



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

MATTHEW FRUMIN
Councilmember, Ward 3

COMMITTEE MEMBER
Executive Administration and Labor
Facilities and Family Services
Hospital and Health Equity
Housing
Transportation and the Environment

November 20, 2023

Via e-mail

Dear Chief Judge Josey-Herring:

I am grateful that the District of Columbia Superior Court is implementing administrative changes that will ensure more timely management of cases involving defendants who pose a significant, immediate health or safety danger on the court's landlord-tenant docket.

I hear frequently from constituents about residential safety concerns related to the actions of tenants, many of whom engage in a pattern of dangerous behavior but have not been evicted due a lengthy adjudication process and case backlog. Tenants and landlords alike deserve a timely process for hearing and deciding eviction cases. The court's move to prioritize cases involving danger to health and safety is a significant first step to address these concerns and protect residents and building management staff. Fundamentally, tenants' right to feel safe in their own homes must be protected.

During meetings with several tenant associations in recent months, they shared how increased police and emergency response due to tenant- or guest-involved dangerous behavior has impacted their lives. As residents are forced to live alongside these threats for the duration of the court process, they are looking to building management teams for information and support. Too often, landlords do not provide the safety and security measures nor lease violation enforcement they seek. In parallel to the court's efforts, I am collaborating with the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Tenant Advocate, tenant associations, and tenant advocacy organizations to identify other actions to keep tenants safe.

Evictions must be used sparingly, but when individuals exhibit violent behavior in a residential setting the District must ensure accountability. The Court's new procedures for prioritizing cases involving these individuals is a critical component in that process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew Frumin".

Matt Frumin
DC Councilmember for Ward 3

