

# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **Office of Councilmember David A. Catania**

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## **COMMITTEE ON HEALTH GRANTED SUBPOENA POWER**

### **INVESTIGATION OF GREATER SOUTHEAST TO FOCUS ON PATIENT SAFETY AND QUALITY OF CARE**

Washington, D.C. – Today, the D.C. Council approved the “Greater Southeast Community Hospital Investigation Emergency Approval Resolution of 2007.” In doing so, it granted the Committee on Health, chaired by Councilmember David Catania (At-Large), the power to subpoena documents and witnesses in its investigation of Greater Southeast Community Hospital (GSCH).

“I’m pleased with the progress the Committee has made so far, but I’m not satisfied,” said Catania. “There are still a number of issues that will require us to probe deeper, ask important questions, and get the answers our residents deserve. This resolution gives the Committee the authority it needs to do that.”

Since May, Catania has chaired a series of oversight hearings on patient safety and the quality of care provided at GSCH. The hearings have uncovered a number of serious shortcomings, including staff shortages and a lack of critical medical equipment. In recent weeks, officials at Envision Hospital Corporation, GSCH’s parent company, have refused to cooperate with the Committee’s efforts. Basic document requests and invitations to testify before the Committee have gone unanswered.

In June, the Department of Health conducted a thorough on-site investigation of the Hospital and the Ambulatory Care Center on the former D.C. General campus. The Department’s final report found profound deficiencies both in the delivery of care and the maintenance of the facility. Hospital and city officials recently agreed on a series of corrective actions designed to address these inadequacies.

According to Catania, “The most important thing right now is to stay completely focused on ensuring that the hospital’s problems are addressed as promised.”

Article VI of the Council’s governing rules authorizes and outlines procedures for the use of subpoenas in conducting Council investigations. Today’s vote marks the first time that Catania has sought subpoena power during his nearly 10 years on the Council. For more information, please call the Office of Councilmember David Catania at (202) 724-7772.

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