



Monday, March 29, 2021

District Reopening Plan Meeting with Mayor Bowser

HAWDC continues to understand the operational hardships that the current travel and tourism related restrictions create for our industry. As you are aware, last week, in collaboration with Destination DC, we sent a letter to Mayor Bowser requesting a comprehensive immediate long-term reopening plan.

We have had several discussions with the Mayor and her team since sending the letter. Earlier today, Solomon Keene, President & CEO, HAWDC, and Meade Atkeson, Chair, HAWDC, had a meeting with Mayor Bowser. Additional participants at the meeting were representatives from Events DC, Destination DC, RAMW, the Kennedy Center, and Arena Stage. We discussed the impact that these restrictions continue to have on our industry and continued to strongly urge her to develop a reopening plan that will help boost travel and tourism to the District. We emphasized that hotels have the ability to handle increased group numbers and indoor occupancies safely and urged her to consider reducing these restrictions as soon as possible.

The following are a few takeaways from our meeting -- The Mayor:

- Was genuinely interested in hearing from the Hospitality Alliance, the Kennedy Center and the Arena Stage;
- Gave us her undivided attention and understands the challenges that the industry is facing;
- Sees us as professionals who have protocols in place to safely navigate increased gatherings;
- Has agreed to work with us to encourage downtown office workers to return to work; and
- Has committed to working with the Smithsonian to reopen its museums.

The Mayor agreed that there needs to be a plan to open the city for larger events. This plan will be based on a forecast that would assist Destination DC, Events DC, and hotels to book and retain business. It is our hope that this “plan” will be communicated in the coming weeks, with the understanding that any forecast could change over time.

As always, we will continue to stress the importance of letting travelers know that

the District is open and ready to welcome them back. HAWDC will continue to update members as we continue our discussions with the Mayor and her team to build back our industry.

Regards,
Lisa