Dear Residents,

We are living in unprecedented times.

At the time of this writing, the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has claimed over 650 lives across the District and left numerous more residents sick. Tens of thousands have lost work and now struggle to make ends meet. Parents have had to juggle putting food on the table and providing childcare. Computer screens have become temporary classrooms for our students, and an imperfect means to staying connected with our elderly and vulnerable residents.

It has been a year of loneliness, anxiety, uncertainty—and reckoning. While COVID-19 has laid bare the inequities that have long plagued communities of color, an eruption of racist police violence has made it impossible to look away.

Yet over these solemn months, I have watched the District meet this crisis with undeniable discipline, determination, and resilience.

I have seen essential workers—doctors and nurses and EMTs, police and firefighters, delivery drivers and cooks and grocery store workers and many more—dutifully serving the District and its residents, particularly our most vulnerable, despite great personal risk.

I’ve heard the District and the nation find its voice within a multiethnic, multigenerational, and global movement demanding true equality under our nation’s economic, educational, criminal justice, and healthcare systems.

I’ve witnessed our decades-long dream of gaining the full rights of citizenship leap closer to reality, as the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 51, the D.C. statehood bill.

And I’ve discovered hope.

I believe this moment can be our opportunity to build a better, fairer future. And I know the Office of the Attorney General can play a role, just as we have worked to contain this virus’s damage.

We may have been teleworking since March, but our commitment to providing the District with first-class legal services has never wavered. We’ve continued to defend your rights and emergency protections—stopping price gougers, rooting out scams and fraudsters, standing up for tenants in need, and fighting for workers’ health and safety.

We’ve leaned on virtual community outreach and our Cure the Streets violence interruption teams to keep residents informed, safe, fed, and counted in the U.S. Census. We’ve advised and collaborated with the Council and Executive Office of the Mayor on emergency legislation. And we’ve worked with the courts, the Metropolitan Police Department, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office to make sure we’re addressing our public health and public safety needs.

All the while, we have filed and settled lawsuits to protect our environment, advanced evidence-based strategies to address racial inequities, taken on discriminatory property managers and neglectful slumlords, and so much more.

2020 has strengthened our resolve to fight for District residents. So if there are ways OAG can better serve you, we want to hear about them. Together, we can chart a path for a future that marks this unparalleled year as the beginning of an extraordinary new era.

Sincerely,

Karl A. Racine
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## About OAG

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) is the chief legal office of the District of Columbia. OAG enforces the District’s laws, works to protect and defend D.C. residents, and provides the highest level of independent legal advice and guidance to District of Columbia government agencies. OAG’s goal is to be the nation’s most effective and respected public law office.
**SAVINGS AND BENEFITS TO THE DISTRICT**

**$3.1+ BILLION**
Approximate amount of savings and benefits to the District and relief for harmed residents as a result of OAG’s legal actions. This includes:

- **$265,000+**
  Approximate amount of relief secured for District tenants who were forced to live in unsafe and unlawful conditions

- **$2.2+ billion**
  Taxpayer dollars the District successfully avoided paying in lawsuits

- **$150+ million**
  Revenue for the District from court settlements and judgments

- **$280+ million**
  Child support collected on behalf of District children

- **$532+ million**
  Tax revenue preserved and bond program fees collected

- **$3.6+ million**
  Approximate amount OAG secured from neglectful building owners to fix issues such as mold, vermin infestations, water damage, and fire code violations at properties across the District

- **$17.1+ million**
  Approximate amount of relief secured for harmed consumers as a result of OAG mediating complaints and holding businesses accountable for breaking the law
Comment letters, briefs, and lawsuits opposing harmful federal policies and standing up for District residents

Success rate in cases against Trump administration

Legal advice memos provided on proposed legislation, proposed rulemakings, and legal and ethics questions from District government agencies and employees

Percentage of cases OAG has won on appeal

Percentage of cases OAG has won defending the District against civil lawsuits that seek monetary damages

Number of residents directly engaged through OAG-hosted events, webinars, listening sessions, constituent service actions, and community outreach
MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE DISTRICT

OAG has been recognized by respected local and national organizations for its work to help District residents and promote the public interest.

HELPING WORKERS AND TENANTS
D.C. Jobs with Justice “I’ll Be There Award” for improving the lives of workers, tenants, and other District residents.

ENHANCING PUBLIC SAFETY
The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation “Cafritz Award” for outstanding performance by District government employees, awarded to OAG’s Restorative Justice Team for its mediation work that addresses the root problems of crime and conflict.

DEFENDING OUR IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN) “Saúl Solorzano Justice Award” for leadership in protecting and defending the immigrant community.

SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CRIME
The Network for Victim Recovery of D.C. “Community Advocacy Award” for a victim-centric approach to helping those impacted by crime.

CULTIVATING YOUTH LEADERS
The MIKVA Challenge “D.C. Youth Champion Award” for a deep commitment to cultivating and mentoring youth civic leadership.

PROVIDING LEGAL SERVICES FOR THOSE IN NEED
Washington Council of Lawyers’ recognition for creating an office-wide Pro Bono Program that encourages OAG lawyers to provide critical legal services to individuals in need.

