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**Government of the District of Columbia**



**D.C. Office of the Tenant Advocate**

Testimony of

**Johanna Shreve**  
Chief Tenant Advocate

**Public Hearing**

**FY 2018 and FY 2019 Performance Oversight  
of the Office of the Tenant Advocate**

Council of the District of Columbia

Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization  
The Honorable Anita Bonds, Chairperson

Thursday, February 7, 2018  
10:00 a.m.

Room 123  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

Thank you, Chairperson Bonds and members of the Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization for giving me this opportunity to report on the OTA's operational performance during Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019 to date. I am Johanna Shreve, Chief Tenant Advocate, at the DC Office of the Tenant Advocate.

In my testimony today, I will address FY 2018 accomplishments, as well as FY 2019 goals and priorities, for each of our major programmatic areas. I begin, however, by noting that the more we grow as an agency, the more we understand about the range of challenges tenants confront in all parts of the District and in all kinds of rental housing. Thus we are becoming ever more innovative and proactive in terms of how we connect with tenants and how we help improve their lives. In FY 2018, the agency continued to forge new governmental and community partnerships; greatly expanded our Educational and Outreach activities; and, in response to the District's new eviction procedure law, carved out a new agency role to meet community needs.

**The OTA's Statutory Mandates**

Each of the agency's major programs correlates to a statutory mandate:

(1) Education and Outreach; (2) Policy Advocacy; (3) Legal Assistance including the

Tenant Hotline; and (4) Emergency Housing Assistance.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the Administrative Division has numerous non-programmatic responsibilities, including human resource matters, budgeting, contracting and procurement, financial and contract management, p-card management; front-office operations, and a variety of other duties.

As of the start of FY 2018, as I will discuss later in my testimony, the OTA assumed responsibility for developing a word-searchable, user-friendly database for Rental Housing Act purposes.<sup>2</sup> During FY 2018, the OTA assumed two new responsibilities as a result of Council action. The OTA has a new statutory role under Law 22-0120,<sup>3</sup> which grandfathers the TOPA rights of current elderly tenants and tenants with disabilities, notwithstanding the new TOPA exemption for single family dwellings. Specifically, within four days of receiving from the owner a copy of an Offer of Sale, we send a notice to the tenants apprising them of their rights and available legal resources. Additionally, when the Council

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<sup>1</sup>D.C. Official Code § 42-3531.07

<sup>2</sup> Act 22-104, the "Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Support Emergency Act of 2017"(Title II Subtitle J) effective July 20, 2017, expired on October 18, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> The "TOPA Single-Family Home Exemption Amendment Act of 2018," effective July 3, 2018.

enacted changes to the law governing eviction procedures,<sup>4</sup> the OTA working with the U.S. Marshals Service assumed the task of sending notices to tenant households scheduled for evictions. The notice apprises affected tenants of their rights under the new law regarding the storage of property immediately following the eviction, and that upon request the OTA will provide boxes to help them move personal belongings out of the unit. A copy of each of these notices and accompanying material are attached to my written testimony.

**OTA's functions and activities**

I will now briefly touch on the four (4) programmatic areas, and provide a glimpse into the accomplishments, challenges faced, and future plans for each operational component.

**LEGAL DIVISION**

**Statutory Mandate**

The Legal Division is tasked with (1) representing tenants in Federal or District judicial or administrative proceedings, (2) advising tenants and tenant organizations on filing complaints and petitions in disputes with housing

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<sup>4</sup> Law 22-0183, the "Eviction Procedure Reform Temporary Amendment Act of 2018," effective November 27, 2018 and expiring on July 10, 2019; Act 22-0571; the "Eviction with Dignity Amendment Act of 2018," projected law date March 26, 2019.

providers; (3) representing the interest of tenants and tenant organizations in judicial matters, and (4) operating a Tenant Hotline and Tenant Center. D.C. Code §42-3531.07

To accomplish these goals, the Division represents tenants before Federal and District judicial and administrative proceedings and advises tenants in-person, by telephone, and by email. The Division also coordinates efforts with the Policy Division to develop agency positions on public interest matters and to draft *Amicus Curiae* briefs. The Division also assists the Education and Outreach Division by maintaining the Tenant Center, developing new educational materials, and conducting educational sessions during the Annual Tenant Summit.

