



## Department of Pathology College of Medicine

Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson and members of the DC City Council,

I am writing to extend my unconditional support for a fair confirmation process for Karima Holmes, Acting Director of the Office of Unified Communications (OUC). As you know I served as the District's Chief Medical Examiner from February 2014 to January 2021 and served as Interim Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice during the last six months of my tenure. Throughout that time, I came to know Acting Director Holmes well and saw firsthand her leadership and expertise in action.

From first being privileged to be her colleague as a member of Mayor Bower's cabinet and later as a director within the public safety and justice cluster under my leadership, I can attest to the fact that Ms. Holmes brings to the District and OUC an unparalleled combination of skills, experience, and subject matter expertise.

You might recall that shortly after I became the city's chief medical examiner, OCME earned full accreditation. This was partially made possible through the institution of novel ways to partner with city agencies, like OUC. As Deputy Mayor, I understood that synthesis and coordination among all city agencies were needed to address public safety as a public health issue and Director Holmes was a key partner in those deliberate efforts. Specifically, she is clear-eyed about the fact that the management of 911 and 311 are upstream from the mortality of District residents and the importance of engagement with the community.

It is for these reasons and many others that I respectfully ask that you reconsider the decision to circumvent the traditional confirmation process and give this nationally renowned public safety communications expert an opportunity to demonstrate her ability to serve as the director of the Office of Unified Communications through the traditional confirmation hearing process.

Without reservation or condition, I support the confirmation of Karima Holmes as the director of the Office of Unified Communications. I am available at your convenience to discuss this matter and appreciate your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,

Roger A. Mitchell Jr. MD  
Chief Medical Officer  
Howard University Ambulatory Care Center  
Professor and Chair  
Howard University Department of Pathology