

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**



FY 2021 – FY 2022 Budget Oversight Hearing

Testimony of
Kimberly A. Bassett
Secretary of the District of Columbia

Before the
Committee on Housing and Executive Administration
Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Anita Bonds, Chairperson

John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

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Good afternoon Chairperson Bonds, members of the Committee, and staff. I am Kimberly A. Bassett, Secretary of the District of Columbia. I am pleased to provide testimony on the Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia's (OS) budget, as outlined in Mayor Bowser's Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Proposed Budget and Financial Plan, *A Fair Shot*.

Today, I am pleased to be joined by Agency Fiscal Officer, Paul Blake, and members of my team: Alma Candelaria, Deputy Secretary; Victor Reid, Administrator of Documents and Administrative Issuances/Legal Counsel; Director of Notary Commissions and Authentications, Judi Gold; and Wiwiek Rembrandt, Operations Manager.

The Office of the Secretary is the official resource for protocol, legal records, District of Columbia history, and recognitions for the public, governments, and the international community. The Office of the Secretary is also the official custodian of the Corporate Seal of the District of Columbia.

The Office of the Secretary is comprised of four (4) offices and one (1) unit, located in three (3) different buildings. These components include the Office of Notary Commissions and Authentications (ONCA); the Office of Documents and Administrative Issuances (ODAI); the Office of Public Records and Archives (OPR); the Office of Protocol and International Affairs (OPIA); and the Ceremonial Services Unit (CS).

The Office of the Secretary works with several key internal and external stakeholders to coordinate various ceremonies, conventions, parades, and festivals, including the

Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission, DC Emancipation Day, the National Cherry Blossom Festival, and the Presidential Inauguration. The Office of the Secretary also has a role in the Mayor's Swearing-In Ceremony and oversees the DC One Fund and the DC Democracy Grant program.

The Office of the Secretary's FY 2022 proposed operating budget is approximately \$4.5 million (\$4,535,032). OS proposes 27 full-time equivalents (FTEs) to support our operations, which represents 70 percent of our total budget. The remaining 30 percent covers non-personal services (NPS). The budget consists of approximately \$3.4 million (\$3,435,032) in Local funds and \$1.1 million in Special Purpose Revenue funds.

The FY22 proposed budget represents a 5.6 percent decrease from FY21 due to a reduction of \$536,024 to account for the removal of one-time funding appropriated in FY 2021, which was comprised of \$367,020 to support the record retention schedule costs for independent agencies and \$169,004 to replace an offsetting reduction of recurring funds for Archives project. FY22 proposed budget also includes an enhancement of \$250,000 to support the National Archives and Record Administration contract, and enhancement of \$15,000 to support the Office of Documents to continue and publish the Districts of Columbia Register (DCRegs) via an online web application. Overall, the Office of the Secretary's FY22 budget represents a 1.6 percent increase in personal services to absorb step increases and Fringe Benefits and a 19.3 percent decrease in nonpersonal services for the reduction of one-time funding.

Looking ahead to FY22, I would like to highlight the following changes that we've made to our programs in this budget:

Agency Management is where the Executive Office of the Secretary and most of our

administrative functions are located. There are currently six FTEs for Agency Management. FY22 proposed budget represents a \$40,000 decrease from the FY21 approved budget. The decrease reflects the cost adjustment in nonpersonal services for the Office of Public Records.

The Ceremonial Services Unit and the Office of Protocol and International Affairs will have increases to cover step increases and Fringe Benefits.

The decrease of \$65,000 in the Office of Documents and Administrative Issuances is a correction to FY21 budget, which an extra FTE was accidentally added to Administrative Issuances. The increase for this program reflects step increases and Fringe Benefits.

The FY22 proposed budget for the Office of Notary Commissions and Authentications includes six FTEs and is funded through Special Purpose Revenue funds. The decrease of \$27,000 in ONCA reflects a reduction in nonpersonal services across multiple programs to offset projected increases in personal services.

The FY22 proposed budget for Office of Public Records and Archives includes six FTEs. The increase in this program includes step increases and Fringe Benefits. In addition, this program also proposes an increase of recurring \$250,000 to support the annual records storage and management contract with the National Archives and Record Administration (NARA). We eliminated one-time funding to complete records retention schedules for independent agencies of \$367,020 in the approved FY21 budget. This program also proposes a reduction of \$169,004 recurring funding for the Archives project. We will re-evaluate the funding for this project in FY23. Lastly, due to difficult budget decision-making last year, capital funds for the new state-of-the-art facility for

the Office have shifted to outer years of the financial plan. The proposed FY22 budget for capital project of building the new Archives facility will remain the same as in FY21 approved budget.

The Office of the Secretary is also charged with managing and administering the DC Democracy Grant program. Each year, the Office of the Secretary administers \$200,000 in grant funds to qualified community-based organizations.

In closing, Mayor Bowser's Fiscal Year 2022 proposed budget, *A Fair Shot*, gives the Office of the Secretary the resources necessary to maintain its critical role in being able to execute key, high-profile projects on behalf of the Mayor. The Council and this Committee are critical allies in this effort, and I appreciate your work to ensure we operate efficiently and effectively. I look forward to our continued work together to achieve our shared goals and give all residents a fair shot to benefit from Washington, DC's continued prosperity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify virtually today. I look forward to answering your questions at this time.