

Pro Bono Spotlight
The Reporter
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Councilmember David Catania of the Washington, DC, City Council has named Nixon Peabody as special counsel to the Committee on Health, which he chairs. Every summer for the past several years, Nixon Peabody has offered pro bono assistance to Councilman Catania's office, and Nixon Peabody summer associates have typically worked on a variety of research projects. This summer, following the March 30 shootings on South Capitol Hill, Councilman Catania sought NP's assistance in combating youth violence, commenting that "the District's current approach to addressing these problems is not working, and it is time for us to consider fresh ideas."

When the special counsel announcement was made, Councilman Catania was joined at our DC office by Nardyne Jefferies, the mother of Brishell Jones, who was one of three people killed in the March 30 drive-by shooting on South Capitol Street. Since her daughter's tragic death, Nardyne has devoted her energy to solving the problem of gun violence in the District. "I am pleased that Nixon Peabody has volunteered its services to this project. We cannot afford more platitudes and empty rhetoric from our public officials," says Jefferies, "it is time to get serious and develop new approaches to preventing future gun violence."

As special counsel, an NP team led by Randy Kelly has been studying a wide range of proposals to address the issue of youth and adolescent violence, including the possibility of early, targeted mental health intervention, needed juvenile justice reforms, and increased accountability for parents and guardians. The team presented a report at a hearing of the Committee on Health on July 8, 2010, which included preliminary findings that included juvenile justice reforms, strategies for increased parental accountability, and targeted mental health intervention. The team will present its final recommendations at the end of the summer.

Special thanks to summer associates **Brian Donnelly, Rebecca Friedman, Courtney Lindsay, Pierce Han,** and **Senayt Rahwa** who are contributing greatly to this effort.