

FROM THE DESK OF ROBERT WHITE

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Robert White At Large



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Hello, friend,

As I plan my 2017 legislative agenda, I can't help but reflect on 2016, which was anything but an ordinary year. My campaign defied the odds with the help and support of voters like you, community groups, and a team of dedicated staff and volunteers. I got an unexpected early start to my term on the Council when I was sworn in to fill a three-month vacancy. And when my wife, Christy, gave birth to our first child, Madison, I gained new meaning to the work I'm here to do.



In my inauguration speech, I spoke about how my commitment to our city mirrors my commitment to my daughter.

If you missed it, you can see it here: bit.ly/CMRW2017

Since I took the Oath of Office on September 16, I have prioritized the issues I ran on; they are the pillars of social and economic mobility: education, affordable housing and workforce development. In preparation for my first full term, I have been working hard to craft thoughtful legislation that prioritizes outcomes over headlines. Here's what I have been working on in my first three months:

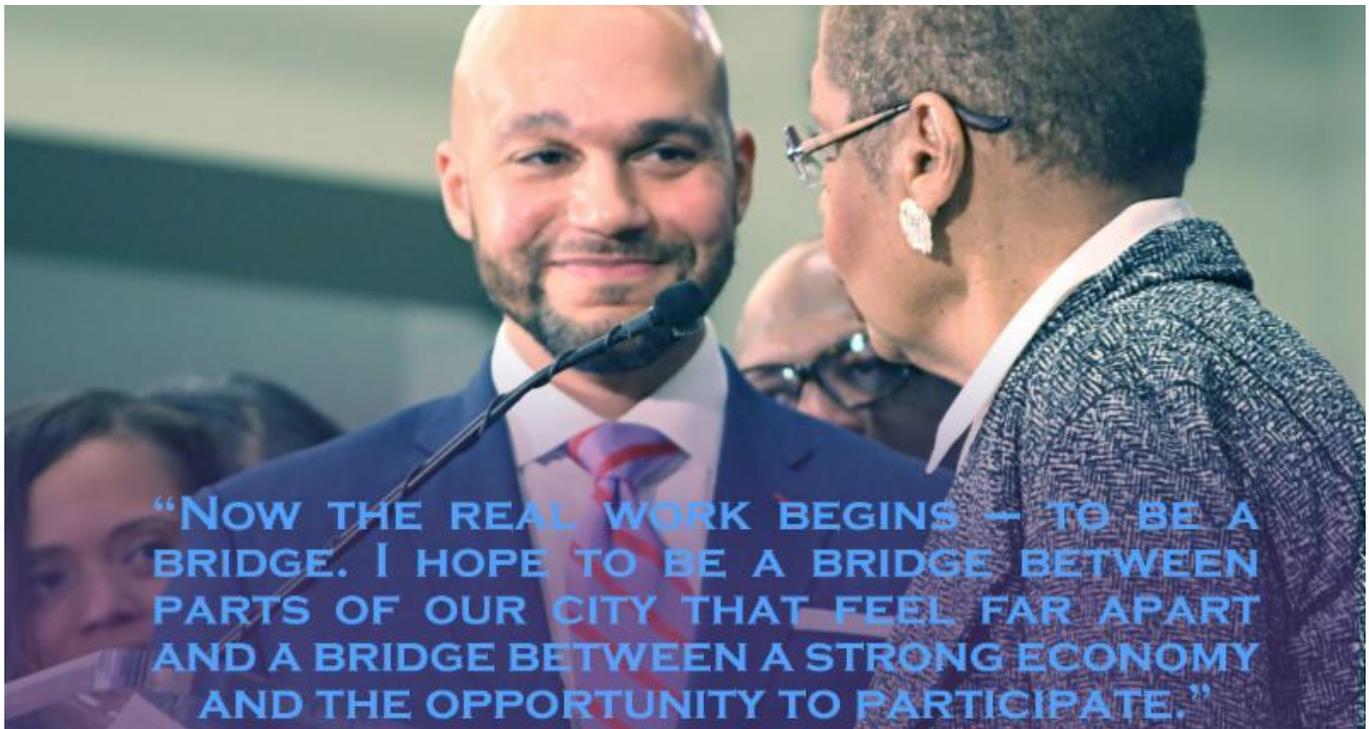
Using My Experience to Make a Better District Government

Although I have worked in all three branches of government and came into the Council with a strong understanding of how government works, I used my early start to begin a deep dive into District agency operations and social services. In my short time here, I've met with over a dozen agency directors and with nonprofit housing developers and food providers to help me craft new ideas. Leaning on experts in our city, I assembled a policy Transition Committee to help me vet my legislative proposals. I pulled together over 40 people, including both familiar, subject-matter-experts and some not-so-well-known stakeholders to help me shake up some of the usual conversations. As we wrap up our work, you will see the evolution of specific policy objectives with a focus on bridging our steep economic divide.

To help accomplish the work we have to do, I'm happy to report that I was able to get committee assignments that correspond to my priorities. During Council Period 22, I will be a member of the following committees:

- Committee on Education
- Committee on Workforce Development
- Committee on Human Services
- Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization
- Committee on Finance and Revenue

In these three months, I have been doing a lot more than just preparing for my first full term. I hit the ground running with a sharp focus on my key issues.



Prioritizing Kids and Education

To drive home the importance of education, I talked to scholars at Ketcham Elementary in Ward 8 about the importance of school and civic engagement. I helped spread holiday cheer and sang Christmas carols to the students at Wheatley Education Campus in Ward 5. I spent an afternoon at Sunrise Early Learning Center highlighting the importance of literacy and reading to the preschoolers. And even though I didn't sit on the Committee on Education, I engaged in the three public hearings for the new DCPS Chancellor and co-introduced legislation to maintain school nursing care for our kids.

Focusing on Housing

Our homeless residents and people who face the threat of homelessness deserve a chance to have their voices heard. In December, I had dinner with residents at DC General Shelter and talked to them personally about shelter conditions and operations to find out first-hand what can be done to improve their lives. I also worked with my Council colleagues to defend the Housing Production Trust Fund, which helps provide affordable housing around the city.



Fairness for District Workers

I backed the *Wage Theft Prevention Clarification and Overtime Fairness Amendment Act of 2016*, which ensures that workers don't get cheated out of the wages they earn. I also supported the *Universal Paid Leave*

Act of 2015 to give everyday workers in the District the ability to care for newborn babies and ailing family members or to recover from major health problems while still paying their bills.

Much More Work to Do

District residents will face unique challenges in the coming years, and we have a lot of work ahead of us. My team and I stand ready for the challenge and are committed to being your voice. So, if you need assistance, feel free to reach out to us.



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Thank you again for the opportunity to serve you. I hope to make you proud.

My Best,

Robert

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