



SIGN-ON LETTER

Mayor Elect Adrian Fenty
Fenty Transition Office
2000 14th St. NW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Mayor Elect Fenty,

As youth-engaged organizations from across the city, we are excited about the fresh ideas and energy you bring to youth development as well as your track record of standing with young people on key issues such as juvenile justice reform and improving our schools.

We very much appreciate your leadership this summer speaking out against the Emergency Crime Bill, your earlier work to mandate closure of Oak Hill, and your important efforts to modernize and strengthen our schools.

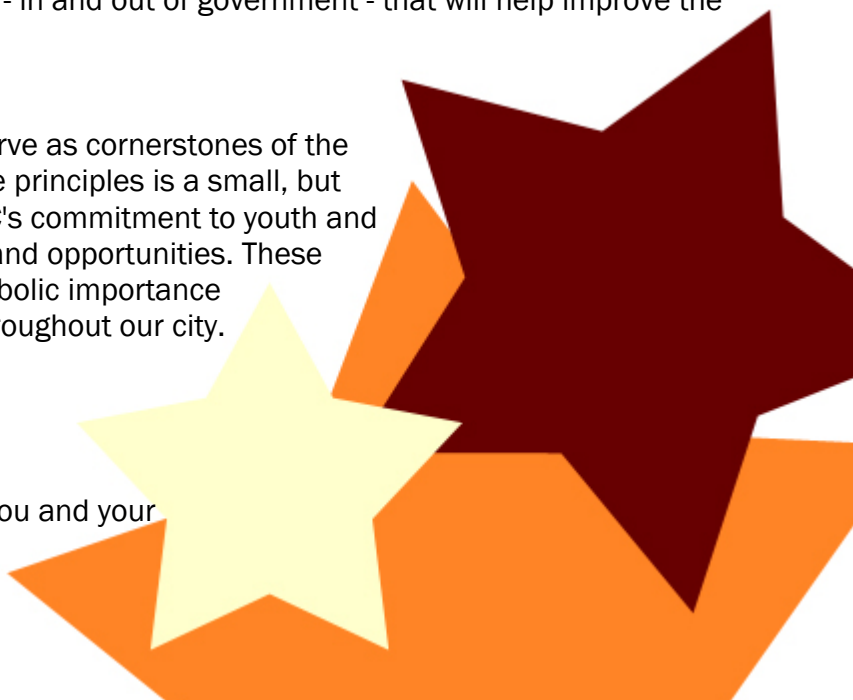
You have been an important and trusted advocate for the young people in our community and we're looking forward to having someone with your knowledge of youth development issues leading the city.

We believe that there are a number of steps that can be taken immediately that will more fully engage youth in our community's decision making; begin to recast the way our community thinks about young people and; build the youth development expertise - in and out of government - that will help improve the quality of life for youth in our city.

Below are four principles that we believe should serve as cornerstones of the city's work with – and for – youth. Below each of the principles is a small, but meaningful, action that could be taken to signal DC's commitment to youth and to a renewed focus on youth perspectives, needs and opportunities. These actions, while costing little money, would have symbolic importance and would go a long way toward engaging youth throughout our city.

1) Value Youth as Community Assets Rather than Community Problems

- Hire ten youth fellows to work directly with you and your staff.



2) Fully Involve Youth in Public Decision-Making

- Revitalize and provide continuous support to the DC Youth Advisory Council.

3) Build Partnerships With Youth-Engaged Organizations

- Hold Quarterly meetings with youth engaged organizations.

4) Build Youth Development Competency of Government and Community-Based Workforce

- Develop a central youth office or appoint a cabinet-level youth development czar.

This is a rare moment in our city's history. Your overwhelming election sent a loud and clear message to DC residents of all ages. Youth, in particular, are energized by seeing a young man who grew up in DC and went to our public schools become the youngest mayor in our city's history.

We have a chance to reframe the broader discussion about youth. Too often, young people are viewed one dimensionally – as a problem. We would like to work with you and your team to turn the conversation around, recognizing that youth need to be part of crafting solutions to some of the stubborn challenges facing our city - schools, crime, HIV/AIDS, and youth homelessness.

Good luck with the rest of your transition. We look forward to working with you and your administration as you chart a bold new course for our city.

Sincerely,
DC Alliance of Youth Advocates

Advocates for Justice and Education
Beacon House
Brainfood
City Year Washington, DC
Covenant House Washington
DC Action for Children
DC Assembly on School Based Health Care
DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
Earth Conservation Corps
Facilitating Leadership in Youth
FAN DC (Fihankra Akoma Ntoaso)
For the Love of Children
Heads Up
Hoop Dreams Scholarship
Justice 4 DC Youth Coalition
KidPower DC
Latin American Youth Center
Little Lights Urban Ministries
Martha's Table
Metro TeenAIDS
National Organization of Concerned Black Men, Inc.
National Center for Children and Families
Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington
Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays DC
Reaching Out to Others Together (ROOT)
Urban Alliance Foundation
Vietnamese American Community Services Center



Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless
Women Empowered Against Violence
Youth Action Research Group
Youth Education Alliance

Cc: Neil Albert, Nominee for Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
Victor Reinoso, Nominee for Deputy Mayor for Education



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