharged, to downtown to try to figure out where I was going to shelter myself at, my life changed for the worse. I don’t care to share the circumstances, but I ended up in the emergency room of a hospital.

A couple of weeks later, I was in an overcrowded rooming house with severe flu like symptoms, diarrhea, could not hold any food or liquids down, and no access to a bathroom, so I had to walk about a couple of miles to a local hospital to stay near a restroom. It turns out that I was seroconverting, which is when HIV antibodies become detectable, and usually take place within a few weeks after initial infection.

I had already been exposed to TB, probably from one of the shelters that I had very rarely chanced going to, so I was not going to chance that again. Being addicted to crack,
bipolar, and now constantly plagued with infections, because of cigarettes, and alcohol, I started making the rounds to emergency rooms for pneumonia, mental health. I had even left a nursing home with a pic line in my vein leading to my heart, because I thought I wanted drugs, and knew they were not going to help me with housing, just send me to another shelter where I kept getting sick in the first place. Not being one who knew how to make a tent, or felt safe enough to sleep in the park, I would stay awake for days at a time, and then either pass out somewhere, or check into a hospital, or psych ward, or a lot of times I would be brought in by someone because of pneumonia, which was occurring frequently.

Anyway, to make a very long story short, 6 years ago, I found myself, by now, on disability for my mental health, so I had no need to report my progression from HIV to AIDS because it probably wouldn't raise my income anyway, and I didn't at first feel comfortable mentioning it, because I had been forced out of a rooming house because someone overheard me on the phone, and found out I had AIDS.

I had spent the last 32 years of my life trying to get at least one year of sobriety, a place to start taking my meds regularly (By now, I'm on Bactrim as a prophylactic, or for help with fighting off the numerous respiratory infections I would get, and it was hard trying to stay consistent without stable housing, and the temptation to resell your very expensive meds to the black market). I had tried sober houses, and transitional homes, but would fail, after trying to stay off drugs. I tried sober court, once, and did so many 3 day sanctions in the jail, I just stayed in. I was totally hopeless. So my last admission to the psych ward was at a time when I had completely given up on ever getting better. I had planned to save my sleep meds, until
discharge if I couldn’t find a room, and check into a hotel, take the months worth of meds, and drink and use to my hearts content, and not wake up. While there, though, I had been convinced to at least take the Bactrim, and antivirals, and not feeling well at the time, decided to do that, but, I decided to burn the side effects, like fat redistribution buffalo neck, and etc. that I had heard happened when you took that stuff out of me by running around my bed, and working up a sweat to burn the excess drug out. Just by accident, the well-being I felt from the running kept me alive long enough to join a HIV support group and to learn about an assessment for a housing program I had never heard of. This turned out to be the Permanent Supportive Housing program, using the Housing First model.

Too make a long story short, I was housed and assigned case management within a month!! There were no barriers to getting into my place, like staying clean or taking meds - nothing but a promise to not disturb my neighbors, destroy the property, and to pay my portion of my, affordable rent!! Did I stop using drugs right away? No. Did I get cured from COPD, AIDS, or Bi-Polar Disorder? No. But what did happen was that I no longer had to spend all my time and concentration on figuring out where I was going to stay, how long the waiting list was, wondering if I could stop using long enough to get in a transitional house, or how long I would last before being put out in the street again for suspicion of drinking or using drugs. Not only did Permanent Supportive Housing provide the stability of a home, but it also provided the support I needed.

I am here before you now, 1 month shy of 6 years abstinence from drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, psych ward admissions, and hospital admissions. I am also 2 weeks away from
running my 13 marathon (26.2 miles), with an AIDS diagnosis, but an undetectable viral load and lots of CD4 helper cells fighting off illness. Permanent Supportive Housing is what made it possible for me to get where I am today.

The problem, however, is that not everyone like me has been so lucky. Because there is not enough funding and attention given to Permanent Supportive Housing using the Housing First model, people are dying without homes. I was just recently trying to find my friend, Ashley, to give her more information about PSH, since she, like me, had never heard of it. A few weeks ago, she passed away, still homeless, still on a waiting list, still, with AIDS, still unable to stop using drugs on a dime in order to get into a “temporary” housing situation.

