



***The Impact of Excessive Volume from Street Performers***  
*Testimonials from businesses, residents and health care providers*

## Quality of Life

“I live on the corner of 7th and H Street NW, in the heart of Chinatown. I have lived in the building for about 7 years, and I have noticed that the noise problem has gotten worse over time. There is no other issue that affects my quality of life nearly as much as this one. Even though I keep my windows closed, I am unable to go about daily living – sleeping, participating in work calls, reading, etc. – without constant interruption and disruption. When outside, it is so loud that I worry about the effect this has on my hearing; it is not uncommon for the music to measure over 100 decibels.[1]”

[1] For context, at 100 decibels, hearing damage can occur in 15 minutes. At 106 decibels, hearing damage can occur in less than 4 minutes.

**-Ranya**

“I live in Woodley Park and the noise coming from the metro station has become a serious problem. I can hear the music in my apartment with all the doors and windows closed. I love music and enjoy the vitality that live music brings to the city; I just don't want to listen to it at that volume. I think many people have thought this is an issue isolated to Chinatown, but in fact it is prevalent throughout the city. Legislation to turn down the volume on street musicians would resolve the conflict between the musicians and individuals' rights to quiet enjoyment of their homes and workplaces.”

**-Marcia**

“We welcome and appreciate this vibrancy. That's why we live here. But this livability is being compromised by excessive uncontrollable noise emanating from street musicians and performers, now armed with gargantuan sound systems, powered by portable generators, capable of blasting high decibel noise for blocks and blocks – far beyond the range of the immediate street audience they seek to attract. For those living near or above, the sounds of street bands can often be deafening – harsh and hurtful to those exiting metro, incapacitating to napping infants and convalescing adults, and injurious to students or business folk working out of their homes. It is impossible to undertake any of these activities with window rattling and ear-splitting noise bombarding you day after day, and as allowed by law, up until 10:00 pm at night.”

**-Harold, former Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for ANC 2C**

“I've heard the noise go until after 11 o'clock at night, which is detrimental to my sleep and to my time to relax. The beat from the recordings that buskers use can be inescapable, and it pulsates through your body and brain– outdoors and inside as well.

It's not just the amplified music, it's also drums being hit too loudly and brass horns played at an excessive volume that is just as loud."

**-Donna**

"I have no problem with buskers performing in the city, and often enjoy the music they are playing. But the amplified bands that play for hours on end on the corner near my apartment have caused me to change my daily routines and work schedule. As a DC public school teacher I generally have several hours of work at night in support of my students. I have to work wearing noise cancelling earphones because I cannot concentrate over the unbearably loud noise, and I have on several occasions decided to go out or work elsewhere instead of sitting in my apartment and waiting for the bands to stop playing at 10pm."

**-Becky, DC Public School Teacher**

"The performances have been starting as early as 10 o'clock in the morning. It makes it hard to sleep or concentrate and it's nearly impossible to make a work call. During work hours buskers park their cars in the fire lane for 6/7 hours, hook their concert/night club style speakers up to their car battery or gas powered generator and sing or just play loud music for hours upon hours."

**-Kelvin**

"As an energy consultant with a home office, I find it difficult to concentrate on my work despite spending over \$6,000 on special noise insulating windows. Mr. Chairman, I am afraid my hearing has already been impaired by daily exposure to amplified music and drums. I find it increasingly difficult to follow conversations at public receptions— which is crucial to my livelihood as a consultant."

**-Howard**

"Regularly and truly we all feel we have no recourse but to somehow suffer through our time at home until 10:00 pm when the noise stops seven days a week, 365 days a year. The problem is that not everyone has a schedule to just plan on sleeping at 10:00 pm! And no one can predict when they will have a noise-free day enabling them to work or have visitors over without incredible disruption and migraine-level noise.

Our property values have been trending downward the last few years in particular (while other buildings enjoy increasing values) and those who rent their condos either have difficulty getting tenants in or have their tenants complain vigorously and then move out as soon as possible. This situation is being repeated in many areas of the District and will in my mind continue to spread as you heard and will hear from the many testimonies today."

**-Barbara**

"The level of noise from the street musicians makes it impossible to think. Both the G Street and H street corners are the sites for whole bands and their generator-powered speakers to blare recorded music or their own music -- so loud that walking by it on the street makes you put your hands over your ears, and so loud that nothing I do inside the apartment can muffle it. White noise, classical music, TV -- hopeless. Ibuprofen sometimes helps, but not always. Headaches are inevitable, and hard to take after a long day.

