

Are you, and your agency guilty of covert discrimination?

Now would be a great time to check yourselves!

An Op-ed written to the local Media & Governmental Leadership in the Nation's Capital.

Greetings,

As a "Write-in" DC Mayoral candidate in the upcoming November 8, 2022, General election, I am disheartened to witness the mass number of Washingtonians who are decrying human rights abuse, and systemic racial discrimination in their housing, and public safety exposures under the current Mayoral administration.

The past few years have demonstrated a decline in the District's ability to properly provide sufficient housing and community level resources for its most challenged citizens. In Ward 8, SE DC several slumlord realities have plagued District housing communities such as Woodberry Village, and Marbury Plaza, which together house almost 1,000 District residents, with other private communities like Brookland Manor in northeast DC noting similar slumlord circumstances, and no relief for tenants year after year.

Communities across the District are fed up with the ongoing gun violence and lack of this Mayoral administration, and the MPD's accountability for their concerns regarding safety, crime, proper housing, mental health responses and outreach in their communities.

Seniors and families with children are left to pay high rents, (some via governmental vouchers; others subjected to full market value rent.) , while navigating and breathing in rodent infested and feces filled spaces, questionable mold and asbestos, and in some cases mushroom filled units with subpar housing repairs and no oversight, crime ridden neighborhoods that leave many scrambling for their lives daily; community centers that are not funded with appropriate and available programs and resources to offset the existence of poor food choices, low healthcare standards, and life expectancy rates among asthmatic, and high blood pressure realities, with drug and alcohol paraphernalia that is present at every corner of these low-income communities, despite DC being reported as having one of the worst high school dropout rates, and District citizens being among the highest in the nation to "self-medicate". Additionally, DC citizens aged 12 and over are reporting drug usage trends that are higher than the national average according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, (NAMI).

Advocates such as myself and other community leaders with a vested interest in making sure that low-income District families have access to appropriate, culturally relevant, impactful mental health and social economic resources have grown frustrated with the Mayor, media, and applicable D.C. agencies who have seemingly shown a lack of interest and reporting regarding the "human" suffering and blatant presence of covert discrimination that has far too many Washingtonians still living in distress, as the city is recognized as having one of the highest poverty rates in the country, amidst the ongoing "top shelf" developing and gentrification advancements that many low-income Washingtonians have been left out of.

Constitutionally the District's current Mayor and her systems on behalf of the public do not fairly represent the public opinions and observations of All Washingtonians. The news articles referenced below, represent recent headlines detailing one failure after the other with the misguided decisions demonstrated by the current Mayor's leadership and representatives of her governmental agencies regarding matters of public interest, safety, and mismanagement. The continued negligent, and discriminatory practices must be properly called out for what they represent.

How can DC's "triple AAA" rating be superb, and at the same time DC be rated as the "worst run city"? The median per capita income ratings are as low as \$29,000 for Black populations and as high as \$92,000 for White populations? Meanwhile, low-income citizens are left to live with atrocious housing related traumas & illnesses but no "civil" law enforcements that end with slumlords being arrested, the tenants being paid for damages, and offered restitutions for constant placement and exposure involving standards that support low living and healthcare outcomes daily .

Access to media that offers fair and impartial exposure for families discriminated upon by systemic and "gate-keeping" measures that have poorer families living in impoverished environments , fighting for their lives, while raising families with declining health issues, and low performing public educational systems, is a must. The "clique styled" circles and professionals that fail to be prosecuted, removed, and publicly called out for their covert intentions of discrimination must also include members appointed as "heads" of agencies that are failing DC citizens, media representatives that are aware of the current "social war" being inflicted on DC lower income and homeless families, and elected officials whose public persona have been spared for political or other compromised intentions.

The current matters affecting DC citizens of color and lower income means are to be treated as more than sensationalized headlines, or political party "daggers". The shameful treatment of marginalized families living in the Nation's Capital by the current Mayor's policies, governing, and appointed leadership calls into question the overall capture and reporting of local media sources that would fail to illuminate the ongoing humanistic suffering of so many "disengaged" Washingtonians at a time as important as the "General Election", which is upon us.

Where are all of the stories of human interest and despair for a Mayor and an Administration that has over 70% of registered District voters choosing to disengage from the most recent election process held. Where are the intentional stories of human disgust and survival that the trail of the following "headlines" noted below have created? Why is it so hard to get the local media to report on so many stories of human interest, where families who are left scrambling and failing by this Mayor's leadership can be heard and properly acknowledged?

While the threat of four (4) more years of the same poor, misguided, and "out of touch" leadership looms for far too many discouraged Washingtonians, leaders and families on the community level are keen to question the media's intention of providing discriminated upon families a voice and seat at the table of reporting, so that the true nature of what Muriel Bowser's failed policies, lack of enforcements, and unaccountable leadership have caused, can come to light. Are you committed to reporting the real truth? Are you or your organization guilty of covert discrimination by ignoring the plight of these

families, by disallowing them to tell their stories, or by cherry picking those that are allowed to? The facts don't lie! These families are tired and enough is enough! When will their stories be told by them through DC Council set hearings, Federal inquisitions, or through DC's mainstream media, without being filtered or "watered down", to save appearance or gate-keeping relationships and realities? DC citizens have many stories to tell that should be made known before Nov. 8, 2022. The criminal and discriminatory behaviors toward our community members in this town need to end. The demonstrated failed leadership must be held accountable!

All DC citizens matter!

Oct. 8, 2022, City Paper reports, "D.C. Housing Authority Is Failing in Just About Every Way."
Oct. 6, 2022, WJLA 7 News reports, "37 Fired DC police officers reinstated, most got \$14M in back pay."
Oct. 6, 2022, Fox News reports, "DC deputy mayor charged after caught-on-camera alleged assault."
Oct. 3, 2022, WUSA 9 News reports, "DCRA officially split into 2 agencies, Mayor appoints top 2 leaders of DCRA to run new departments."
Sept. 30, 2022, ABC 7 News reports, "7 MPD officers investigated for confiscating illegal guns but not making arrests."
Sept. 27, 2022, WUSA 9 reports, "New DC housing director answers to filthy, dangerous conditions inside some public housing units."
Sept. 22, 2022, WJLA 7 News reports, "Audit finds DC in violation of law to create public safety teams to reduce crime, violence."
Sept. 15, 2022, The Washington Informer reports, "Bowser Defends City's 911 Call Center Against Incompetence Accusations."
July 12, 2022, Washington Examiner reports, "DC boasts highest rates of youth poverty and homelessness: Study says."
June 30, 2022, The Washington Times reports, "D.C. is the nation's worst-run city, study says."
Feb. 28, 2022, The Hilltop online reports, "Black Inequality in Washington DC."

Sept. 29, 2022 Tenant Rally at the Wilson Building

<https://youtu.be/ZE7tSyNTs4s>

Sept. 2022 Tenant Testimony Brookland Manor Apts.

<https://youtu.be/6i0ya8jb5Yg>

Sept. 2022 Tenant Testimony Marbury Plaza Apts.

<https://youtu.be/IFQMN4E7nhQ>

2021 The Woodberry Project - Woodberry Village Apts.

<https://youtu.be/IVJm1Lg9MiY>