

**For Immediate Release**  
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**CONTACT: Jason J. Shedlock**  
Phone: (202) 724-8779  
Fax: (202) 724-8099

**MENDELSON LAUDS RULING ON AMBULANCE CHASERS**  
*Chair of Public Safety Committee Shepherded Underlying Legislation through Council*

(Washington, DC) Today, Councilmember Phil Mendelson (D, At-Large) expressed thanks to the DC Court of Appeals for upholding the constitutionality of the White Collar Insurance Fraud Prosecution Enhancement Amendment Act of 2006. Mendelson credits the bill with protecting victims of an accident from so-called “ambulance chasers.”

The bill addressed the problems arising from the practice of soliciting accident victims immediately following an accident. These practitioners hire intermediaries, commonly known as “runners,” to obtain accident victims’ personal information in hopes of filing claims. Runners often engage in aggressive tactics such as menacing visits and harassing phone calls immediately after the accident.

The appellants’ challenge, rejected by the court, was that the law was an unconstitutional restriction of freedom of speech and also contrary to the Council’s authority under Home Rule. The Court quoted Mendelson when he stated that the bill “is a consumer protection measure which serves to protect accident victims from being victimized a second time - by harassing phone calls and other personal contact looking for business out of an accident.”

“The Court’s decision affirms the Council’s position that the predatory practice of exploiting consumers when they are most vulnerable - after an accident - is and continues to be unacceptable in the District of Columbia,” stated Mendelson. “I’m proud to have moved this legislation and that the Courts have affirmed the bill’s intent.”