At one point, all of my friends were, and some still are, chronically homeless. We know the solution to chronic homelessness is Housing First and that it saves money. Let's end chronic homelessness now, so that no one has to be homeless for 32 years before getting a safe place to call home. Let's end chronic homelessness so I don't have to keep losing all my friends.
Testimony

Confirmation of Laura Zeilinger, Director
Department of Human Services for the District of Columbia
Friday, February 27, 2015: 11:00 a.m.

Good morning, my name is Richard Bradley and I am the Executive Director of the DowntownDC Business Improvement District. The Downtown BID has long been involved in providing assistance through clinically-based outreach teams for the chronic homeless in downtown. We have worked with our partners in the city and with our contractor, Pathways to Housing DC, to identify solutions to provide shelter, appropriate care, dignity and independence. Over the past decade the BID has invested over $6M providing essential outreach services as well as assisting in developing better public policies and practices to deal with chronic homelessness.

The DowntownDC BID most enthusiastically supports the nomination of Laura Zeilinger to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services for the District of Columbia.

She brings a wealth of knowledge and an understanding of national best practices, as a result of both her recent tenure serving as the head of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness for the city and as Deputy Director for the same department in 2008-2010. Laura was the architect of the city’s first major efforts to provide permanent supportive housing and played a key role in closing the Franklin School Shelter, looking to move homeless into permanent housing and out of the unhealthy shelter environment. During her tenure as Deputy Director, approximately 1000 units of permanent supportive housing were established.
It is clear Ms. Zeilinger has the knowledge and the managerial competency to address the matters of chronic homelessness in balance with homelessness as it relates to struggling families; understanding each requires specific and separate strategic approaches.

While we would like to infuse Ms. Zeilinger with super human powers to immediately resolve all these issues, we know she will need a lot of help from the Administration, from the City Council, from us in the business community and from the citizens of the District of Columbia. It will take significant monies to provide the permanent supportive housing needed in the city as well as time to develop and implement a sustainable system that will provide those in dire situations an efficient program that will bring stability and the opportunity for independence.

We urge her speedy confirmation.
Testimony in support of Laura Green Zeilinger
for Director of the Department of Human Services
Washington, DC
By
Linda M Kaufman

For the past thirty years I have worked in homeless services in the District of Columbia. I am currently working on a national campaign to end veteran and chronic homelessness in 71 communities around the country. Each community has committed to end veteran homelessness by the end of this year; chronic homelessness by the end of 2016. Washington, DC, is one of the communities which made that commitment.

In 2008 the conversation in the District of Columbia about homelessness and the reality of those who had no homes changed. We moved from talking about homeless services to a serious plan to end homeless. A huge part of that paradigm shift was the presence and leadership of Laura Green Zeilinger. During her time in the City Administrator’s office and subsequently in the Department of Human Services, Laura was a force of nature. She led us to success in the homeless arena that was never seen before in the District of Columbia and has not been seen since.

During the time Laura was the lead for ending homelessness in Washington, DC, we were regularly housing 100 people a month. We were the first major city to be on track to end homelessness. Laura led this work by an amazing combination of skills: brilliant bureaucratic strategies, intentional community building, and lining up and strategically deploying resources. The interface between DHS, the DC Housing Authority, and The Community Partnership was seamless. I am still in awe of the brilliance Laura brought to that work.

The skills she had when she left to work for the federal government have been enhanced by her time there. She led the national movement to end homelessness. As head of the USICH, her portfolio included Opening Doors, the federal plan to end homelessness. Opening Doors was developed when Laura was doing the work of ending homelessness here in DC, and reflects our work.

I cannot think of anyone better to lead our City’s work to end homelessness. But, even better than having Laura back to take on and finally end homelessness, she is taking on the whole Department of Human Services. The same skills we saw in her local and national work to end homelessness will now be focused the issues that impact tens of thousands of people in the District. We are a better City having her prodigious skills refocused on people in the District of Columbia who are poor, some without homes, and some whose families are not stable.

