



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B

January 16, 2026

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RE: Request to Change Rules and Regulations Regarding Pedestrian Signals

Dear Director Kershbaum, Chief Carroll, Councilmember Allen, and Councilmember Pinto,

At its regular meeting on January 14, 2026, the Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission (“ANC 2B” or “Commission”) considered the above-referenced matter. With 9 of 9 Commissioners in attendance, a quorum at a duly-noticed public meeting, the Commission approved the following resolution by a vote of (7-0-1):

Whereas DC Law Title 18 Section 18-2302 defines the meaning of pedestrian signals and the requirement of pedestrians to follow such signals, and

Whereas this law makes it illegal for pedestrians to begin crossing the roadway after the onset of the flashing or steady “DON’T WALK” indication, and

Whereas the Federal Highway Administration mandates that the flashing upraised hand indication begin flashing to signal the pedestrian change interval such that a pedestrian moving at a very slow rate of 3.5 feet per second would have time to complete their crossing, and

Whereas most pedestrians are capable of walking at a speed greater than 3.5 feet per second and studies show the average walking speed is between 4.4 and 5.9 feet per second, and

Whereas most pedestrians have ample time to complete their crossing, even if they start after the onset of the flashing upraised hand, and

Whereas the introduction of countdown pedestrian signals allows pedestrians at intersections with that feature to know how many seconds remain for them to complete their crossing, and

Whereas the Federal Highway Administration made countdown pedestrian signals mandatory at all new or reconstructed pedestrian signals installed from 2011 on, and

Whereas the District of Columbia has installed countdown pedestrian signals at virtually every intersection with pedestrian signals in the District, and

Whereas forcing faster pedestrians to wait even though they have sufficient time to clear the intersection creates undue delay, discourages walking, discourages compliance with the pedestrian signals, and creates the setting for pretextual stops, and

Whereas multiple studies have determined that the introduction of countdown pedestrian signals generally *increases* the number of pedestrians entering the crosswalk during the flashing upraised hand, but *decreases* the number of pedestrians who are still in the crosswalk when the pedestrian phase ends,

Whereas a pedestrian entering on the flashing upraised hand places neither themselves nor any other roadway user in danger or at risk of delay, so long as they complete their crossing before the onset of the steady upraised hand, and

Whereas the Metropolitan Police Department has indicated that they actively ticket pedestrians who enter the crosswalk during the flashing upraised hand phase, even if the pedestrian may be able to complete their crossing, and

Whereas DC Code Title 18 explicitly defines pedestrian signals in terms of ONLY the words “WALK”, “WAIT”, and “DON’T WALK” and does not define the signals in terms of the graphic representations of “walking person” and “upraised hand”, and

Whereas since the 1978 edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, graphic representations of “walking person” and “upraised hand” have been permitted in addition to the word message pedestrian signals, and

Whereas the Federal Highway Administration banned the installation of new pedestrian signals using word messages after January 17, 2001 and required all new or replaced pedestrian signals after that date to use the graphic representations of “walking person” to symbolize “WALK” and “upraised hand” to symbolize “DON’T WALK”, and

Whereas, over the past 24 years, the District Department of Transportation has replaced virtually every word-only pedestrian signal in the District with a graphic representation, and

Whereas, this makes the penalty for walking against the upraised hand, either flashing or steady, unenforceable.

Therefore be it resolved that ANC 2B encourages the Council of the District of Columbia to amend DC Code to remedy the listed issues by changing the law such that:

- The graphical representations accompanying the words “WALK”, “WAIT”, and “DON’T WALK” are defined in the code including the “walking person” and the “upraised hand”,

- Making it legal to start crossing during the flashing “DON’T WALK” or “upraised hand” indication so long as the crossing is completed prior to the countdown clock reaching zero,

Be it further resolved that ANC 2B discourages the Metropolitan Police Department from ticketing pedestrians starting during the flashing upraised hand indication, as this behavior does not put anyone at risk and resources are better spent on enforcing against actions that do have the potential to cause harm to other road users, and

Be it further resolved that ANC 2B encourages the District Department of Transportation to identify all locations where countdown pedestrian signals have not been installed and where pedestrian signals using word indications remain in place and make an effort to replace these signals as expeditiously as possible.

Commissioners Matt Johnson (2B65@anc.dc.gov) and Zach Adams (2B08@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission’s representatives for this matter.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION.

Sincerely,



Zachary Adams
Chair