PROMOTING HEALTHY HABITS FOR YOUTH
The Foundation of Advancing Alcohol Responsibility “Champions of Responsibility Award” for a strong commitment to fighting underage drinking.
MAKING GOOD-FAITH ADJUSTMENTS TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE, JUVENILE JUSTICE, AND MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEMS

OAG worked to reduce the number of people held in the D.C. Department of Corrections to protect public safety and prevent additional COVID-19 deaths among incarcerated residents. After evaluating each case to determine if the defendant posed a risk to the community, OAG asked the Court to release those held on OAG charges and 65% were released. For those accused of nonviolent misdemeanor offenses, OAG worked with law enforcement partners to allow police to issue citations and notices to appear in court at a future date instead of bringing those individuals to jail. OAG also worked with law enforcement, the Court, and the District’s Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services to reduce the number of youth arrested and detained during the pandemic. Working extensively with clinicians at Saint Elizabeths Hospital, OAG also helped determine whether several defendants could be safely released to the community prior to the date of their civil commitment hearing.

PROTECTING CONSUMERS FROM BAD ACTORS

Consumer complaints to OAG doubled to more than 600 at the beginning of the pandemic, with most residents reporting problematic billing and cancellation issues. In every ward, residents consistently reported price gouging concerns, leading OAG to send dozens of cease and desist letters. OAG filed a lawsuit against a Ward 7 convenience store for increasing the cost of bleach by 200%, and the Court ordered it to stop selling overpriced merchandise. OAG also filed a lawsuit against Washington Sports Club for failing to process cancellation requests submitted during the COVID-19 crisis and failing to provide promised credits to consumers when its gyms reopened.

SUPPORTING ESSENTIAL WORKERS

OAG issued nearly 30 health and safety inquiry letters following multiple worker complaints about insufficient Personal Protective Equipment in the workplace. OAG also secured an agreement with Instacart, a grocery delivery service, that expanded
paid sick leave, offered free telemedicine for workers with COVID-19 symptoms, and provided childcare assistance to certain workers. The agreement also compelled Instacart to donate $50,000 to the Capital Area Food Bank. OAG also worked with a multistate coalition urging Amazon and Whole Foods to provide paid sick leave for their workers.

STANDING UP FOR TENANTS

To inform tenants about the District’s COVID-19 emergency protections, OAG published and distributed educational tip sheets and frequently asked questions and participated in several public education webinars. OAG received more than 230 housing complaints, and following investigations, sent 58 cease and desist letters for issues including rent freeze violations, wrongful eviction, and health and safety concerns.

ADVOCATING FOR EMERGENCY PROTECTIONS FOR RESIDENTS

After Congress shortchanged the District $750 million in emergency COVID-19 aid, AG Racine led a bipartisan coalition of 37 Attorneys General—10 Republicans, 1 Independent, and 26 Democrats—in demanding state-level relief funding for the District. OAG also worked with the Council to extend protections to residents using funeral services, enhance OAG’s civil rights enforcement authority, and protect residents from unscrupulous debt collectors. OAG also supported and enforced the District’s COVID-19 emergency legislation that prohibited evictions and utility shut-offs, stopped landlords from charging late fees, outlawed the stockpiling of essential goods, set workplace safety standards, and increased penalties for illegal price gouging.

TRANSITIONING TO VIRTUAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

During the pandemic, OAG has hosted more than 25 virtual events, including a series of Tele-Town Halls on legal protections for consumers, workers and tenants, which garnered more than 3,200 participants. OAG also launched a 30-minute live video chat series with AG Racine called “Take 30” covering important community topics such as coping with stress, safeguarding LGBTQ+ rights, and stopping the spread of xenophobia and violence. OAG also hosted weekly “Twitter Chats” to provide opportunities for District youth to discuss important issues with local and national experts, such as managing family conflict, recognizing child abuse, and fostering emotional wellness.
EXPANDING VIOLENCE INTERRUPTION EFFORTS

In 2019, with support of the Council, OAG expanded its violence interruption pilot program—Cure the Streets—to four additional sites. More than 60 Cure the Streets violence interrupters and outreach staff are now working at six sites across Wards 5, 7, and 8, using public-health strategies that treat violence like a disease that can be interrupted, treated, and stopped from spreading. This work is carried out by residents with deep ties to their neighborhood, called violence interrupters, who are trained to identify and de-escalate conflict. Community members feel safer knowing violence interrupters are nearby and early evidence points to success in the long-term.

REMOVING GUNS FROM POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS PEOPLE

The District’s “Red Flag Law” helps keep residents safe by allowing certain residents to petition the D.C. Superior Court to issue Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs), which require the temporary removal of firearms and ammunition from a potentially dangerous individual. OAG has successfully litigated five orders so far and is raising awareness about this law through education and outreach. Learn more about who is eligible to use this law, how to petition the court, and what happens if an ERPO is granted at: oag.dc.gov/RedFlagLaw.

SUPPORTING COMMON-SENSE GUN REGULATIONS

Ten states and the District of Columbia banned large-capacity magazines to prevent the kind of devastating mass shootings that plague our country. AG Racine led multistate coalitions supporting California and New Jersey’s ban on large-capacity magazines, arguing in court briefs that states have a responsibility to enact common-sense gun safety regulations that can save lives. AG Racine also joined a multistate “ghost gun” lawsuit to prevent the federal government from making it easier to acquire 3D-printed firearms online and separately sued gun manufacturer Polymer80 for illegally advertising and selling untraceable ghost guns to D.C. consumers.

KEEPING RESIDENTS SAFE

AG Racine is working to make the District safer through smart prosecution and innovative, evidence-informed initiatives. OAG’s public safety efforts aim to stop violence before it happens and address the root causes of crime to prevent individuals from re-offending.

Frederick Mercer
Violence Interrupter for OAG’s Cure the Streets Washington Highlands site in Ward 8

We don’t have bullet proof vests. We don’t use weapons. We use communication [to make our community safer].

“We don’t have bullet proof vests. We don’t use weapons. We use communication [to make our community safer].”

