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Press Release

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Pepco, Washington Gas and Verizon DC sign agreements with DCPSC to renew their commitment to increase opportunities for diverse businesses

Agreement designates an aspirational goal of 25% diverse spending with District-based businesses

WASHINGTON D.C. – The Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia (Commission) signed revised Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with Pepco, Washington Gas and Verizon DC to renew their commitment to increased opportunities for diverse businesses. Through the revised MOUs, the utilities are expected to provide diverse suppliers with the maximum opportunity to participate in and compete for contracts and subcontracts in the utility’s supply chain for goods and services that support the utility. Each utility has designated an aspirational goal of 25% diverse spending with District-based businesses. Also, the definition of diverse suppliers was expanded by designating veterans, service-disabled veterans, and LGBTQ owned enterprises as diverse suppliers. Each year, the Commission will hold a legislative-style hearing to review the results of each utility’s commitment.

The revised MOUs are the result of work by the Advisory Council on Supplier and Workforce Diversity (Advisory Council) which was established by the Commission in 2019. The Advisory Council was formed to provide advice and recommendations on areas related to improving diversity and inclusion within the energy workforce and utility suppliers in the District. The Advisory Council’s primary goals were to: establish a guide of suggested best practices, to recommend revisions to the 2010 MOUs between the Commission and the utilities, and to drive results on supplier and workforce diversity issues. For the course of a year, the Advisory Council developed the revisions before submitting final recommendations to the Commission.

Willie L. Phillips, DCPSC Chairman stated, “The DCPSC is committed to increasing opportunities for diverse businesses in the District. I want to congratulate the Advisory Council on facilitating this process of revising the MOUs to incorporate best practices for diversity, equity and inclusion in contracting and

employment within the public utility sector. With the revised MOUs, Pepco, Washington Gas and Verizon DC will significantly increase the pool of diverse suppliers doing business in the District. I also want to thank Advisory Council Chair David Velazquez and Vice-Chair David Gadis for their leadership in this effort.”

David Velazquez, President and CEO of Pepco Holdings and Chair of the Advisory Council stated, “As companies in the District, we must ensure that we are doing everything we can to advance the social vibrancy, equity, and long-term economic and environmental health of the communities that we are a part of and privileged to serve. At Pepco, that includes advancing diversity, equity and inclusion within our company and communities, as well as expanding economic opportunities to local and diverse businesses all while helping the District achieve its goal of being the healthiest, greenest, most livable city in the nation.”

“Through the outstanding commitment and effort of the Advisory Council, diverse suppliers will now be afforded more engagement in the economic activities of District utilities,” said David L. Gadis, DC Water CEO and Vice Chair of the Advisory Council. “We know that supporting diversity and inclusion provides myriad benefits including better decision-making and problem-solving. This revised MOU and guidance further positions utilities to be strong partners for business development, business utilization, and job retention.”

Throughout the process, the Advisory Council has brought together over 40 organizations to identify the opportunities and challenges of diversity and inclusion in the utility industry. The members of the Advisory Council include: local government agencies, colleges and universities, utility contractors, trade associations, and public utilities, including Pepco, Washington Gas, Verizon DC and DC Water.

Visit the [Commission website](#) for more information about the Advisory Council.

The Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia is an independent agency established by Congress in 1913 to regulate electric, natural gas, and telecommunications companies in the District of Columbia.

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