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For Immediate Release
December 23, 2008

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Thomas to Reintroduce Bill to Tighten Process Used to Sell District-Owned Property
Proposal Includes Specific Measures Related to Surplus Schools

Washington DC—When the DC City Council reconvenes on January 2, 2009, Ward 5 Councilmember Harry “Tommy” Thomas, Jr. will reintroduce legislation to tighten the process by which the city government disposes of District-owned property. The reintroduction of the bill is critical given the recent announcement that the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development’s has issued a Solicitation for Offers regarding the redevelopment of 11 DC Public School sites, six of which are located in Ward 5.

Thomas’ bill, which was introduced during the prior Council session, calls for amending existing city regulations to create standards that must be met prior to classifying public property as surplus. The bill also requires community input and adherence to federal land transfer requirements before District-owned property can be declared surplus.

“Because we have a limited supply of District-owned property, the decision to sell or lease our public assets must be reached methodically” said Councilmember Thomas. “The Deputy Mayor’s solicitation for redevelopment concepts for 11 schools of the 23 schools closed last year highlights the importance of establishing a rigorous process for determining whether District-owned properties are no longer needed for public purposes.”

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