Frederick Mercer
Violence Interrupter for OAG’s Cure the Streets Washington Highlands site in Ward 8
TREATING CHILDREN AS CHILDREN

In close collaboration with OAG, the Metropolitan Police Department announced in February 2020 significant changes to its policies governing interactions with District youth. The new policy emphasizes using age-appropriate, trauma-informed practices to de-escalate interactions with youth and limit their exposure to the justice system. Everyone benefits when police can use interactions with young people as an opportunity to establish trust and help kids stay on the right path.

KEEPING KIDS IN SCHOOL

Studies show that chronic absenteeism increases students’ risk of ending up in the juvenile justice system. OAG partnered with Sousa Middle School to create “I Belong Here,” an anti-truancy program which involves OAG-led lesson plans and leverages friendly competition, incentives, and rewards to disrupt behaviors associated with truancy. In its second year, Sousa Middle School had the highest percent of in-seat attendance out of all comparably sized District middle schools and was only one of three middle schools in D.C. to see gains in attendance.

OAG’s Addressing Truancy Through Engagement and Negotiated Dialogue (ATTEND) Program is an alternative to prosecuting parents for failing to send their children to school. ATTEND links parents to appropriate community-based services to address the cause of the chronic absenteeism. ATTEND has held nearly 380 mediations with a 100% agreement rate.

ADDRESSING TRAUMA AND ROOT CAUSES OF CRIME

OAG has significantly increased the number of young offenders it diverts to the District’s Alternatives to the Court Experience (ACE) program. Through ACE, offending children identified as low risk to the community are provided personalized services to address trauma that include behavioral health support, mentoring and tutoring, and family and individual therapy. Both the Metropolitan Police

ENDING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

Evidence shows that the default path of prosecution, probation, and detention to hold young offenders accountable ignores the root causes of delinquency—and even exacerbates it. That’s why OAG is making investments in data-driven solutions that keep kids in school, treat childhood trauma, and reduce recidivism—while holding them accountable when they offend.
You never want your child to be the victim of a crime. You also don’t want this pain compounded by seeing another child’s life derailed because of a bad decision. What a gift for us to be able to experience [OAG’s Restorative Justice Program] that led to healing and a way forward for all involved.

Amber and Warren

*Parents of victim in a robbery case discuss Restorative Justice.*
CELEBRATING YOUTH ON THE RIGHT PATH
AG Racine’s Right Direction Awards is an annual celebration honoring District youth who are positively impacting our community despite significant challenges. Past awardees all have unique stories—from discovering a calling in juvenile justice reform and marching for women’s rights to teaching conflict resolution and graduating high school while raising a child and supporting a younger sibling. Each of the 250 awardees since 2015 is an extraordinary role model.

SETTING YOUTH UP FOR SUCCESS
AG Racine has launched initiatives to celebrate youth on the right path, teach healthy decision-making skills, and engage youth on important issues.

EMPOWERING YOUTH TO “DO THE WRITE THING”
For the past four years, AG Racine has sponsored the District’s participation in the national “Do the Write Thing” challenge, a national anti-violence essay contest for middle schoolers. In June 2020, OAG hosted a virtual celebration for over 240 student essayists and their families, featuring two contest winners, Amari Edmonds and Tyler Willis. Amari spoke about the need to support and educate Black youth, and Tyler read his poem about the power of song as a metaphor for healing and strength.

LAUNCHING OAG’S HIGH SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL
In July 2020, OAG welcomed its second High School Advisory Council (HSAC) cohort, a yearlong program that gives District high school students first-hand experience with advocacy and policymaking. HSAC members spent a two-week summer boot camp researching policy options to help educate District students about our country’s history of systemic racism and ways to ensure all students feel safe at school.

ONLINE CHILD SUPPORT APPLICATION
OAG launched a new online application for parents to start the process to obtain a child support order, get help collecting payments, or establish paternity. More information at cssd.dc.gov or by calling (202) 442-9900.

TEACHING YOUTH ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS
Because everyone deserves happy and healthy relationships, OAG works to stop teen dating violence in the District. In 2019, OAG attorneys conducted 15 presentations for over 1,300 District students about consent and healthy relationships, the warning signs of abuse, and how kids can get help if they need it.
LISTENING TO COMMUNITY CIVIL RIGHTS CONCERNS

During the summer of 2019, OAG invited residents to share personal encounters with discrimination at a series of civil rights listening sessions across the District. OAG then released a report detailing the community’s concerns with housing discrimination, racism, and violence against the LGBTQ+ community, which have and continue to guide OAG’s civil rights work. You can read the findings of this report at oag.dc.gov/CivilRightsReport.

STOPPING DISCRIMINATION IN THE DISTRICT

OAG’s Civil Rights Section has taken legal actions to stop:

• **Housing discrimination:** The availability of affordable housing is a crisis for many District residents. OAG sued Curtis Investment Group and Evolve LLC, landlords that unlawfully discriminated against low-income residents who used housing vouchers to pay for rent. OAG secured its largest civil rights settlement ever against Curtis, requiring the landlord to pay $900,000 for posting discriminatory online housing ads. OAG also secured a $250,000 penalty from Evolve for its discriminatory conduct. Finally, OAG worked with Apartments.com and Zillow, two online real estate companies, to implement filters that identify and remove discriminatory online housing listings with phrases like “No vouchers” and “No section 8.” Several lawsuits and investigations to stop this kind of housing discrimination remain pending, including eight cases filed against real estate professionals for discriminatory advertisements.

