



**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004**

Charles Allen
Councilmember, Ward 6
Chairperson
Committee on Transportation and the Environment

Committee Member
Business and Economic Development
Health
The Judiciary & Public Safety

July 10, 2023

Nyasha Smith, Secretary
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Smith:

Today, along with Councilmembers Brooke Pinto, Brianne K. Nadeau, and Robert C. White, Jr., I am introducing the **“Architect and Engineer Good Samaritan Act of 2023.”** Please find enclosed a signed copy of the legislation.

In response to natural and human-made disasters and emergencies, we rely on licensed professionals to voluntarily render aid. To make sure that these licensed professionals are not discouraged from providing that critical assistance, current law protects some types of professionals against civil liability when rendering aid to those in need. This type of law is known as a “Good Samaritan” law, and it is frequently invoked in situations involving help provided by physicians in medical or life-threatening emergencies.

Architects and registered civil, geotechnical, and structural engineers are more than willing to volunteer their skills and time to help communities rebuild and safely respond to natural or human-made disasters. For example, these professionals may be called on by state or local emergency management agencies to provide immediate post-crisis safety and habitability evaluations of homes, buildings, or other infrastructure in the event of a fire, building collapse, or severe weather. Forty-one states across the country – including Maryland and Virginia -- have Good Samaritan laws in place to protect architects and engineers who provide disaster assistance from civil liability.

This legislation would have the District join the supermajority of states across the country by providing immunity from civil damages, absent gross negligence or willful misconduct, to licensed architects or professional engineers who, in good faith and without compensation, utilize their professional skills in providing rescue or relief assistance at the scene of or in connection with a natural or human-made disaster or other life-threatening emergency.

Please feel free to reach out to me or my Legislative Director, Antonio Nunes, with any questions or for additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles Allen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Charles Allen, Ward 6 Councilmember
Chairperson, Committee on Transportation & the Environment
Vice Chair, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

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2 Councilmember Brooke Pinto



Councilmember Charles Allen

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6 Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau



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10 Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.

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12 A BILL
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16 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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20 To provide civil immunity, absent gross negligence or willful misconduct, to licensed architects
21 and professional engineers who, in good faith and without compensation, utilize their
22 professional skills in providing rescue or relief assistance at the scene of or in connection
23 with a natural or human-made disaster or other life-threatening emergency.
24

25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
26 act may be cited as the “Architect and Engineer Good Samaritan Act of 2023”.

27 Sec. 2. Civil immunity for voluntary practice of architecture or professional engineering
28 at scene of disaster or emergency.

29 Any licensed architect or licensed professional engineer who, in good faith and without
30 compensation, voluntarily utilizes their professional skills in providing rescue or relief assistance
31 at the scene of or in connection with a natural or human-made disaster or other life-threatening
32 emergency, shall not be liable, in the absence of gross negligence or willful misconduct, for any
33 civil damages for acts or omissions on their part resulting from the rendering of such assistance.

34 Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

35 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
36 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
37 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

38 Sec. 4. Effective date.

39 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
40 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
41 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
42 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
43 Columbia Register.