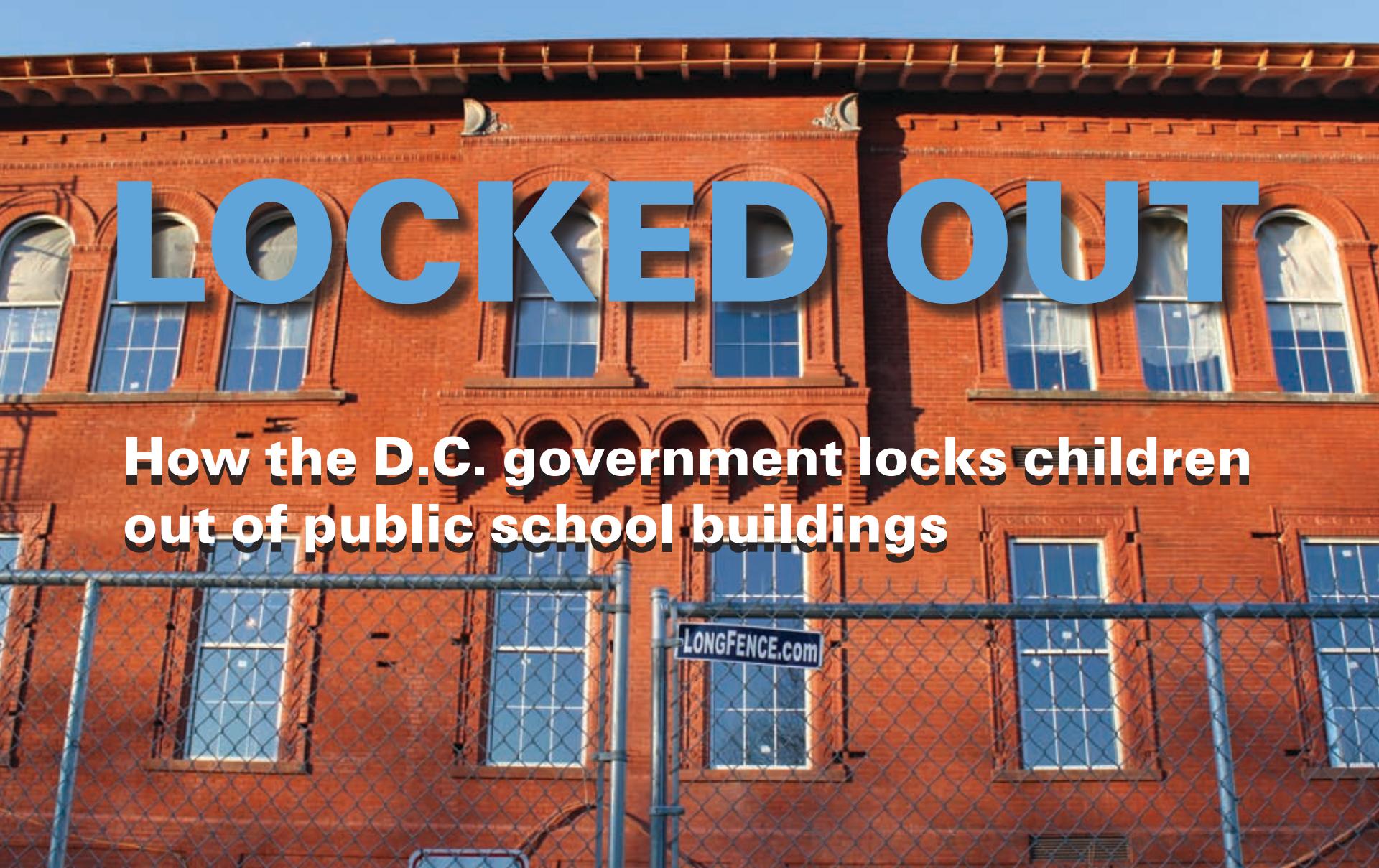


LOCKED OUT

A photograph of a two-story red brick building with several arched windows. The building is partially obscured by a chain-link fence in the foreground. A street sign on the fence reads "LONGFENCE.com". The sky is clear and blue.

**How the D.C. government locks children
out of public school buildings**

A History of Discrimination

Forty percent of D.C.'s public school students go to public charter schools, which are publicly funded but independently run. Yet these mostly economically disadvantaged students are treated as second-class citizens by the D.C. government.