• **Location-based discrimination:** Residents east of the Anacostia River often find themselves excluded from goods and services. OAG reached a settlement with Renewal by Andersen, a window company that illegally refused to do business in certain District neighborhoods, requiring that they serve all District residents equally regardless of location and pay $50,000 to the District. Another lawsuit against a home contractor for similar location-based discrimination is pending.

STANDING UP FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Civil rights violations unfairly limit opportunity for District residents and offend their personal dignity. AG Racine established a new Civil Rights Section to ensure equal treatment under law and meaningful opportunity for all District residents.

How to Report Discrimination

If D.C. residents experience discrimination of ANY kind, report it to OAG by calling (202) 727-3400, emailing OAGCivilRights@dc.gov or filling out an online form: oag.dc.gov/CivilRightsComplaint.

Residents can also file a complaint with D.C. Office of Human Rights by calling (202) 727-4559 or visiting ohr.dc.gov.
SEEKING JUSTICE FOR SENIORS AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Too many District seniors are victimized by unscrupulous individuals and businesses. AG Racine launched a new elder justice team of OAG attorneys who have secured indictments and won judgments against individuals who have stolen money from seniors and other vulnerable adults:

- A joint OAG/U.S. Attorney’s Office investigation led to guilty pleas from a bank manager and personal banker for stealing over $80,000 from an elderly client who they befriended by visiting after hours.
- OAG helped an 80-year-old victim of financial exploitation get out of a $51,000 car loan after being tricked into it by his stepson and a dishonest agent at a car dealership.
- An OAG attorney detailed to the U.S. Attorney’s Office secured a conviction against a home health aide who stole over $3,000 by collecting cash back for herself whenever she would make purchases at CVS for an 80-year-old client with dementia.

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

Part of promoting the public interest includes protecting those most susceptible to abuse and neglect. OAG has prioritized responding to the needs of our city’s most vulnerable residents, including seniors, low-income residents, victims of child sex trafficking, and others.

Help Stop Elder Abuse

One of the most common forms of elder abuse is financial exploitation, where scammers—or sometimes even close friends, caregivers, or relatives—take advantage of vulnerable seniors for personal gain.

Recognize signs of financial exploitation:
- Unusual banking or credit card activity;
- Suspicious changes in wills or powers of attorney; and
- Sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives or friends.

If you suspect elder abuse, neglect or financial exploitation, call the Adult Protective Services hotline at (202) 541-3950 or OAG at (202) 727-3807. Call 911 if the senior is in immediate physical harm. Learn more signs of elder abuse and how you can help at oag.dc.gov/ElderAbuse.
Help for Victims of Child Sex Trafficking

Do you know the warning signs of child sex trafficking? Here are a few common red flags:

1. Running away from home
2. Not attending school
3. Using phones or credit cards that are not theirs
4. New tattoos
5. Signs of physical abuse

To get help if you or someone you know is a victim of sex trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888. Learn other warning signs of child sex trafficking and how you can get youth help: oag.dc.gov/trafficking

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM SEX TRAFFICKING

Sex trafficking, which poses a serious threat to District children, is a terrible crime where traffickers force victims to exchange sexual acts for something of value. OAG staff seeks to connect suspected victims with services that can help them break free of traffickers. OAG also builds awareness year-round through educational resources, trainings at schools and community centers, and public awareness campaigns that teach residents how to identify trafficking victims and connect them to help. Since 2016, OAG has trained over 1,600 youth on the warning signs of sex trafficking. OAG has partnered with Comcast, Lyft, Verizon, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and more to expand public education.

DEFENDING CRITICAL FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR MILLIONS

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—commonly known as “food stamps”—is a critical safety net program that uses food assistance to help lift people out of poverty. In January 2020, AG Racine led a multistate lawsuit to stop the Trump administration from eliminating SNAP food assistance for nearly 700,000 struggling Americans nationwide, including up to 12,000 District residents. In October, a federal court permanently blocked this harmful rule.

Help Child Abuse Victims

District law requires all adults to report child sex abuse. Anyone who suspects child abuse can call the District’s Child and Family Services Agency central reporting line at (202) 671-SAFE. In life threatening situations, call 911.

Learn more about reporting requirements at oag.dc.gov/PublicSafety.
ADVOCATING FOR TENANTS AND PRESERVING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

One of the most pressing issues facing District residents is the shortage of affordable housing. To respond to this growing problem, OAG is using the law in creative ways to preserve affordable housing and ensure landlords maintain safe, habitable living conditions.

HOLDING SLUMLORDS ACCOUNTABLE

In OAG’s largest-ever rent recovery from a District landlord, AG Racine announced a settlement in 2020 that will require the owners and managers of two Ward 8 apartment complexes—Forest Ridge and The Vista Apartments—to pay at least $1.9 million to eligible current or former tenants, who were forced to live with severe rodent infestations, repeated flooding, and a lack of working smoke detectors. In 2019, AG Racine also announced a settlement requiring Sanford Capital to return $1.1 million to tenants in Wards 5, 7, and 8 after leaving tenants to live in uninhabitable conditions that included vermin infestations, inconsistent heat, broken plumbing, and dangerous fire code violations. Along with paying a penalty to the District, Sanford agreed to divest ownership of the over 20 properties it once managed in the District. The company is banned from operating in the city’s residential housing business for at least seven years.

“We have been impressed by OAG’s renewed commitment to securing safe and affordable housing for low income residents and to ensuring housing providers are held to a high standard under the law... In a single action, OAG can vindicate the rights of hundreds of households, having a massive impact on the security and habitability of those family’s homes.

