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2 Councilmember Muriel Bowser

Councilmember Jim Graham

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6 Councilmember Marion Barry

Councilmember Phil Mendelson

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8 A BILL  
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10  
11 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
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14 To amend the Smoke Detector Act of 1978 to require apartment building owners to post  
15 notice in conspicuous places in common areas in a building instructing tenants on  
16 the operation of a building fire alarm; to notify tenants whether the building fire  
17 alarm is connected to smoke alarms in individual apartments, or to fire  
18 department and emergency medical services; to maintain a fire safety plan and  
19 conduct periodic fire drills; and to instruct tenants to immediately call 911 in the  
20 event of a fire.  
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22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

23 That this act may be cited as the “Fire Alarm Notice and Tenant Fire Safety Amendment  
24 Act of 2009”.

25 Sec. 2. Section 6 of the Smoke Detector Act of 1978, effective June 20, 1978  
26 (D.C. Law 2-81; D.C. Official Code § 6-751.01 et seq.), is amended by adding new  
27 paragraph (d) to read as follows:

28 “(d)(1) Within 30 days of the effective date of the Fire Alarm Notice and Tenant  
29 Fire Safety Emergency Amendment Act of 2009, and in addition to any existing  
30 requirements in law or regulation, an owner of a building containing two or more  
31 dwelling or rooming units shall provide written notice, in a language delineated by the  
32 Language Access Act of 2004, as necessary, to each tenant by first class mail, and post  
33 notice in conspicuous places in common areas of the building, as required in this  
34 paragraph. Written notice shall also be provided to each new tenant, as required in this

1 paragraph. The Mayor shall provide a sample form of the notice required by this  
2 paragraph.

3                   “(2) The written notice shall include, at a minimum, instructions on the  
4 operation of a building fire alarm, whether this alarm is separate from the smoke alarms  
5 in individual apartments, and a statement that the building alarm is not necessarily  
6 connected to the fire department or emergency rescue, and that in the event of a fire they  
7 must be contacted immediately by calling 911.

8                   “(3) Failure to post notice as required by this section shall be a violation of  
9 the Smoke Detector Act of 1978, and subject to penalties as provided in the act.

10                   “(4) In addition to the notice required by this paragraph, the owner, or the  
11 owner’s agent shall maintain a fire safety plan and conduct fire drills in each building that  
12 is subject to the provisions of this paragraph, at least once every twelve months.”.

13                   Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

14                   The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement of the Council budget director as  
15 the fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia  
16 Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-  
17 206.02(c)(3)).

18                   Sec. 4. Effective date.

19                   This bill shall take effect following approval of the Mayor (or in the event of a  
20 veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of  
21 Congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(l) of the District of Columbia Home  
22 Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code §1-  
23 206.02(c)(l)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.