

Office of Ward 5 Councilmember Harry "Tommy" Thomas, Jr.



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**Thomas Introduces Legislation to Study Installation of
Video Cameras on MPD Fire-Arms**

Washington DC-At the City Council's June 16, 2009 legislative session, Ward 5 Councilmember Harry "Tommy" Thomas, Jr. introduced a bill to require the Mayor to study the feasibility of installing video recording devices on service fire-arms of all police officers sanctioned by the District. The purpose of the video recording device is to capture the circumstances during which law enforcement officers draw and discharge their weapons, protecting the rights of officers in any subsequent legal actions and alleviating concerns of citizens in police confrontations. Councilmember Thomas introduced a similar bill last year.

Thomas introduced the "Officer Firearm Camera Act of 2009" after hearing from residents of the Trinidad neighborhood who questioned the circumstances regarding the June 8, 2009 shooting of Trey Joyner, 25, by law enforcement officers.

"This is a relatively new technology that other jurisdictions such as Orange County, New York, are beginning to adopt," Councilmember Thomas noted when he introduced the bill. The technology involves fixing a miniature camera roughly the size of a pack of gum onto the barrel of a service weapon. The camera activates automatically when the weapon is drawn from an officer's holder and records both audio and video from the officer's vantage point.

"As more jurisdictions explore this option, the District should study the feasibility of this technology. Having recorded information that can be analyzed after an officer-involved shooting is a win-win for both the police and citizenry."

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Harry "Tommy" Thomas, Jr. represents Ward 5 on the Council of the District of Columbia. Thomas chairs the Council's Committee on Libraries, Parks, and Recreation. He sits on four additional committees: Workforce Development and the Environment, Aging and Community Affairs, Housing and Workforce Development, and Public Services and Consumer Affairs.