



Submitted Testimony of the DC Chamber of Commerce

To the Committee on Finance & Revenue

Regarding Bill 22-43, the “East End Commercial Real Property Tax Rate Reduction Amendment Act of 2017”; Bill 22-202, the “East End Grocery and Retail Incentive Program Tax Abatement Act of 2017; and Bill 22-218, the “Relieve High Unemployment Tax Incentives Act of 2017”

May 8, 2017

Good Morning Chairmam Evans and members of the Committee. On behalf of the DC Chamber of Commerce, the member-companies of the DC Chamber, the hundreds of thousands of employees they employ, and the millions of dollars in District tax revenue they provide yearly to the District we would like to submit for the hearing record, our comments on the Bill 22-45, the “East End Commercial Real Property Tax Rate Reduction Amendment Act of 2017”; Bill 22-202, the “East End Grocery and Retail Incentive Program Tax Abatement Act of 2017; and Bill 22-218, the “Relieve High Unemployment Tax Incentives Act of 2017. Today, the DC Chamber is working aggressively to expand the economy in the District by attracting new jobs and creating economic opportunities for our members and citizens. The DC Chamber also focuses on issues that impact our future growth and community development, including workforce development, international trade, and tax reform.

At the DC Chamber of Commerce, we believe that it is important for the growth and development of our jurisdiction that we focus on economic diversification and policies like B22-45 and B22-202 that support the interest of the business community and foster job creation so that the District’s economy progresses competitively. Local businesses drive our economy and pull us through strained economic times. We are encouraged to see focused attention and support and spur development in neighborhoods east of the river.

Without economic growth and incentives that the District through its Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development provides and these bills seek to expand upon, District of Columbia residents will see fewer businesses moving to the District; fewer restaurants; fewer stores; and fewer jobs. Without policies that entice investment and development, District of Columbia residents will see less affordable housing; less tax revenue; and less of an opportunity for promotion and advancement in career pathways. Without growth, our city will suffer from more income inequality; more crime; more unemployment; and an increase in the use of social programs and public assistance.

The DC Chamber will continue to advocate for lower taxes and ensure the District is one of the best places to work and grow a business. As a community, we look forward to working with you and our policymakers as you develop a complement of economic incentives that enhances the District’s financial position, but is also sensible for all stakeholders.