Since the first charter school opened in 1996, the government has locked charter students out of most school buildings no longer needed by the school system. Instead, it has sold the buildings for condos, used them for office space, even let them rot—anything to keep them from housing children who attend charter schools.

Front cover: Rutherford B. Hayes School at 1005 5th Street, Northeast, was closed in 1981.

Opposite: The Alexander Crummel School at Kendall and Gallaudet Streets, Northeast. Closed by the District in the 1970s, the building has been derelict for decades.



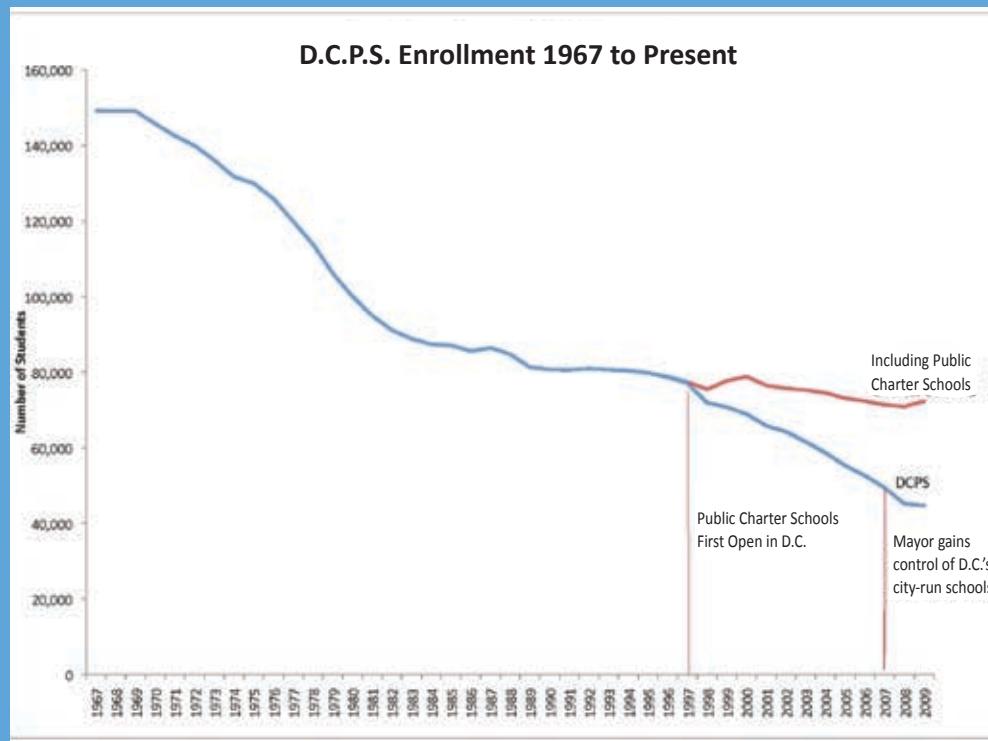
The image shows the front entrance of an old brick school building. The main entrance is a double door made of weathered wood, flanked by two arched windows. Above the entrance, a stone plaque reads "CRUMMELL SCHOOL" and "1912". Below the plaque, a metal sign with the word "GIRLS" in capital letters is mounted on the entrance. The building is covered in ivy, and the sky is clear and blue.

CRUMMELL SCHOOL
1912

GIRLS

Bad Schools, Empty Buildings

For decades, D.C. Public Schools failed in its duty to provide students a quality public education in a safe environment. Accordingly, student enrollment collapsed as parents gave up hope of improvement and moved away.



LANGSTON SCHOOL

Declining Enrollment Left School Buildings Empty

As increasing numbers of parents who could afford it moved to Maryland or Virginia to enroll their children in suburban public schools, or enrolled their children in parochial or private schools, the city could no longer fill many of its public school buildings.

Opposite: Closed by the city a generation ago, Congress Heights School at Alabama Avenue, Southeast, lay derelict for decades.

Overleaf: Slater School at 45 "P" Street, Northeast.
Gales School at 65 Massachusetts Avenue, Northwest.

CONGRESS HEIGHTS SCHOOL



SLATER SCHOOL

GALES SCHOOL

New Hope Arrives

By 1996, generations of children had been written off by the failed public school system. But hope arrived in the form of a new kind of public school. Public charter schools were instantly popular with D.C. parents, especially those who couldn't afford to move to the suburbs or pay tuition fees.



