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October 3, 2012

The Honorable Vincent C. Gray
Mayor
District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Mr. Preston Bryant, Jr.
Chairman
National Capital Planning Commission
401 9th Street, NW
North Lobby, Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mayor Gray and Chairman Bryant:

Since its establishment as our nation's capital, it has been necessary to balance the dual role of Washington D.C. as both the federal city and a home to local residents. One of the roles of my Committee is to help ensure that the proper balance is struck.

At a July 19, 2012, hearing entitled "Changes to the Height Act: Shaping Washington, D.C., for the future," I suggested that the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPCC) could work jointly with the District of Columbia government to examine the extent to which the Height of Buildings Act of 1910 continues to serve federal and local interests, and how changes to the law could affect the future of the city.

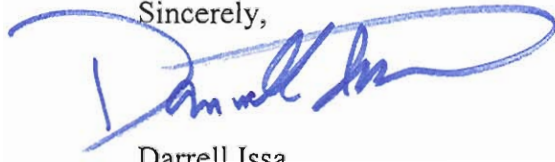
The character of Washington's historic L'Enfant City – particularly the monumental core – establishes the city's iconic image as our capital. Any changes to the Height of Buildings Act that affect the historic L'Enfant City should be carefully studied to ensure that the iconic, horizontal skyline and the visual preeminence of the U.S. Capitol and related national monuments are retained. The Committee encourages the exploration of strategic changes to the law in those areas outside the L'Enfant City that support local economic development goals while taking into account the impact on federal interests, compatibility to the surrounding neighborhoods, national security concerns, input from local residents, and other related factors that were discussed at the July 19 hearing.

I understand that NCPCC and the District are prepared to work jointly to examine this issue and make recommendations. I therefore request that NCPCC work with the District to formulate and submit to the Committee a joint proposal and timetable for such work by November 1, 2012. If feasible, the timetable should indicate a summer 2013 completion date.

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Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have question, please contact James Robertson at (202) 225 5074.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell Issa", is written over a light gray rectangular background. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Darrell Issa
Chairman