

Opening Statement of

**Senator George V. Voinovich
Chairman**

**Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management,
Restructuring and the District of Columbia**

Hearing on

**"Assessing the Progress of Performance Management in the
District of Columbia"**

Tuesday, October 3, 2000

Good morning and thank you for coming. The Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, Restructuring, and the District of Columbia meets today to discuss the progress of performance management in the District of Columbia. The Subcommittee held a hearing last May to discuss the results of the FY1999 Performance Accountability Report, and to discuss the performance goals laid out for this year. Today, we have invited the Mayor back to report on the progress made by the District in achieving its performance goals for this year. The General Accounting Office was tasked with auditing a sample of the city's performance goals to evaluate the city's progress, and Chris Mihm of GAO is here today to report the results, and to submit any recommendations GAO may have to improve how the city measures performance and, more importantly, how the city uses performance information to improve services for District residents.

Since our previous visit with the Mayor, there have been a number of improvements made in the nation's capital. The D.C. Financial Control Board recently announced that the city is able to meet its short- and long-term borrowing needs. In June, the District voted to change the structure of the D.C. Board of Education in order to make the city's education system more accountable to the Mayor. The Metropolitan Police Department has shifted its manpower in order to get more officers on the streets. The D.C. Tuition Assistance Program received thousands of applications from students now eligible to take advantage of the educational opportunities throughout the country. The U.S. Attorney's office is diligently working to promote cooperation between the various law enforcement agencies in the District. And most recently, the Mayor has hired John Koskinen, who we welcome today, to take over the day-to-day operations of the city, a move that shows that the Mayor means business when it comes to getting results.

But despite these signs of progress, the troublesome headlines persist. Among them:

"Court Takeover of D.C. School Busing Possible," *WP*, 7/27/00

"District Audit Finds Illegal, Wasteful Contracting," *WP*, 7/29/00

"12 D.C. Schools Lacked Certified Food Workers," *WP*, 9/14/00

"DPW Takes Years to Start Road Projects," *Wash Times*, 6/29/00

"City Fails to Get Paychecks to 150 Teens," *WP*, 8/9/00

"A Year After Promises, Parks in Disarray," *WP*, 7/24/00

"Prisoners Languish as Backlogs Get Worse," *WP*, 9/4/00

"GAO Study Faults D.C. Child Care," *WP*, 9/20/00

I think it is clear to all of us that have an interest in the revitalization of the District of Columbia that Mayor Williams has made tremendous improvements in the health of the city, but there remains a long road ahead and I would like to iterate that this Subcommittee is committed to helping the Mayor in any way possible.

Just last week, in our Governmental Affairs Committee, we reported out a number of bills that will assist the Mayor in improving the health of our nation's capital. The Southeast Federal Center Public-Private Development Act will allow the city begin to the long awaited effort to revitalize the Anacostia waterfront, located less than a mile away from the U.S. Capitol. The D.C. Receivership Accountability Act will establish lines of communication between the Mayor and the receivers and subject the receivers to an independent, annual audit. The D.C. Performance Accountability Plan Amendments Act that Senator Durbin and I introduced at the request of the Mayor will improve upon the District's process for measuring and reporting on its performance. The full Committee also approved the nominations of two D.C. Superior Court associate judges to fill vacancies on a bench that is in desperate need of assistance. The District's fiscal year 2001 appropriation has been approved by both the Senate and the House and is currently in conference committee.

In addition to providing any assistance that the Mayor may need to improve the services in the District, our role here in the Subcommittee is to oversee the Mayor's progress in implementing the various programs developed to improve the city's performance. In that regard, I am interested to hear today how the Mayor plans to integrate the numerous performance documents he introduced at the hearing last May so that, first of all, the citizens are satisfied, second, the agency managers know exactly what is expected of them, third, reform is accomplished, and finally, congressional standards are met.

At the May hearing, you made it clear that your Citywide Strategic Plan would be the focal point of the District's performance management system, the source of all other performance documents. However, after reviewing the city's current system, GAO found that the Citywide Strategic Plan is better suited as a broad, long-range plan for directing the city, especially given the fact that the Citywide Strategic Plan is evaluated on a biannual basis. GAO found that the annual Performance Accountability Plan is a superior guide regarding day-to-day, month-to-month, and year-to-year performance measurement since it is subject to continual oversight, and it is updated on an annual basis.

The General Accounting Office will make several more observations and recommendations, and raise a number of concerns, in its testimony this morning, and I would like to take this

opportunity to ask the Mayor to respond to the GAO testimony, point by point, as follow-up to this hearing. I think they make some insightful observations and I want to make sure that your office has acknowledged their findings and recommendations and will consider integrating them into your performance management system.

I close my opening statement by noting that I think the Mayor has done a tremendous job of getting this beautiful city back on its feet again, and I commend him on his progress so far. However, it is time that Congress start seeing some positive results, and it is time that we begin to see a local government that's capable of managing itself, without the constant meddling of Congress. The District's past message of "change has been slow so far, but big things are expected in the near future" must yield to some clear, verifiable results. On that note, I look forward to your testimony to hear what the District has accomplished since our last hearing.