Testimony of Rachel Rintelmann

Supervising Attorney, Housing Law Unit, Legal Aid Society for the District of Columbia
ENSURING PROPERTY OWNERS KEEP TENANTS SAFE

OAG sued the D.C. Housing Authority (DCHA) in June 2020 for endangering thousands of tenants at 10 public housing properties after numerous complaints from residents and more than 5,270 incidents the Metropolitan Police Department has responded to since January 2019. Despite repeated homicides, assaults, and drug arrests and multiple OAG warnings, DCHA failed to make basic security improvements like increasing security presence, lighting, and security cameras. OAG also secured settlements in 2020 to enhance security measures at Good Hope Laundromat in Ward 8 and make property repairs to 220 Hamilton Street, a 34-unit apartment building in Ward 4.

STOPPING ILLEGAL SHORT-TERM APARTMENT RENTALS

In a big win for affordable housing, OAG announced a settlement in November 2019 with Ginosi USA—a hospitality chain—banning the company from offering illegal short-term apartment rentals that illegally cut into the District’s viable long-term housing supply while also failing to pay District sales taxes that they collected from guests. Under OAG’s settlement, Ginosi is required to pay nearly $730,000 in unpaid sales taxes, interest, and penalties, and must notify OAG if they intend to sell any other goods or services in the District for the next ten years.

Help for Tenants

If you believe your landlord is not making needed repairs or if your health and safety are in danger, you can request an inspection from the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs by calling (202) 442-4400. You can also contact the Office of the Tenant Advocate at (202) 719-6560.

If you believe your landlord is wrongly withholding a security deposit, collecting illegal late fees or attorney’s fees, improperly raising your rent, or deceiving you in any way, report it to OAG’s Consumer Hotline at (202) 442-9828.

Learn about your tenant rights, what to do about a nuisance property, and how OAG can help at oag.dc.gov/TenantRights
PROTECTING CONSUMERS

OAG’s Office of Consumer Protection works to ensure that businesses treat District consumers fairly. OAG handles consumer complaints, mediates disputes, educates consumers about their rights, and takes legal actions against individuals and companies who defraud District residents and break District laws.

SECURING RELIEF FOR DATA BREACH VICTIMS

Last summer, AG Racine announced a historic $600 million multistate settlement with Equifax over its 2017 data breach that exposed the personal information of more than 350,000 District residents and nearly half of the U.S. population. Under this settlement, Equifax is required to provide $425 million in restitution, strengthen security practices, and offer consumers 10 years of free credit monitoring along with assistance in preventing or recovering from identity theft. OAG also continues its lawsuit against Facebook for failing to protect the privacy of millions of its users and deceiving them about who had access to their data and how it was used.

FIGHTING A TEEN PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

Often marketed as safer than smoking, vaping products have created a public health crisis among teens nationwide. To protect District youth, OAG filed a lawsuit against JUUL, a major e-cigarette manufacturer, for intentionally designing advertising campaigns that target kids and misleading consumers about the highly addictive quality of its nicotine products. OAG is seeking to stop JUUL from illegally preying on young consumers and to hold the company accountable. Learn the facts about vaping and how to talk with youth about its dangers: oag.dc.gov/vaping.

Help for Consumers

If you are the victim of a scam or believe a business has deceived you, submit a consumer complaint to OAG by:

Calling
(202) 442-9828

Emailing
consumer.protection@dc.gov

Filing out an online form at oag.dc.gov/ConsumerProtection
CRACKING DOWN ON HIDDEN HOTEL “RESORT FEES”

AG Racine filed a lawsuit against Marriott in 2019 for deceiving consumers about resort fees that have boosted the hotel giant’s bottom line. To lure consumers, including tens of thousands of District consumers, Marriott advertised daily room rates that were lower than the true total price consumers were required to pay. By adding mandatory fees on top of advertised rates at the end of the booking process, Marriott reaped hundreds of millions in profits without appearing to raise prices. OAG is seeking a court order to force Marriott to advertise the true prices of its hotel rooms up front, pay monetary relief to harmed D.C. consumers, and pay civil penalties to the District.

STOPPING PREDATORY LENDERS

Depending on the type of loan contract, District law sets maximum interest rates that lenders can charge between 6 and 24% to protect residents from falling prey to exploitative lenders. In June 2020, AG Racine sued Elevate, an online lender, for illegal high-interest loans burdening over 2,500 financially vulnerable D.C. residents. Elevate misrepresented the nature of their loans, which had interest rates ranging between 99 and 251%—up to 42 times the legal limit.

HOLDING BIG PHARMA ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

OAG filed suit against Purdue Pharma and its former top executive Richard Sackler for misleading patients, doctors, and communities in pursuit of massive profits from opioid sales. OAG alleges Purdue broke the law and recklessly endangered District residents by misrepresenting the addictive quality and relative safety of opioids, pushing doctors to prescribe opioids for longer periods at higher doses, and falsely claiming signs of addiction can be treated with more opioids. OAG seeks to halt Purdue’s deceptive marketing claims and compel Purdue give up all gains achieved through violations of the District’s consumer protection laws.

“
I paid a fee to apply for an apartment, only to learn that it had already gone to the first person who applied. I asked the property management company for a refund since my application was never processed, but I was denied. I contacted OAG’s Office of Consumer Protection, and they helped me get my money back.

Julia
District resident
FIGHTING FOR DISTRICT WORKERS

OAG has prioritized protecting workers from wage theft and payroll fraud schemes like worker misclassification. With new independent authority to investigate and bring wage theft cases, OAG has launched over 30 investigations and recovered millions of dollars from businesses that have stolen wages from District workers.