Old Buildings Get New Life

The drafters of D.C.'s public charter school law gave public charter schools a legal preference to move into empty school buildings before they could be offered to developers.

From 1996 to 1999, when D.C. public education was in the hands of the federal government's Control Board, public charter schools got 11 of the 58 then-existing surplus public school buildings.

Charters renovated these buildings, revitalizing their neighborhoods and boosting the city's economic development.

Opposite: Friendship Public Charter School – Chamberlain campus. Opened in 1997, the renovation of this once-empty school building was a catalyst for neighborhood renewal.



D.C. Government Stops Charters' Access to Surplus School Buildings

After the Control Board's demise charters had increasing difficulty buying or leasing empty school buildings, as the Williams and Fenty administrations repeatedly ignored the law. Meanwhile, many former D.C.P.S. buildings continued to decay and others were sold off for commercial development.

Opposite: The Bryan School at 1315 Independence Avenue, Southeast. Sold to the city by private developers.
Now luxury condominiums.

CONDOS



“D.C.’s government grudgingly accepts applications from charters hoping to acquire vacated school buildings but, more often than not, opts to sell the properties to private developers or, worse, lets the buildings rot.”

The Washington Post

Opposite: Carberry School at 410 5th Street, Northeast. Sold by the city to private developers. Now luxury condominiums.

Overleaf: William Syphax School at 1360 “N” Street, Southwest. Sold by the city to private developers. Now luxury condominiums.

Gage School at 2035 2nd Street, Northwest. Sold by the city to private developers. Now luxury condominiums.

Berret School located at 1408 “Q” Street, Northwest. Sold by the city to private developers. Now luxury condominiums.

J.R. Giddings School at 315 “G” Street, Southeast. Now a private health club.

Overleaf: Lovejoy School at 400 12th Street, Northeast. Sold by the city to private developers. Now luxury condominiums.

Lenox School at 725 5th Street, Northeast. Sold by the city to private developers. Now luxury condominiums.

Pierce School at 14th and “G” Streets, Northeast. Sold by the city to developers of luxury condominiums.

Wormley School at 3323 Prospect Street, Northwest. Sold by the city. Now luxury condominiums.

A photograph of a two-story red brick building with decorative architectural details. The facade features several arched windows with dark frames and red-painted window sills. A prominent arched window is located above the entrance. The words "GARBERY SCHOOL" are painted in black letters on the side of the building. The building is set against a clear sky with some bare tree branches visible on the right.

CONDOS



CONDOS



Charter Schools Struggle to Find Space

Unable to acquire and renovate decaying school buildings, public charter schools moved into church basements, renovated warehouses, and converted office and retail space.

Opposite: DC Prep Academy Public Charter School is located at 707 Edgewood Street, Northeast.

Two Rivers Public Charter School is located at 1227 4th Street, Northeast.

Roots Public Charter School is located at 15 Kennedy Street, Northwest.