### **Functions and Activities**

For FY 2018, the Legal Division was staffed by five attorney advisors, two case management specialists, and one paralegal. However, for a large portion of FY2018, the Division was operating with only four attorney advisors due to family leave, medical leave, internal staff reassignments, and a staff departure.

At the beginning of calendar year 2019, the office was able to bring on new hires and reassign staff to the Division. Now, there are six attorney advisors. Also, the office has added a third case management specialist and a legal assistant, whose time is shared with other OTA divisions. The following chart explains the

roles of each member of the litigation division and the staffing of each position in FY 2018 and FY 2019 to date.

| <b>Job Title</b>            | <b>Job Duties</b>   | <b>Staff FY 2018</b> | <b>Staff FY 2019</b>      | <b>Immediate Supervisor</b>              |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>General Counsel</b>      | <p>Advises the agency on legal matters.</p> <p>Coordinates with other divisions on policy and outreach issues.</p> <p>Develops office procedures and protocol.</p>  | Dennis Taylor        | Dennis Taylor             | Chief Tenant Advocate                    |
| <b>Supervising Attorney</b> | <p>Directs Legal Division's tenant facing functions, such as legal representation, legal clinic, and Ask the Director/Ask the Mayor.</p> <p>Supervises all subordinate members of Legal Division Staff.</p> | Dennis Taylor        | Amir Sadeghy <sup>5</sup> | Chief Tenant Advocate<br>General Counsel |

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<sup>5</sup> Amir Sadeghy was internally promoted to the position of Supervising Attorney effective January 2019.

|                                   |   |  |  |                             |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>Attorney Advisor</b>           | <p>Represents tenants in negotiations and judicial or administrative proceedings.</p> <p>Provides legal advice in-person, by phone, or email.</p> <p>Assists other divisions as directed.</p> | <p>Ramona Quillet<sup>6</sup><br/> William Z. Mundy<sup>7</sup><br/> Sean Treanor<sup>8</sup><br/> Harrison Magy<br/> Stephen Dudek<sup>9</sup><br/> Umar Ahmed<sup>10</sup></p> | <p>Ramona Quillet<br/> Sean Treanor<br/> Harrison Magy<br/> Umar Ahmed<br/> Johan Fatemi<sup>11</sup><br/> Shavannie Braham<sup>12</sup></p> | <b>Supervising Attorney</b> |
| <b>Case Management Specialist</b> | <p>Provides tenants with information and non-legal advice in-person or by phone.</p> <p>Assists other divisions as directed.</p>  | <p>Christopher Lucas<br/> Manuel Bolanos</p>   | <p>Christopher Lucas<br/> Manuel Bolanos<br/> Cynthia Houser<sup>13</sup></p>  | <b>Supervising Attorney</b> |

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<sup>6</sup> From August 31, 2018 to September 28, 2018, Ramona Quillet was out of the office on medical leave.

<sup>7</sup> William Z. Mundy resigned his position to begin other employment in September of Fiscal Year 2018 and stopped accepting new cases in August of 2018.

<sup>8</sup> From February 13, 2018 to March 5, 2018 and from May 7, 2018 to June 20, 2018, Sean Treanor was out of the office on family leave.

<sup>9</sup> Stephen Dudek was internally promoted to the position of Education and Outreach Director in July of Fiscal Year 2018 and was permanently relieved from his attorney advisor duties.

<sup>10</sup> Umar Ahmed joined the Division in August of 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Johan Fatemi joined the Division in January of 2019. The new attorney training will be completed and he will begin to accept new cases on March 1, 2019.