STopping PayRoll Fraud

Worker misclassification is a form of payroll fraud in which employers improperly categorize their workers as “independent contractors” instead of direct employees. This illegal practice, especially prevalent in the construction industry, hurts workers, cheats taxpayers, and undercuts law-abiding competitors. An OAG-commissioned economic study found that construction companies that misclassify employees in the District can illegally reduce labor costs anywhere from 16.7 to 48%. In January 2020, OAG announced a settlement requiring Power Design, a major electrical contractor, to pay $2.75 million to resolve a wage theft and worker misclassification case—OAG’s largest wage theft recovery both in value and the number of affected workers.

“An OAG-commissioned economic study found that construction companies that misclassify employees in the District can illegally reduce labor costs anywhere from 16.7 to 48%.”

HoldinG ABUsive EmPloYers ACCounTAbLe

OAG has significantly stepped up wage theft enforcement over the past two years with significant wins including:

- **Matchbox**: OAG secured a $142,000+ settlement that will provide unpaid wages to over 100 Matchbox and Ted’s Bulletin restaurant workers following allegations that Matchbox Food Group failed to pay DC’s minimum wage.
- **Instacart**: As part of an agreement with OAG, Instacart expanded COVID-19 paid sick leave for workers during the pandemic.
- **Rock Spring Contracting, LLC**: OAG secured a $280,000 settlement that will provide unpaid wages to approximately 75 drywall workers and penalties to the District.
- **J.D. Nursing and Management Services, Inc.**: OAG won a $216,000 judgment from a now-shuttered home healthcare company that will provide unpaid wages to more than 20 personal care aides and penalties to the District.
- **Airway Sheet Metal Co.**: OAG secured a $115,000 settlement that will return unpaid wages to 40 sheet metal workers and a payment to the District.
PROTECTING GIG ECONOMY WORKERS

OAG filed a lawsuit against DoorDash, an app-based food delivery company, alleging it used tips consumers intended as gratuity for delivery workers to subsidize the company’s labor costs—the more consumers tipped, the less DoorDash had to pay workers. OAG is seeking to recover millions of dollars in tip money that consumers thought they were paying to workers and to impose civil penalties.

Thanks to [AG Racine’s] leadership and commitment to fight wage theft and the underground economy, Washington D.C. will be among the top cities of where to work and for business to find fair competition.

Raul Castro-Ramirez
Team Leader at Keystone Mountain Lakes Regional Council of Carpenters

Help for Workers

If you believe your employer has not paid you what you are owed, call the District’s Department of Employment Services at (202) 671-1880.

If you believe your employer routinely fails to pay workers what they are owed, provide sick leave, or follow other D.C. labor laws, call OAG at (202) 727-3400.

Learn about workers’ rights and how to report wage theft at oag.dc.gov/WageRights.
ENSURING AN ACCURATE U.S. CENSUS COUNT
AG Racine, along with several other state Attorneys General, successfully blocked the Trump administration from adding a citizenship question to the 2020 Census, which would have discouraged participation from immigrant communities in the District and nationwide. The U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling is a win for democracy, as the U.S. Census impacts political representation and access to critical funds for education, infrastructure, healthcare, and more.

PROTECTING DISTRICT TEACHERS FROM VISA FRAUD
OAG sued Bilingual Teacher Exchange (BTE), a teacher exchange company, for preying on hardworking foreign educators who came to the District to teach. BTE misled teachers into paying for visa and sponsorship support services they never received, entrapping them in a cycle of debt and late fees. BTE charged up to 13 times the amount foreign teachers typically pay legitimate visa sponsors and threatened those struggling to pay with loss of visas and deportation. OAG secured a preliminary injunction against BTE to block the company from doing business in the District while litigation continues.

OPPOSING DEPORTATION OF LONGTIME RESIDENTS
AG Racine led a 21-state coalition challenging the Trump administration’s effort to end Temporary Protected Status for Haitian nationals and restrict immigration from countries with populations primarily made up of people of color. Without protected status, hundreds of Haitian-born residents who legally live and work in the District will lose their work permits and be at risk of deportation. AG Racine also led multistate coalitions to stop Trump’s efforts to limit asylum for immigrants of color and block state laws that limit local resources for federal immigration crackdowns.

DEFENDING OUR IMMIGRANT NEIGHBORS
In today’s political climate, our immigrant community has faced cruel federal efforts to separate families fleeing violence and persecution, restrict immigration from countries of color, punish immigrants who lawfully use nutrition, housing and medical assistance programs, and more. AG Racine is committed to protecting the nearly 100,000 immigrants who live and work in the District and make valuable contributions to our communities.
PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT

Located at the junction of two tidal rivers, the District and its residents are particularly vulnerable to the harmful health and safety effects of climate change. Over the past two years, with the help of the Council, OAG has devoted new resources to combatting climate change and cracking down on chronic polluters—especially when they harm vulnerable people and low-income communities of color.

SUING MONSANTO OVER CANCER-CAUSING CHEMICAL POLLUTION

OAG secured its largest environmental recovery to date: Monsanto, an agrochemical company, will pay $52 million to clean up toxic pollution in the District. OAG sued Monsanto in May 2020 to hold the company accountable for toxic polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) that damaged our natural resources—including the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers—and put residents at risk. OAG alleged the company knowingly produced, promoted, and sold toxic and harmful products and misled consumers and regulators to maximize profits.