We are lucky to have Laura Green Zeilinger back.
I am pleased to submit this testimony in support of the confirmation of Laura G. Zeilinger as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

I am the Chief Executive Officer of Community of Hope, a nonprofit organization that provides housing with supportive services to families experiencing homelessness as well as healthcare to low-income families in Washington, DC. I have been pleased to work with Laura Zeilinger since about 2009. I worked closely with Ms. Zeilinger in her role as Deputy Director of the Department of Human Services, both as a service provider and in our roles as Co-Chairs of the Strategic Planning Committee of the DC Interagency Council on Homelessness. After leaving the DC government, Ms. Zeilinger worked at the US Interagency Council on Homelessness, most recently in the role of Executive Director.

Ms. Zeilinger has both the expertise and the skills to succeed as the Director of the Department of Human Services. Ms. Zeilinger has deep expertise in the area of homelessness, both from her previous experience working in the District as well as working at the national level. She is highly knowledgeable about national trends, research, and best practices nationally. She was a leader during her previous tenure at DHS in promoting a housing first philosophy. She was integral in implementing DHS’s successful Permanent Supportive Housing Program that housed over 1,000 of the most vulnerable men, women, and families in their own apartments. She worked closely with the Housing Authority, the Veterans Administration, and other agencies to leverage the resources needed to make the program happen. Ms. Zeilinger has worked both in the District as well as with communities nationally to use data to guide decisions and develop plans to end homelessness.

Ms. Zeilinger is also very adept at overcoming obstacles and collaborating to make sure that change is implemented. Community of Hope was a service provider in one of the first-ever Consolidated Request for Proposals for permanent supportive housing for families in Ward 8. The project included many partners — including DHS, the Housing Authority, the Department of Behavioral Health, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and a private developer.
There were several times where the project was stalled due to the complexities of working with so many partners. Ms. Zeilinger was able to make sure that communication happened and issues were resolved such that the project was completed and today provides permanent supportive housing for fourteen families and five singles who previously experienced homelessness. And this is only one example of one project that she was involved in during her tenure at DHS. Most importantly, Ms. Zeilinger believes in the strength, resiliency, and the dignity of people who are living in poverty or experiencing homelessness. I still remember her words of encouragement at a meeting when the city was launching its federally funded Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP). Ms. Zeilinger urged us as providers to believe in the resiliency and strengths of the people we were supporting. She is a good listener and very empathetic in speaking with people who share the pains and challenges of homelessness. Ms. Zeilinger is very clear in her belief that it is possible to end homelessness, and that homelessness should be brief and should not re-occur.

I urge you to confirm Ms. Zeilinger’s appointment as Director of the Department of Human Services. Especially as the city undertakes the next five year plan to end homelessness, the role of the Department of Human Services will be critical, and we need an experienced and skilled leader at the helm. This city is lucky to have her.
A PUBLIC HEARING ON

PR21-28, the "Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015"

Committee on Health and Human Services
The Honorable Yvette Alexander, Chairperson
Council of the District of Columbia

Friday, February 27, 2015

John A. Wilson Building
Hearing Room 412
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

11:00 A.M.
Introduction

Good morning Chairperson Alexander, members and staff of the Committee on Health and Human Services, and all those assembled. I am Laura Zeilinger, Acting Director of the District of Columbia Department of Human Services (DHS). Thank you for this opportunity to provide a statement regarding my appointment as Director of DHS.

I am honored and grateful to Mayor Bowser for having the confidence in me to help her confront some of the District’s most difficult challenges. I want to thank members of the Council for their consideration of my nomination and thank members of the community who took time away from the tremendous work they do on behalf of our community to voice support for my appointment.

Mayor Bowser has made closing the opportunity gap a top priority for her Administration – and I know this is a goal that is shared by members of the Council and this Committee. Although I was not contemplating a job move when the then Mayor-elect asked me to be part of a team responsible for executing on this goal, it was the type of offer that could only have one possible answer for me.