<sup>12</sup> Shavannie Braham joined the Division in January of 2019. The new attorney training will be completed and he will begin to accept new cases on March 1, 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Cynthia House joined the Division in January of 2019. The new attorney training will be completed and he will begin to accept new cases on March 1, 2019.

|                                  |   |   |                             |                      |
|----------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Paralegal Specialist</b>      | <p>Responds to Ask the Director inquiries from the OTA website.</p> <p>Responds to tenant issues forwarded from the Mayor's Ask the Mayor website inquires.</p> <p>Tracks Rental Housing and Office of Administrative Hearings Decisions.</p> <p>Tracks Housing Provider Petitions.</p> | Horace Lassiter   | Horace Lassiter             | Supervising Attorney |
| <b>Administrative Assistance</b> | <p>Mails Rapid Response Letters for TOPA, Housing Provider Petitions, Foreclosures and Evictions.</p> <p>Calendars Court appearances and filings.</p> <p>Provides other clerical assistance as needed.</p>  | No designated individual; tasks were distributed among all staff. | Jocelyn Reyes <sup>14</sup> | Supervising Attorney |

In FY 2018, over 7,124 tenants contacted the OTA for advice and assistance. Approximately 3,468<sup>15</sup> tenants resolved their issues with the aid of an attorney advisor, and the remaining tenants were able to resolve their issues with the assistance of a paralegal or case management specialist. In addition to providing limited legal representation by coaching tenants who were representing themselves in court and drafting complaints, petitions, and other court

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<sup>14</sup> Jocelyn Reyes joined the Division in January of 2019.

<sup>15</sup> Ramona Quillet 697; William Z. Mundy 677; Sean Treanor 527; Harrison Magy 828; Stephen Dudek 604; and Umar Ahmed 135



documents, attorney advisors also provided in court representation and negotiated on behalf of 43 tenants in judicial and administrative proceedings.

For FY 2019 through February 1, 2019, approximately 1,663 tenants have contacted the OTA for advice and assistance. Approximately 866<sup>16</sup> tenants resolved their issues with the aid of an attorney advisor and the remaining tenants were able to resolve their issues with the assistance of a paralegal or case management specialist. For FY 2019, due to previous staffing limitations, the Division has focused on completing the representation of the cases that OTA has already committed to and has restricted the number of new in-court and negotiation cases accepted for representation to date. However, the Division anticipates accepting new cases in in the spring of 2019.

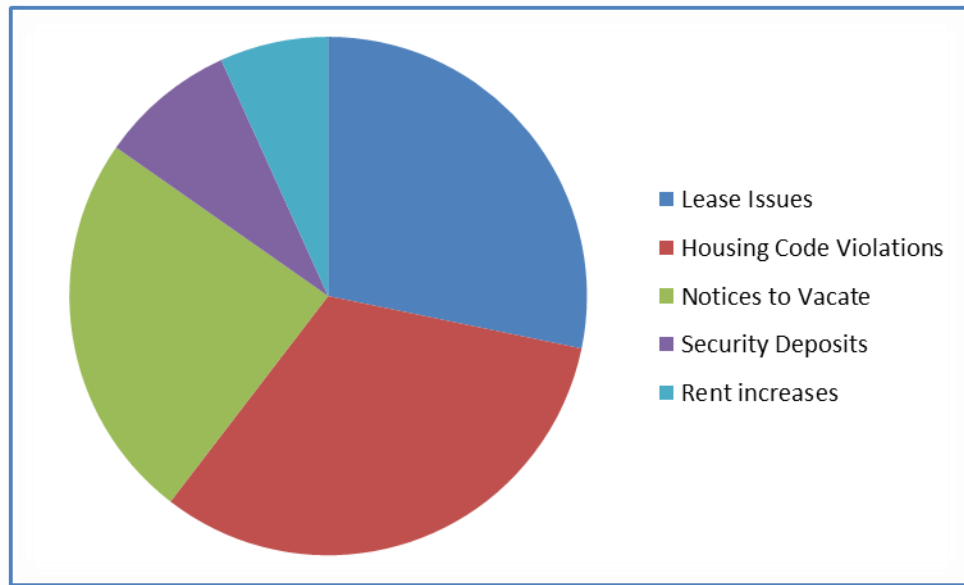
In FY 2018 the most common issues reported by tenants were (1) 2,801 housing code violations and mold; (2) 2,458 lease issues; (3) 2,114 notices to vacate and lease violations; (4) 740 security deposits; and (5) 590 rent increases. Lease issues include questions about the legal meaning of lease terms, utilities, and basic tenant rights. Common housing code issues include bed bugs, rodents, pests, water damage, and malfunctioning appliances. The OTA initially included mold questions in the housing code violations category, but subsequently added

