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For Immediate Release

April 11, 2008

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Thomas Kicks Off Late-Night Basketball to Stem Youth Violence in Ward 5

Washington, DC - Ward 5 Councilmember Harry “Tommy” Thomas, Jr. will kick-off a late night basketball program at 8:45 p.m. this evening at Langdon Park Recreation Center. Langdon Park is one of three recreation centers in Ward 5 that will offer late night basketball for the next nine Fridays as part of an initiative to stem youth violence by providing teens with a safe alternative to the streets. Kick-off details are listed below.

Late night basketball, sponsored by the DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), will be offered at the Langdon Park, Turkey Thicket, and Trinidad recreation centers on Fridays between April 11th through May 23rd. Six teams will be hosted at each recreation center, and games will run from 9 p.m. to 12 p.m. The season will feature an all-star game, playoffs, and a championship game. The DPR will also be playing against two additional teams fielded by the Metropolitan Police Department and WKYS. Representatives from the DC Department of Employment Services will be at future games to discuss the Passport-to-Work Summer Youth Program (SYP), a ten-week temporary job readiness and academic enrichment program available to District youth ages 14 to 21.

In addition to late night basketball, Councilmember Thomas is working with civic leaders to bring conflict resolution, employment, and prevention services to Ward 5 teens. Peaceaholics will coordinate mediation to resolve neighborhood conflicts, including a long-standing conflict between Brentwood and Langdon Park youths. Reaching Out to Provide Enlightenment (ROPE) will bring counseling services and prevention programs to youth at the Brookland Manor housing complex, located in Brentwood.

“Ward 5 has been besieged with violence among our youth,” said Councilmember Thomas. “We need to step up our efforts to reach young people and bring them back into the fold of the community. Providing safe, organized recreation and outreach services will help us reach—and save—our young people in crisis.”

Who: Ward 5 Councilmember Harry “Tommy” Thomas, Jr.

What: Late Night Basketball Kick-Off

When: Friday, April 11, 2008, at 8:45 p.m.

Where: Langdon Park Community Center, 2901 20th St., NE

Why: To stem youth violence by providing teens with a safe alternative to the streets