I have lived in the District for nineteen years – this is where my husband and I chose to raise our children who are now fourteen and ten years old. I am personally invested in the opportunity to make meaningful change in our community. The District is an incredible city, a place that has seen tremendous development in the time I’ve been here, yet there are far too many people who have yet to benefit from the growth and development we’ve seen.

DHS, through its dedicated staff, is charged with providing a critical safety net for approximately 250,000 residents of the District of Columbia. Through the provision of income and nutrition supports, and a range of programs and services, DHS has an essential role in supporting, strengthening, and improving the well-being of District residents. This is critically important for...
the obvious reasons, but also because it provides the foundation from which we have the opportunity to meaningfully support people to overcome crises, strengthen their families and get on a path to employment, and/or permanent housing.

Since I had the opportunity to work at the agency from 2008 to 2010 when I served as the Department’s Deputy Director for Program Operations, major changes have taken place that affect the people we serve. TANF customers who have received assistance for more than 60 months will see their TANF benefits end later this year. In response to this major policy change, DHS redesigned the TANF program to work individually with each customer to help them address their barriers to work, acquire critical work skills, and secure meaningful jobs that can lead to family supporting careers. The challenge before us now is to make sure our customers have access to the job resources they need. We are committed to taking advantage of new advances in the workforce development field and increasing the resources available to our customers through local and federal programs and new partnership opportunities.

Another major advancement at DHS is the development and anticipated benefit to our customers of our new IT system, known as the DC Access System. Through DCAS we are modernizing our human service application, eligibility determination, and case management technology. While we are aware there are challenges, we are also starting to see tangible benefits to our customers and our service center efficiency. For example, since implementation, over 33,000 residents applied for and were determined eligible for benefits through automated DCAS processes, without the need for assistance from an ESA service center eligibility worker. And beginning just last month, DCAS was able to provide Medicaid recertification for about 2/3 of the beneficiaries online or over the phone. This prevented 2500 customers from needing to come to the service centers in January alone.

In the four years since my last position with DHS, I had the great honor of serving in the Obama Administration as Executive Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. In this role, I was responsible for coordinating the Federal response to homelessness, working
across 19 Federal agencies and in partnership with states, local governments and the private sector on efforts to prevent and end homelessness throughout the nation. In my work at the Interagency Council, I was able to understand many of the opportunities to leverage federal and local programs to greater outcomes and to work with communities across the country – promoting broad implementation of the solutions proven to work. The lessons learned from this experience are invaluable and I am excited to bring them to my work here in the District. I would like to share just two of many examples with you.

First – USICH is a coordinating and convening body, responsible for implementing a Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness – the actions needed to realize the plan fell outside of our agency. Responsibility for action is with our partner agencies in federal government and with states, communities and local providers. I do not have to tell you that solutions to complex social problems like homelessness and poverty do not live in a singular agency. So our success depended on being able to create the consensus and buy in to an annual action plan that required people to work differently and make aggressive commitments, while getting them to do so was outside of USICH's authority. Meaning, we had to find and innovate ways to ensure transparency, accountability, measurement and a feedback loop. In doing so, we saw year after year reductions in homelessness at the national level, every year I was at the Council. Now, to be perfectly clear - I do not profess that that progress was mine alone – of course it was not – but I did have some hand in it. Moreover, I learned something about how to organize with a diverse array of partners to deliver results for the people we are here to serve.

So, being able to break down into steps the actions needed to get to better solutions to complex problems, build a shared vision and put measures in place to execute on that vision is something I bring to DHS – with relevance to all aspects of the agency’s work.