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<sup>16</sup> Ramona Quillet 259; Sean Treanor 143; Harrison Magy 221; Umar Ahmed 243

mold as a separate category due to demand. Questions about lease violations and notices to vacate can also overlaps with questions about evictions, sale of rental housing, and foreclosures. Lastly, rent increase questions cover subsidized housing, units subject to rent control, and exempt units.

### Most Common Issues



### Accomplishments

Several years ago, OTA began to maintain data regarding the financial returns to tenants, including damage awards and rent rollbacks, derived from both in-house representation and the OTA funded “Legal Service Provider Program.” In FY 2018, the Division secured the return of \$915,186 to the tenant community and the Legal Service Provider Program won and additional \$372,745 for a total of \$1,287,931.

These numbers represent only a portion of the impact of OTA’s work on behalf of the tenant community. Every legal win for tenants promotes future compliance by the housing providers involved and amongst all housing providers. With our increased staffing and under the leadership of our new Supervising Attorney, the Division aims to increase the number of cases provided full in-court representation and to increase our return to tenants. The proposed plan involves reviewing and streamlining our clinic and hot-line procedures to accommodate the increasing demand while balancing our need to increase our in-court presence. To that end, we aim to complete an internal reorganization in the near future to allow for a portion of our attorney advisors to focus entirely on impact litigation, specifically representing tenant associations, building-wide litigation, and precedent-setting cases.

## **POLICY ADVOCACY**

### **Statutory mandate**

The agency’s policy advocacy mission is to “represent the interests of tenants and tenant organizations in legislative, executive, and judicial issues, including advocating changes in laws . . .”<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, the OTA engages each

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<sup>19</sup>D.C. Official Code § 42-3531.07(2)

branch of District government to promote the public policy interests of tenants and the tenant community.

### **Functions and activities**

A critical Policy Division function is to work with stakeholders, the Council and the Mayor's office, sister agencies, and others to help identify statutory, regulatory, and other gaps in the District's system of tenant protections, and to develop proposals to help fill in those gaps. The Policy Division also keeps the community apprised of relevant legislative and regulatory developments – at both the federal and District levels – through regular listserv notices and stakeholder meetings working in tandem with the Education and Outreach Division. The Division also regularly collaborates with non-governmental policy organizations such as the DC Preservation Network, the Coalition for Non-Profit Housing and Economic Development, the Urban Institute, the DC Fiscal Policy Institute, and the National Low-Income Housing Coalition (of which the OTA is a member).

### **Accomplishments**

#### *1. Enacted legislation*

In FY 2018, the OTA helped draft or provided the Council and/or the Mayor's Office with testimony or recommendations regarding rental housing-related legislation in a broad range of issue areas. We are gratified that in FY

2018 a number of OTA priorities were enacted into law, or if the law was enacted

“subject to appropriations” actually did receive funding. They include:

- Bill 21-0706, the “Fair Criminal Record Screening for Housing Act of 2016” (Law 21-0259 effective 4/7/17; funded as of 12/13/17)(restricting housing provider inquiries into the arrest and criminal records of rental applicants)
- Bill 22-0024, the “Expanding Access to Justice Act of 2017” (incorporated into Bill 22-244, the “Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Support Act of 2017,” Title III Subtitle F, effective 12/13/17)(moving toward a right to counsel for low-income eligible individuals confronting eviction)
- Bill 22-0025, the “Vacancy Increase Reform Amendment Act of 2018” (Act 22-536 projected law date 2/26/19)(capping the rent control vacancy rent increase at 10 percent of the rent charged if the previous tenant occupied the unit for 10 years or less, or to 20 percent if the previous tenant occupied the unit for more than 10 years)
- Bill 22-0441, the “Rental Unit Fee Adjustment Amendment Act of 2018” (Law 22-0113 effective July 3, 2018)(increasing the per rental unit fee to \$30 from \$25)
- Bill 22-0442, the “Rental Housing Registration Update Amendment Act of 2017” (incorporated into Law 22-0168, the “Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Support Act of 2018,” Title II Subtitle CC, effective 10/30/18)(requiring housing providers to re-register rental units under the Rental Housing Act)
- Bill 22-0570, the “Rental Housing Affordability Re-establishment Amendment Act of 2018” (Act 22-0501 projected law date 2/26/19)(resetting the rents of units no longer exempt from the Rent Stabilization Program due to the end of a tenant-based subsidy to an amount based on the adjustments of general applicability that accrued during the period of exemption)
- Bill 22-0640, the “Rental Housing Commission Independence Clarification Amendment Act of 2018” (Act 22-492 projected law date 2/26/19)(clarifying that the Rental Housing Commission is an independent agency within the executive branch of the District government)

- Bill 22-0092, the “Short-term Rental Regulation and Affordable Housing Protection Act of 2017” (Act 22-0563 no projected law date yet)(to regulate short-term rentals to ensure compliance with zoning regulations, building codes, health codes and housing codes among other things)
- Bill 22-0809, the “Eviction with Dignity Act of 2018” (Act 22-571 no projected law date yet)(requiring landlords to store the property of tenants for 10 days upon an eviction)
- Bill 22-0999, the “Rent Charged Definition Clarification Amendment Act of 2018” (Act 22-574 no projected law date yet)(clarifying the definition of the term "rent charged" and requiring the definition of the term "rent charged" to be included on all Rental Accommodations Division forms that include the term)

## 2. Regulation

As a voting member of the “Property Maintenance” Technical Advisory Group (PM-TAG) -- one of about twenty TAGs that advise the Construction Code Coordinating Board (CCCB) –the OTA is in a position to closely monitor and help improve the regulations that impact tenants where they live. In that capacity, the OTA spear-headed certain tenant protections that were included in the “Construction Codes Amendment Approval Resolution of 2018” (PR22-0719), which was deemed approved on March 16, 2018. They include:

- a) Protecting the tenant right of privacy by including a provision setting forth the criteria for when a code official must obtain an administrative search warrant before entering the tenant’s unit.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Changes made to Section 104.3.1.

b) Maximizing the opportunity for the District to recover the cost of OTA emergency housing expenditures from derelict landlords by clarifying that DCRA's lien authority and OTA's lien authority are not mutually exclusive.<sup>21</sup>

More recently, the OTA worked with the D.C. Housing Finance Agency to help fashion language for proposed rulemaking to extend protections to HFA tenants who are not protected by the Rental Housing Act or the new eviction procedure law.

### *3. Judicial activity*

In July 2018, at the invitation of the D.C. Court of Appeals, the OTA filed an *amicus* brief opining on the Court's question regarding whether a transfer of interest between co-owners triggers the tenant right of purchase under TOPA.<sup>22</sup> We are awaiting a decision in that matter. Additionally, attorney-advisor Harrison Magy has assumed the role of regularly reviewing the Court's unpublished decisions to help identify those that if published would be helpful to the tenant bar. This past year the Court granted the OTA's motion to publish a previously unpublished

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<sup>21</sup> Changes made to Section 108.5.1. and Section 106.