CLEANING UP POTOMAC RIVER

AG Racine secured a settlement in 2020 requiring GenOn, a fossil-fuel energy company, to pay $2.5 million to the District to resolve allegations that one of its powerplants illegally discharged oil and other pollutants directly into the Potomac River. This settlement includes $50,000 to improve drinking water quality and $50,000 to support environmental enforcement training for District government employees.
STOPPING AIR POLLUTION VIOLATIONS

Air pollution triggers asthma in approximately 10,000 District children, increasing their risk of long-term health issues. OAG secured a settlement requiring Greyhound to adopt national anti-idling policies and pay $125,000 for allowing buses to idle at Union Station for longer than the District’s legal limit. The company is also required to provide anti-idling training to its drivers and hire a full-time supervisor to monitor compliance at Union Station.

COMBATTING CLIMATE CHANGE

For decades, Exxon Mobil, BP, Chevron, and Shell spent millions to mislead consumers about the role their products play in causing climate change and to discredit climate science in pursuit of profits. In June 2020, AG Racine sued these oil and gas companies to stop their disinformation campaigns, provide relief for District consumers, and secure civil penalties. OAG has also joined several multistate lawsuits to stop the Trump administration from rolling back critical environmental protections, such as auto emissions standards and Clean Power Plan rules.

KEEPING RESIDENTS SAFE FROM LEAD PAINT

AG Racine filed a lawsuit against the owner of a Ward 7 apartment building for endangering the health and safety of residents by exposing them to poisonous lead-based paint, which can cause lifelong problems for children, including learning disabilities and developmental delays. OAG secured a default judgment requiring the landlord to pay a penalty of over $11,000 and begin work to eliminate the health hazard.
MAKING GOVERNMENT WORK AND ELEVATING DISTRICT AUTONOMY

As the chief legal officer for the District, OAG represents the city in court, provides sound legal advice and guidance to District agencies, and enforces the law to ensure that people and businesses operate with the highest integrity. OAG also uses every opportunity to advocate for D.C. Statehood and full autonomy, fighting to ensure the District has a voice in federal matters as well.

FIGHTING FOR D.C. STATEHOOD

The District’s more than 702,000 residents serve on juries, fight in wars, and pay the highest federal taxes per capita, yet cannot elect a single voting member of Congress. This is undemocratic and unfair. AG Racine led a coalition of 21 attorneys general for the first time in supporting D.C. Statehood and urging Congress to pass H.R. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act. AG Racine also filed a friend-of-the-court brief supporting a lawsuit filed by District residents alleging that lack of voting representation violates the Constitution.

ELEVATING COMMUNITY VOICES IN FEDERAL COURT

OAG was appointed by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to represent the views of D.C. community members about the U.S. Attorney’s Office’s request to reduce Rayful Edmond’s sentence following his cooperation with federal authorities. Mr. Edmond was convicted of federal drug distribution charges and sentenced to life without parole in 1990, after running a major cocaine ring in the District in the 1980s.

This was the first time OAG has been asked by a federal court to represent the community’s views in an adult criminal matter in which it does not have prosecutorial authority. After collecting feedback from more than 500 community members, OAG submitted a brief to the court, which did not adopt a position, but elevated thoughtful and sharply divided opinions. OAG is grateful to the Court for entrusting the office with the responsibility and opportunity to assist in this critical case.

ROOTING OUT PUBLIC CORRUPTION

The District is the only place in the U.S. that does not have a local prosecutor or other office specifically responsible for prosecuting local public corruption and related matters that impact the integrity of honest government services. While the U.S. Attorney’s
signs. OAG sued the company in 2016 because it flagrantly violated District law by erecting large LED signs without first obtaining the required permits. The company ignored multiple stop-work orders directing it to cease any further sign construction without obtaining the required permits.

**TRANSFORMING DISTRICT SERVICES FOR COURT-INVOLVED YOUTH**

The District announced a major settlement this year to end court oversight and monitoring of the D.C. Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) after 35 years. The settlement resolves a class action lawsuit filed in 1985 on behalf of youth in the District's secure juvenile detention facilities. This settlement is possible because the District invested in the construction of modern facilities, recruited and retained talented leadership, and transformed its policies and practices for supervising and providing services to court-involved youth. The District will continue to enhance public safety by meeting the rehabilitative needs of our young people.

**PROSECUTING LOCAL GUN CASES IN LOCAL COURTS**

AG Racine filed two briefs in court opposing the U.S. Attorney’s policy to prosecute local gun cases in federal court. AG Racine argues that this policy undermines the District’s autonomy and that harsher federal sentencing will disproportionately harm African Americans and youth in the District. It also denies offenders access to data-driven public safety and sentencing reforms that address problems of overincarceration and racial inequities. The District has strong laws to punish felons in possession of a gun and must be allowed to enforce them without interference.

**STOPPING INSTALLATION OF ILLEGAL DIGITAL SIGNS**

OAG secured a victory in its case against Lumen Eight Media Group LLC (formerly Digi Media) for illegal outdoor Light-Emitting Diode (LED) digital signs. OAG sued the company in 2016 because it flagrantly violated District law by erecting large LED signs without first obtaining the required permits. The company ignored multiple stop-work orders directing it to cease any further sign construction without obtaining the required permits.

Office for the District of Columbia has jurisdiction over local offenses involving public corruption, the preferred course throughout the country is to empower a locally accountable prosecutor to investigate and charge such offenses. That’s why OAG sought and received expert recommendations from highly-regarded former federal prosecutor Jonathan Kravis on how best to structure a new Public Corruption Section and potential areas of focus. These recommendations will help inform OAG’s efforts to bring additional prosecutorial resources to deter public corruption.