The second lesson I would like to share with you is from the success we are having as a nation on ending homelessness among Veterans. The Obama Administration, in the Federal Plan, set...
the goal of ending homelessness among Veterans in five years – by the end of 2015. This is a goal we’ve adopted in the District and one that is within reach. It is within reach because it is a goal that is shared across party lines, we have invested in the solutions that work, and there is relentless leadership attention in getting to the goal. I had the honor to stand with Mayor Landrieu earlier this year when he announced that they have ended homelessness for Veterans in the city of New Orleans. I frequently raise the example of this work not because one group is more deserving than another, but because we feel a shared urgency around the injustice that someone should risk their life for our freedoms and come home to live on our streets – and we’ve channeled that urgency to strategic action – and by doing so we are creating a proof point that these complex problems are actually solvable. If we can solve it – we must – this is what we owe as public servants.

The stated mission of DHS is, in collaboration with the community, to provide temporary support and assistance to low income families and individuals while helping them maximize their potential for economic security and self-sufficiency. I see my role at DHS as not only implementing Mayor Bowser’s vision, but supporting the DHS Team and our partners inside and outside of the District Government to be highly successful in achieving our shared goals. My job is to remove the barriers, help solve problems that arise, build trusting and collaborative relationships with our partners and constituents, and to ensure we have the resources we need and that we deploy them effectively.

DHS has been entrusted with the tremendous responsibility of ensuring that residents in our community have their most basic human needs met and that they have what they need to lift themselves and their families up to a more secure place. I look forward to working with the Mayor, the DHS Team and also you, Chairperson Alexander, members of the Committee on Health and Human Services and other members of the Council of the District of Columbia to ensure that people have access to food, a safe roof over their heads, and healthcare.
Most fundamentally, I believe the purpose of our work at DHS is to advance social justice in the District of Columbia. The demographic data – showing great lack of parity from ward to ward among DHS’s clients – results from decades of disparate access to opportunity. We can and must change that through the work we do every day.

You can count on me to be direct, respectful, do what I say I am going to do when I say I am going to do it, and if ever I’m not able, to let you know in advance and figure out an alternate plan.

In addition, I will work at finding new and faster ways to support our constituents to move from unemployment to jobs and from homelessness to housing, by continuing to design and develop the tools needed to shift from operating an array of programs to operating a system that can seamlessly connect people to the supports and services they need.

I have been at DHS for just a few weeks and some of the immediate issues that top my priority list include:

- Improve the internal business processes at DHS to efficiently deploy agency resources.
- While working on a longer term strategy to improve the way we deliver homelessness services, take immediate steps to improve service delivery and support people to more quickly exit homelessness.
- Evaluate progress on efforts to develop the DC Access System and actions needed to ensure its successful implementation.
- Take steps to ensure services centers are appropriately staffed and equipped to improve customer service and decrease wait times at DHS service centers.
- Increase access to employment programs for TANF recipients.

I appreciate your consideration of my nomination for the Director of Human Services and hope to work closely with you. That concludes my statement. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.
ATTACHMENT THREE
MEMORANDUM

TO: Councilmember Yvette Alexander

FROM: John Hoellen, Acting General Counsel

DATE: March 10, 2015

RE: Legal Sufficiency Determination for Proposed Resolution 21-28, the Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015

The measure is legally and technically sufficient for Council consideration.

The proposed resolution would confirm the appointment of Ms. Laura G. Zeilinger as the Director of the Department of Human Services, established by Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1986, effective January 3, 1987, and in accordance with section 2 of the Confirmation Act of 1978, effective March 3, 1979 (D.C. Law 2-142; D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01). If confirmed, Ms. Zeilinger would serve at the pleasure of the Mayor.

I am available if you have any questions.
ATTACHMENT FOUR
A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

21-28

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To confirm the appointment of Ms. Laura G. Zeilinger as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this resolution may be cited as the “Director of the Department of Human Services Laura G. Zeilinger Confirmation Resolution of 2015.”

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia confirms the appointment of:

Ms. Laura G. Zeilinger
4319 Fessenden Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016
(Ward 3)

as the Director of the Department of Human Services, established by Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1986, effective January 3, 1987, and in accordance with section 2 of the Confirmation Act of 1978, effective March 3, 1979 (D.C. Law 2-142; D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01), to serve at the pleasure of the Mayor.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution, upon its adoption, to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.