It is one thing to have a vibrant street scene, and another to have musicians playing their music so loud that, even on the 9th floor and nowhere near the corners, I simply can't escape it. Work at home? Out of the question."

**-Barbara**

"Recognizing the diversity of interests in resolving this challenging issue, I have woefully observed that we residents and workers who are so negatively impacted by this noise have had zero available recourse to address it. When I have gone down to the street to converse with the performers about the issue, I have at best been ignored or at worst been told to "go f\*\*\* myself." When I tried reporting the issue to the DCRA, I was told to call 911 only to then be told by the police that there was not a single thing they could do."

**-Matthew**

"Buskers have been using increasing numbers of amplification speakers - some employ 5 large speakers at once, such that sound readings indoors exceed 70dB! Remember that government intelligence agencies cap sustained noise interrogation tactics at 68dB. It is also important to note that within the past two weeks individuals have started to show up with up to five speakers and amplifiers, not to perform but nearly to play music from their laptops over the speakers without any instruments or vocals. Once again these sound readings have been sustained at above 90dB, most of the time above 100dB."

**-Jose**

"The street performers prevent me from working at home or making conference calls, because I can't hear people on the phone. I cannot have guests over for dinner because the sound level is so disruptive. At the end of a work day, I'm in a constant state of anxiety because I can't go home until 10PM when the sound ordinance will be enforced. The greatest days are when it rains, because the street performers cannot plug in their amplifiers. Residents in my building (including myself) with pets have many issues with stressed animals that hide in closets until the 10PM sound ordinance is enforced."

**-PK**

"As a Major in the United States Air Force, I take my responsibilities very seriously and often have to work outside the typical 9-5 work day. In order for me to successfully perform my assigned duties, I must be able to rest when I can. The noise situation has become unbearable for me and has impacted not only my work, but my quality of life. At a minimum, the volume must be reduced drastically. It is like having a raucous party next door, only it endures for 12 hours a day and there are no police coming to break it up."

**-Active Duty Military Officer**

"As you have heard, the laws currently on the books are forty years old, unenforceable, and inconsistent with the current situation. When called upon, the Police, DCRA and other city officials mostly shrug their shoulders and say "nothing we can do about it." We seek a serious and systematic review of the current laws, including a careful look at other municipalities where similar problems have been successfully addressed. We do not advocate the abrogation of first amendment rights, the right to organize, rally and protest, or the right to creative free speech. We accept and applaud all of these rights. What we do advocate for is the creation of a legal framework that will establish a more

equitable and harmonious balance between these rights and the rights of people who live in the downtown area to find some sanctuary in their own homes – to be able to sleep, work, and conduct normal activities free from the barrage of over amplified sounds which make living next to an airport a more desirable alternative than living in the city.”

**-Harold**

“My wife, my kids and I moved into an apartment near the Navy Yard early this summer. After a couple weeks living in our apartment a marching band began setting up on the corner of M Street SE and New Jersey Avenue before Nationals baseball games. The band was comprised of about a dozen or more children with various drum kits and an amplified speaker with a soundtrack. The group had a sign indicating that they were raising money for uniforms and had some affiliation with the Potomac Gardens neighborhood. They performed for hours each night, before, during, and after Nationals games. The group would perform as late as 1 o'clock in the morning. The volume of the drums reverberating off the windows of our apartment was excessive and we were unable to ignore it.”

**-Douglas**

“My apartment is located 9 floors above the 400 block of 7<sup>th</sup> Street NW, directly above Carmine’s Restaurant and 2 blocks south of the Gallery Place Metro Stop. Last spring I was studying botany, botanical classification, plant biomes and related materials in order to qualify to become a docent at the United States Botanic Garden. The music from Gallery Place Metro Center was so loud that even with my windows closed I was unable to concentrate. I am not an easily distracted person by nature and my hearing levels and sensitivities are normal. I was so disturbed by the noise level that I went to Gallery Place to see why the music was so loud that it vibrated my windows. I found 5 musicians, 4 of whom had large amplifiers. Each amplifier was set at level 9 or 10. The drummer had no amp but a large set of drums. The 5 musicians were all wearing noise cancelling hearing protection as they blasted the neighborhood with their heavy metal music.”