<sup>22</sup> *Williams, et al v. Kennedy, et al*, Case No. 17-CV-681, Notice of Appeal filed 6/20/17.

decision which held that a rule of reasonableness applies to questions of compliance with a cash for keys agreement.<sup>23</sup>

### **Future considerations**

The OTA's ongoing policy concerns are reflected in bills that were introduced in the last Council Period but not enacted, and in several bills newly introduced this year. They include:

- Bill 22-100, the "Preservation of Affordable Rent Control Housing Amendment Act of 2017" (prohibiting tenants and housing providers from forming certain agreements that shift the burden of rent increases to other current or future tenants, unless those rent increases would also apply to the tenants who are parties to the agreement)
- Bill 22-0396, the "Property Manager Licensing Amendment Act of 2017" (defining the term property manager and clarifying the scope of duties of licensed property managers in the District, and specifying the education requirements that must be met prior to licensing)
- Bill 22-1012, the "Eviction Record Sealing Authority Amendment Act of 2018" (authorizing the Court to seal certain eviction records and establishing penalties for those who publish such records)
- Bill 23-0015, the "Landlord Transparency Amendment Act of 2019" (establishing Mayoral subpoena power to compel the production of ownership records when a housing rental business allows any of its units to fall into significant disrepair).<sup>24</sup>
- Bill 23-0045, the "Bedbug Control Act of 2019" (creating regulations that govern the removal of bedbugs, require landlords to provide notice to tenants sharing party walls, floors and ceilings of units infested with bedbugs; and other purposes);

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<sup>23</sup> Chambers v. Cobb, 193 A23d 123 (D.C. 2018). We also congratulate Mr. Magy for being sworn in this past year as a member of the U.S. Supreme Court Bar.

<sup>24</sup> In January, the OTA discussed with a New York non-profit organization a database it has developed to track information related to housing conditions, problem properties, and slumlords.



- Bill 23-0048, the “Housing Conversion & Eviction Clarification Amendment Act of 2019” (providing for damages when a housing provider repossesses a rental unit from a tenant in order to personally use and occupy or sell a housing unit for personal use and occupancy and subsequently receives rent within the following 12-month period, and other purposes).
- Bill 23-0080, the “Federal Worker Housing Emergency Relief Act of 2019” (*approved on Final Reading on January 22<sup>nd</sup>; Mayoral response due February 7<sup>th</sup>*) and Bill 23-0081, the “Federal Worker Housing Temporary Relief Act of 2019” (protecting unpaid federal workers, employees of contractors of the federal government, and household members of federal workers and employees of contractors from eviction, late fees, and foreclosure during a federal government shutdown).
- Bill 23-0091, the “ Department of Buildings Establishment Act of 2019” (establishing the Department of Buildings as a subordinate agency within the Executive branch with oversight of construction compliance, rental housing safety, and residential property maintenance activities in the District, and other purposes).

Other ongoing and emerging policy concerns include finding more effective ways to tackle the problem of indoor mold; strengthening rent control, particularly regarding housing provider petitions and Voluntary Agreements, to better protect the affordability of rental housing in the District; further protecting the tenant’s reasonable contractual expectations regarding lease provisions that too often take tenants by surprise<sup>25</sup>; and revisiting the District’s security deposit laws in light of best practices.

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<sup>25</sup> See Law 21-210, the “Residential Lease Clarification Amendment Act of 2016,” effective 2/18/17.

## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

### **Statutory mandate**

The OTA's first statutory duty is to “[p]rovide education and outreach to tenants and the community about laws, rules, and other policy matters involving rental housing, including tenant rights under the petition process and formation of tenant organizations.”<sup>[1]</sup>

### **Functions and activities**

Education and outreach about tenant rights takes many forms. Through the Tenant Educational Institute, we collect and maintain key legal materials for the Resource Center; we develop curriculums on basic tenant rights in various educational forums; we help to establish tenant associations and tutor them about board governance; and we create informational brochures. The Education and Outreach Division works in tandem with the Policy Division regarding regular stakeholder updates and meetings. Each fall we hold the Tenant and Tenant Association Summit to connect all parts of the tenant community with policy experts and elected officials.