**FIGHTING WASTE AND ABUSE**

Nonprofits are unique corporate entities that function as public trusts, legally required to ensure that their funds are used for their stated public purpose—not for enriching private interests. In January 2020, AG Racine sued the Trump Presidential Inaugural Committee and two Trump entities for abusing nonprofit funds to enrich the Trump family, alleging that the Committee staff collaborated with the Trump family to grossly overpay for event spaces at the Trump Hotel for alleged official inaugural events. AG Racine also filed a lawsuit to resolve dueling Boards at the D.C. tech nonprofit Open Technology Fund. OAG alleges its Board of Directors was illegally replaced by a Trump appointee, creating a leadership crisis and paralyzing the independent organization. The court ruled those actions were unauthorized and invalidated them.

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**Enforcing the Constitution**

In a victory for the rule of law and the Constitution, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in a 9-6 ruling denied President Trump’s attempt to dismiss the District and Maryland’s anti-corruption lawsuit against him. AG Racine and Maryland AG Brian Frosh sued President Trump in 2017 for openly violating the Constitution’s Emoluments Clauses by profiting off business transactions through his hotel in the District. The president attempted to get the case thrown out via an unusual mid-stream appeal, but the Fourth Circuit denied his request, ruling that the president is subject to the same rules of the legal system as anyone else. The case is stayed pending President Trump’s potential appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.
RESPONDING TO DISTRICT CHALLENGES

In response to feedback OAG received from residents and stakeholders about the office’s policy priorities, AG Racine introduced the following bills in the Council of the District of Columbia to address challenges across the District.

SAFEGUARDING RESIDENTS’ PERSONAL INFORMATION

In recent years, consumers have seen the largest and most serious data breaches in history, including the Equifax breach, which exposed the personal information of over 143 million people nationwide and nearly 350,000 District residents. To better protect consumers, OAG introduced the Security Breach Protection Amendment Act, which would require companies to protect a broader range of private information, maintain reasonable security procedures, and inform consumers and the Attorney General of a data breach.

HELPING GRIEVING FAMILIES

OAG received community complaints that some residents were being taken advantage of as they were making funeral arrangements for loved ones. OAG introduced the Funeral Services Consumer Protection Amendment Act of 2019, which establishes a Funeral Bill of Rights to increase transparency in the funeral industry and better protect consumers. The legislation also requires funeral directors to clearly post and distribute the Funeral Bill of Rights.
PROTECTING LOCAL JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The District gives local businesses an edge in competing for government contracts to support local jobs and drive economic development; however, some non-District businesses lie to get this competitive edge, robbing residents of jobs and harming local businesses. OAG introduced the Small and Certified Business Enterprise Protection and Enforcement Amendment Act of 2019, which will increase oversight of this program to help District businesses, boost penalties for fraudulent businesses, and make it easier to report fraud.

STOPPING CHILD SEX ABUSE

District law requires mandated reporters—like teachers or doctors—to report any abuse or neglect for those under 18, but OAG realized there were gaps in existing laws that left children vulnerable. OAG introduced the Protecting Children Through Mandatory Reporting Amendment Act of 2019, which broadens the circumstances under which mandatory reporters must contact the authorities, makes clergy mandated reporters, stiffens penalties for failing to report, and requires training for mandated reporters.

STANDING UP FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

The District’s Human Rights Act is one of strongest civil rights laws in the nation, but OAG realized there were gaps in enforcement that left some residents vulnerable. OAG introduced the Attorney General Civil Rights Enforcement Clarification Amendment Act of 2019 (Jan. 2019), which clarifies that OAG has the independent ability to sue for violations of the District’s Human Rights Act, as well as continue to bring cases in collaboration with the District’s Office of Human Rights. OAG also introduced the Hate Crime Civil Enforcement Clarification Amendment Act of 2019 (Oct. 2019), which allows OAG to bring civil actions against anyone who commits hate crimes to seek restitution for the victim and civil penalties from the perpetrator.
CONNECTING WITH OAG

**TALK WITH OUR OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
We want to hear from you! Share your concerns and feedback with us and learn how to access OAG services by calling (202) 727-3400 or emailing OAGCommunity@dc.gov.

**SUBMIT A CONSUMER COMPLAINT**
If you have been a victim of a scam or have been harmed by a business, OAG can help investigate, mediate, and, if necessary, bring legal action to protect consumers. Contact our Office of Consumer Protection at (202) 442-9828, consumer.protection@dc.gov, or oag.dc.gov/ConsumerComplaint.

**PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST SCAMS**
Learn warning signs for common scams and how to protect yourself by visiting our Consumer Protection Library at oag.dc.gov/ConsumerProtection.

**REPORT DISCRIMINATION**
District residents who have experienced discrimination of any kind can report it to OAG by calling (202) 727-3400, emailing OAGCivilRights@dc.gov or filling out our online form at oag.dc.gov/CivilRightsComplaint.

**ACCESS CHILD SUPPORT RESOURCES**
For questions about collecting child support or help getting back on track to pay child support, call our Child Support Services Customer Care Team at (202) 442-9900.

**LEARN YOUR RIGHTS AS A TENANT**
If you have a problem with a neglectful or abusive landlord and want to know your rights, learn how OAG can help by calling (202) 442-9828 or visit oag.dc.gov/tenantrights.

**LEARN YOUR RIGHTS AS A WORKER**
If you believe your employer is violating your rights or you are a victim of wage theft, submit a complaint to OAG at (202) 442-9828 and learn about your right to fair wages, overtime pay, and sick leave at oag.dc.gov/wagerights.

**WORK AT OAG**
Want to work with a committed team of professionals that use the law to defend and protect the District and solve problems for District residents? Come work with us. Browse OAG job vacancies at oag.dc.gov/careers.
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