**-Catherine**

## Personal health

“While the volume makes it painful to walk down the street, the volume inside my home impacts my ability to concentrate, relax, or sleep, causing me headaches, extreme anxiety and stress. When they leave at 10:00 PM, it takes several hours to calm my nerves, so I can sleep or go about life. White noise machines and noise cancelling headphones do not mitigate the volume. After installing \$12,000, 5/8-inch noise cancelling windows with more than 5” of air space, I can still hear drums, brass instruments, and some amplified music in my home at disruptive and disturbing volumes.”

**-Elizabeth**

“Last year, I got a sound meter app for my phone and I can see the sound levels increasing. Now, I am regularly getting readings of 107 to 108 dB, which is 50% louder than it was last year. That loud enough to permanently damage the hearing of people who are doing nothing more than waiting 10 minutes for their bus at the corner of 7th

and H. (Source: CDC/National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/noisehearingconservation/>).

**-Robert**

“Up until the past year I have enjoyed the street musicians, but now due to the increased, amped volume at the Archives Metro stop I have limited use of my balcony. I have to keep my doors and windows closed because the noise invades my indoor space as well. The noise penetrates no matter what I try to do and there’s no one to contact to bring any kind of relief from those who play too loud. I work from home and challenge anyone to try to take phone calls and concentrate with amped up music playing for long period of time.

I also suffer from migraines and take medication daily. Needless to say the noise exacerbates my health issue. I’m beginning to feel like a victim in my own home.”

**-Diane**

“My daughter and I both use wheelchairs and she relies on voiceover software for access to all print materials as she is blind. Despite the fact that we live on one of the higher floors of the building the buskers below often deploy massive amplifiers run by gas and electric generators. The operation and amplification of this elaborate apparatus turns a street performance into something more akin to a Sensurround stage event as the sound travels into the G St and 7th St alley next to the Verizon Center and reverberates up the walls of the condominiums above. The noise is so significant that our daughter cannot use her software voiceover programs to complete her homework, read, or perform other tasks of daily living.”

**-David, Sharon, and Emma**

“Let me share with you one such experience I had roughly 10 months ago to highlight how poor the current situation is. I was with a patient whose 3-year-old grandchild had just died from cancer. Her grief was profound. She could barely get the words out to describe her pain. Suddenly loud music blared. Aside from its being so incongruous it was impossible for us to continue the session. Although I contacted the Golden Triangle office at the time, I was told there was nothing that could be done. Truly, this was a devastating experience to be a therapist unable to help a long-standing patient in pain who was sitting right in front of me because noise wouldn’t allow us to speak or hear each other.”

**-Nancy**

“For me, busker noise is not just an annoyance - it has worsened a medical condition I suffer from called tinnitus. It is one of the most common clinical syndromes in the United States, affecting twelve per cent of men and almost fourteen percent of women who are sixty-five and older. Tinnitus is commonly described as ringing in the ears Researchers have concluded that excessive noise which they term “dangerous decibels” can worsen this condition.

My condo sits almost right above the intersection of 7<sup>th</sup> and H Streets in the heart of Chinatown. Almost daily my condo is assaulted with loud noises generated by the buskers. It is equivalent to a diesel locomotive going 45 miles per hour. But in our case, the engine doesn’t whiz by but idles for hours in front of our condo. It can start as early as 2 pm and lasts often until 10 pm when the city-wide noise curfew goes into effect.

As an energy consultant with a home office, I find it difficult to concentrate on my work despite spending over \$5,000 on special noise insulating windows. Especially onerous is the playing of drums whose noise can defeat any sound barrier. One reason we installed the special windows was to make sure our toddler grandchildren could take naps. Even with the special windows that eliminate 80 percent of the noise, my wife had difficulty finding bed rest following her three week stay in the Medical Intensive Care Unit at Howard University Hospital.

Madame Chairperson, I am afraid my hearing has already been impaired by daily exposure to amplified music generated in public spaces here in the District. I find it increasingly difficult to follow conversations at public receptions—which is crucial to my livelihood as a consultant.”

**-Howard, Gallery Place**

## **Businesses/Hospitals**

“Buskers perform, morning to night, each day outside of GW Hospital. These performances currently occur directly below our Intensive Care Units, including our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). As a Level III NICU, designated Level I Trauma Center and designated Comprehensive Stroke Center, these units serve as home to some of the most critically ill individuals in the DC area, as well as their loved ones. We recognize the importance of a calm environment in helping all of our patients and their loved ones heal.