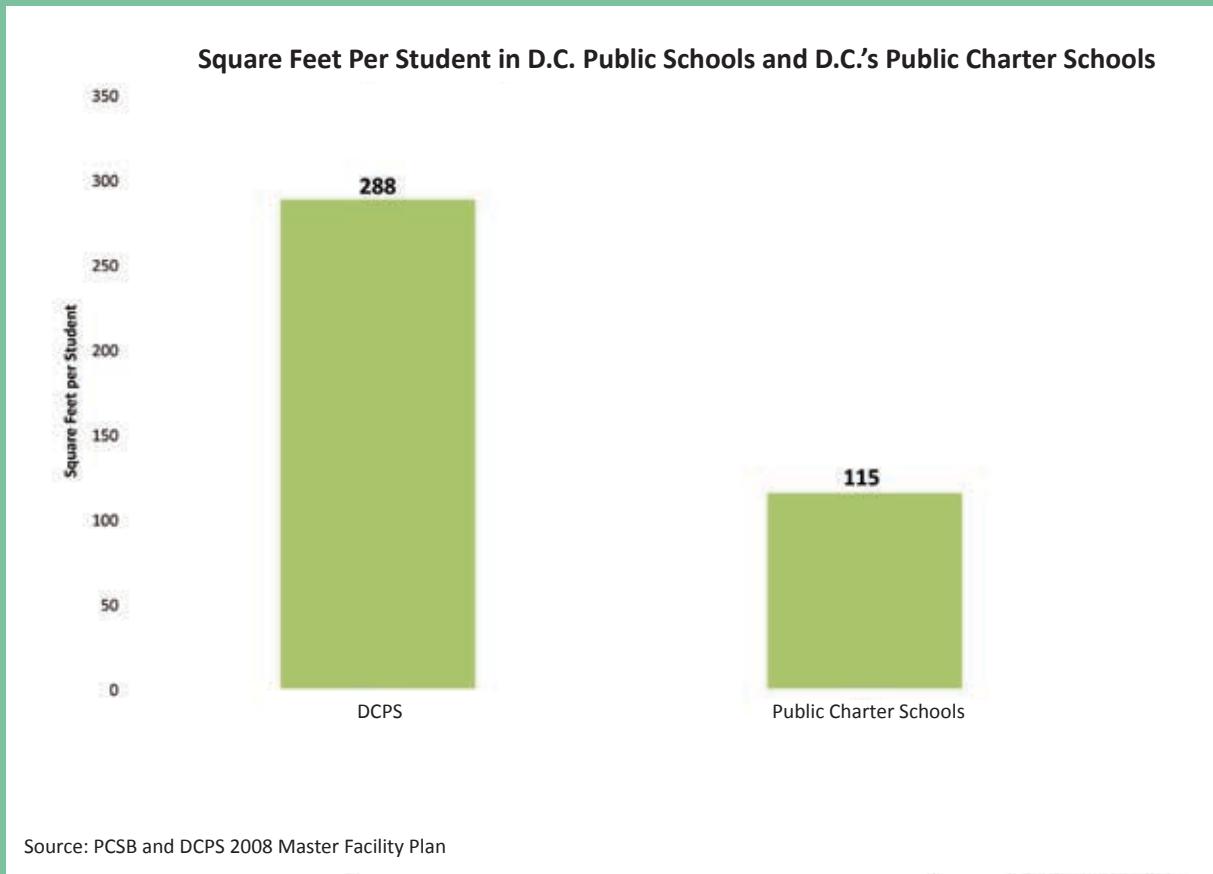
KIPP DC's first campus, KEY Academy, in an Anacostia church basement in 2001.



Less Space, Few Amenities

Charter schools have renovated commercial spaces in wonderfully creative ways, and for less than half the money per square foot that D.C.P.S. spends renovating its buildings. But inequitable funding by D.C.'s government has meant much less classroom space for charter school students. Locked out of school buildings, many lack access to playing fields, playgrounds, gymnasiums, cafeterias and auditoriums.

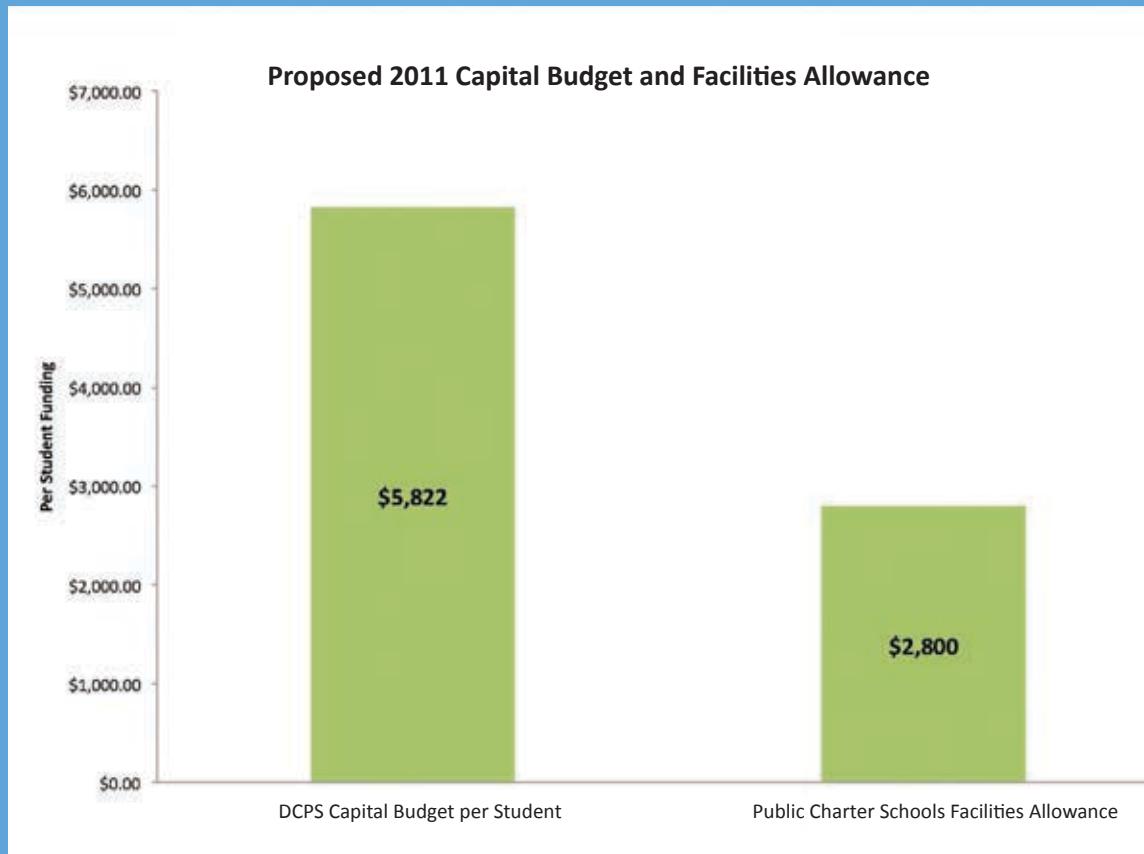
D.C. public charter schools have less than half the square footage per student as D.C.'s city-run public schools.



