

**Council of the District of Columbia
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC ROUNDTABLE**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004

**COUNCILMEMBER KENYAN R. McDUFFIE, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY**

ANNOUNCES A PUBLIC ROUNDTABLE ON

**CONSIDERING CIVIL *GIDEON*: EXPANDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**Wednesday, June 22, 2016, 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law
Moot Court Room (Room 518)
4340 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008**

On Wednesday, June 22, 2016, Councilmember Kenyan R. McDuffie, Chairperson of the Committee on the Judiciary, will convene a public roundtable titled “Considering Civil *Gideon*: Expanding Access to Justice in the District of Columbia”. In 1963, the United States Supreme Court held in *Gideon v. Wainwright* that criminal defendants have a fundamental right to counsel at the government’s expense if they cannot afford one. The phrase “civil *Gideon*” refers to the national movement to expand this right to counsel to civil cases.

The need for civil representation in the District of Columbia is dire, particularly for low- and moderate-income residents. Recent reports have indicated that 98 percent of litigants in domestic violence cases in the D.C. Superior Court proceeded *pro se*, in addition to 77 percent of plaintiffs in divorce and custody cases, 98 percent in paternity and child support cases, and 97 percent in landlord/tenant court. The roundtable will include a robust discussion of best practices in other jurisdictions and will explore policy recommendations for the expansion of the right to civil counsel in the District of Columbia. The roundtable will be held in the Moot Court Room of the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law, located at 4340 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The Committee has invited subject matter experts to provide oral testimony. The Committee invites the public to submit *written testimony*, which will be made part of the official record. The public is invited to attend, but those who wish to provide oral testimony will be offered the opportunity to do so at a later date.

Copies of written statements should be submitted either to the Committee by emailing judiciary@dccouncil.us or to Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 5, Washington, D.C. 20004. **The record will close at the end of the business day on Friday, July 8, 2016.**