Unfortunately, the continuous, excessive sound from Buskers impacts our patients’ ability to experience a restful environment. Reducing sound volumes from Buskers or relocating the performers would help us ensure that our patients and their loved ones are able to rest and recover in a healing place.”

**-George Washington University Hospital**

“We’ve only been open since April 2017, but with the neighborhood becoming more vibrant and new restaurants moving in it seems that the foot traffic increases and along with it the duration and level of noise from musicians and other performers. This is absolutely a concern when it comes to our bottom line. Noise is one of our biggest topics of discussion. Noise is the biggest customer complaint we get. The noise from amplified speakers, drums being played too loud and horn sections that blare as loud as possible affects our ability to thrive, which should concern the Council as stewards of our city.

It is impossible to tune out, or even drown out, the oppressively loud, muffled, off-tone sounds that reach my office. With noise-cancelling headphones piping white noise/music, I still am unable to ignore the cacophony from below, making thought work or conversation all but impossible from my desk when an amplified band is playing outside. These interruptions occur on at least a weekly basis and continue through most of the work day.”

**-Marco, MR Gallery Square, LLC, Pod Hotel DC**

“As these performances are ad hoc and unpredictable, we are unable to adapt our work schedules around the noise. My co-workers and I regularly experience frustration, anxiety, and headaches due to the extreme noise level.”

**-Colleen**

“The complaints I have heard relate to the extreme volume of the music and the extent it is directly impeding individuals and companies in their ability to work, often for hours on end. Frequently, it is possible to hear the music from several blocks away, even over the din of daily activity. These disruptions have affected a wide group of businesses including non-profits, legal services firms, and even medical, dental, and mental healthcare providers. Property owners in these areas have conveyed to me accounts of tenants leaving and potential tenants not signing leases after hearing the volume of the music inside their spaces.”

**-Patrick, Director of Operations and Preparedness, Golden Triangle Business Improvement District**

“Excessive noise levels, especially when occurring for prolonged periods of time, can unreasonably interfere with the ability to conduct business. Employees cannot effectively communicate with each other or their customers. Excessive noise can also directly affect a jurisdiction’s ability to attract and retain businesses. Restaurants and other retail tenants, for example, may close-up outdoor seating areas or never open due to prolonged periods of excessive noise which significantly reduce pedestrian activity.

This can be devastating to those retailers that depend on foot traffic for business.”

**-Kirsten, Apartment and Office Building Association**

“The noise from these activities affects our work in very clear and easily identified ways.

Much of our work involves talking on the phone, with the news media (including radio interviews), state and federal policymakers, and fellow advocates. The noise level is such that at times people will ask us where we are calling from. Radio journalists have told us that they cannot record us as a result of the background noise. Additionally, the level of noise is such that our offices cannot be used for meetings.”

**-Josh, Violence Policy Center**

“Over recent years I have witnessed a significant uptick in amplification at street corners in the center city. This disruptive, loud music is having a negative impact on office leasing and associated property management functions in nearby properties. Office workers are not able perform work that requires concentration nor are they able to conduct conversations, conference calls or meetings in their offices or conference rooms due to the level of noise and disruption. As a result, landlords that own properties in these areas suffer in efforts to attract and retain businesses and occupants. I have directly witnessed and experienced tenants threaten early termination or decide not to renew their leases in commercial buildings in these locations for reasons stated above.”

**- Amy, commercial real estate broker**

“Our leases, like most commercial leases, stipulate that tenants are entitled to the right of ‘quiet enjoyment’ of their spaces. Unregulated, amplified buskers are preventing our tenants from enjoying this right. At Connecticut and K, a full band with large amplifiers playing at the Metro entrance can be heard inside the building from street level to the 12th floor, and tenants find it difficult to make simple phone calls. We have received numerous requests from tenants to terminate their leases because they cannot function in their spaces due to the disruption caused by buskers. Many times the tenants cite the ‘quiet enjoyment’ provision and claim that we are in default of performing under the lease.

But there is very little that we as landlords have control over. We have tried to work with D.C. police and WMATA police, and we have even hired our own private security personnel but for a variety of reasons, we have not been able to solve this problem.