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<sup>[1]</sup>D.C. Official Code § 42-3531.07(1)

## **Accomplishments**

During FY 2018 the OTA continued to expand its educational and outreach activities. In FY 2018, the OTA participated in 41 outreach events. In FY 2019 to date, the OTA has participated in over 33 outreach events. A list of those events is attached to my testimony. In the 74 outreach events, the OTA has informed 2,582 District tenants and governmental and non-governmental colleagues about tenant rights and OTA's services. The agency continues to respond to requests from tenants interested in forming a tenant association and sustaining their organization. The tenant association presentations provide vital information on how to create and sustain a functional tenant association. Each month, the OTA presents Renters Rights 101 to a variety of markets within the community. We have begun to tailor the presentation to the needs of the attendees, whether they are students, elderly tenants, subsidized tenants, embassy employees, or ANC Commissioners.

## **FY 2019 goals**

Ever expanding the agency's outreach into all parts of the tenant community is the Division's most significant goal and challenge. The new Education and Outreach Director has made it his mission to make District tenants aware of the OTA and its services. Plans for FY 2019 including: a college student

initiative focusing on on-campus housing clinics at each of the District’s Colleges and Universities, creating interactive documents that help tenants understand their leases and how to protect their security deposits; and further collaboration with area universities, embassies, nonprofit, and government agencies.

## **EMERGENCY HOUSING ASSISTANCE**

### **Statutory mission**

The OTA has a statutory duty to “provide emergency housing and relocation assistance to qualified tenants, as determined by the Office.”<sup>28</sup>

### **Functions and activities**

The agency fulfills this mandate through the Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP), generally in collaboration with others including DHS Strong Families, DCHA, and the Red Cross. EHAP assistance is provided primarily to those tenants who are displaced by fires and government building closures.

Benefits may include: (1) the short-term relocation of tenants to hotels, motels, or other appropriate accommodations, generally up to fourteen (14) days; and (2) the moving and storage of personal property.

In FY 2018, the agency provided EHAP services to 333 renter households. The high demand for emergency housing services is evidenced by the fact the OTA

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<sup>28</sup>D.C. Official Code § 42-3531.07(6A)

generally spends more on EHAP than is budgeted. In FY 2018 the budgeted amount was \$545,000, and we had a balance of \$397,000 with as of the last month of the fiscal year. In mid-September, however, expenditures resulting from the fire at the Arthur Capper Senior Public Housing complex in Southeast, involving 162 residents, reduced that balance \$105,000. To date, with the help of supplemental funding from Mayor Bowser, the OTA has spent approximately \$1.5 million on the Capper event alone.

### **Rent Control Housing Clearinghouse Database**

Finally, let me provide you, Chairperson Bonds, with a progress report regarding the Rent Control Housing Clearinghouse Database. Having completed the assessment and design phase of the project, we submitted a scope of work to the Office of Contracting and Procurement (“OCP”) to be incorporated into a Request for Proposals (RFP). The OTA remains in continual contact with OCP to ensure that this project is and remains a priority item. OCP has assured the agency that the RFP is now being prepared for publication. Barring any unforeseen delays, we believe a contract should be awarded to a vendor by mid-April, and the database should be ready to be transferred to DHCD’s Rental Accommodations Division by mid-December 2019. The database will include the

capacity for housing providers to fulfill the requirements of Bill 22-0442, the “Rental Housing Registration Update Amendment Act of 2017.”

**Conclusion**

I wish to thank you, Chairperson Bonds and the Committee, as well as Mayor Bowser, for all the support given to the OTA and the services we provide to the tenant community. This concludes my testimony and I am happy to answer any questions you and members of the Committee may have.