Charters Denied Buildings Under Mayors Williams and Fenty

Of nearly 28,000 public charter school students, only about a third are in former school system buildings. Of this third, many are in buildings leased or sold to the charter schools during the Control Board years.

D.C. public charter schools receive less than half of the public facilities funding that city-run public schools receive on a per-student basis.



Data Source: cfo.dc.gov
Proposed FY11 Budget

The More Things Change....

“What’s clear is that Mayor Adrian M. Fenty (D) is being as stingy as the previous administration was in denying public charter schools their rightful access to public schools.

“District Officials recently announced that they have 11 former school buildings for sale to developers interested in using the sites for retail, offices or housing. Never mind that at least a dozen charter schools, desperate for new facilities, had hoped to acquire the spaces. Never mind that, by law, the charter schools are supposed to get first dibs.”

The Washington Post



**11 Former Public School
Buildings**

Charters Denied Buildings While Dozens of Schools Closed

Mayor Fenty's handling of 24 school buildings declared surplus in 2008 typifies the problems D.C. public charter schools have faced. Charters were already co-located in three of the surplus buildings. The Fenty administration allocated a dozen of the 21 remaining schools for government agency use and made plans to sell five more to private developers. Charters currently occupy only three of the 21 surplus school buildings.

Since 2008, the D.C. Public Schools Chancellor has closed 27 city-run schools.

Benning Elementary School
Birney Elementary School
Bertie Backus Middle School
Bowen Elementary School
Bunker Hill Elementary School
Clark Elementary School
Douglas Transition Academy
Gage-Eckington Elementary School
Garnet-Patterson Middle School
Gibbs Elementary School
Green Elementary School
Hine Junior High School
J.F. Cooke Elementary School
M.M. Washington Career High School

Merritt Middle School
McGogney Elementary School
Meyer Elementary School
Park View Elementary School
Patricia R. Harris Educational Center
Rudolph Elementary School
Scott Montgomery Elementary School
Slobe Elementary School
Stevens Elementary School
Taft Special Education Center
Webb Elementary School
Wilkinson Elementary School
Young Elementary School

Overcoming Obstacles, Producing Results

Public charter school founders and leaders spend an inordinate amount of time worrying about facilities, and most charter schools must move at least two times before finding a permanent home.

In spite of this, D.C. public charter school students outperform their peers in city-run schools from the 5th grade up. Charter students also have a much higher chance of graduating high-school and being accepted to college.

Charters Are Helping Make All D.C. Schools Better

“I believe competition is a huge step forward in making public education the great equalizer it is supposed to be... and children in D.C. have already begun to benefit from its capacity to make us better at what we do....

“Spurred by the competition, the D.C. Council voted to make the mayor accountable for results instead of diluting accountability across a school board, which had been the case for decades.”

Michelle Rhee, D.C. Public Schools Chancellor 2007-2010

End the Discrimination Against D.C. Public Charter Schools

D.C.'s public charter school reform is working. Please support our campaign for D.C.'s public charter school students to have fair access to surplus public school buildings, as D.C. law requires. It's the right thing to do.

To learn more, visit www.befairDC.org