This situation is having major economic consequences. If brokers bring prospective tenants to our buildings to tour available spaces and the buskers are performing, the prospects refuse to tour. I have noted that existing tenants want to terminate their leases because of the impact of buskers. If this situation continues without significant changes in public policy, we and many other landlords may find that many floors of our buildings closest to Metro stations are not leasable.”

**-James, VP of Zuckerman Gravely**

“I manage a commercial office building not a residential building. At this time we have noted 39 incidents of disturbances since June caused by buskers at the entrance to the metro station right in front of the building. The majority of these street performers use amplification and cause disruption to the building tenants while they are trying to conduct normal business.”

**-Susan, Senior Property Manager**

“Over the last couple of years, the sound has become too much. I’m a Physician and a lot of times I work overnight. Whenever I’ve been on a long, stressful call, I come back home to rest and I cannot sleep. I can hear the drums, horns and amplifiers over our TV on the 9th floor perfectly clear. Often all the way up to 10 O’clock at night. After a 72 hour shift, the noise is so loud and it just does not let you sleep. I have to rest because the next day I’m going back in to work long hours.

City sounds don’t bother me one bit and I’m not a light sleeper. But I’ve spent time in Times Square and the noise does not come close to the level of volumes I’m experiencing in my home or on the street.”

**-Dr. John**

“Over recent years I have witnessed an uptick in amplification at street corners in the center city. This disruptive loud music is having a negative impact on office leasing and associated property management functions in nearby properties. This disruption is causing businesses to threaten early termination or to not renew their leases in commercial buildings that I work with in the affected area.”

**-Walter, Commercial Real Estate Broker**

“As I have also noted, summertime often means an amplification battle between religious/political groups and various musical performers. In the past, performers have set up on the 7th St. side of the Metro station and boosted their amplification to try and drown out the religious group. On more than one occasion, the resulting cacophony forced the entire legal staff at my association to leave the office early. Our need to shuffle personnel in the offices facing 7th and H Street often disrupts my organization’s workflow. Frequently, staff members or visitors are forced to go into an interior office to make/take a phone call because the amplified sound from outside can be heard by callers. Our exterior rooftop patio – often used for hosting important events and VIP guests – can be rendered unusable if the sound from the performers exceeds a certain level.”

**-Sharon**

“Zuckerman Gravely Management, Inc is a local, family owned real estate management company who owns and manages commercial office buildings in the central business district. ZG is known for our customer service and ability to provide an affordable and professional working environment for hundreds of small business owners and nonprofits. Some of our buildings are located right on top of metro entrances, which provide our tenants easy access to public transportation, but also means a negative impact on their day to day business functions because of excessive sounds levels from some buskers who stand directly outside of metro entrances. Some of our office tenants are here today.

As an example, I receive monthly complaints from tenants at 1001 Connecticut Ave, NW about a full band playing outside of the Metro entrance with large amplifiers. This noise can be heard inside the building from the ground level, up to the 12th floor. The windowed offices have trouble making simple phone calls. Multiple tenants have decided to move from this building because of this busker activity. Relocating a nonprofit or small business is not economical for the tenant or landlord.”

**-Peter, Manager**

“I am an Associate VP with property management at Terrell Place, 575 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW. Over the past few years, my commercial office and retail tenants have voiced to me their dismay over the intrusive noise from the street buskers on 7<sup>th</sup> and F Sts., NW, at the metro stop entrance. I’ve had tenants from as high as the 10<sup>th</sup> floor call me on speakerphone and I was able to hear the buskers clearly. The complaints are not exaggerated after hearing the buskers within the office building first-hand. This type of work environment has caused stress on our occupants; they’ve had to relocate temporarily for meetings and conference calls and our street level retailer, with their main dining room and outdoor seating across the street, have conveyed their customers’ negative feedback to me as well. The professional work environment we like to ensure for our tenancy has been jeopardized.”

**-Garrett, Property Manager**

## Restaurants

“We have suffered a measured drop in business and increased levels of guest dissatisfaction due to amplified street performances on the corner. Not only do these performers make it next to impossible for our guests to hear each other when outside, but they also permeate the inside dining room. Even when the doors and windows are closed, the amplified performances can be heard. We receive complaints from guests nightly and there have been dozens of instances of guests cancelling the remainder of their meal and departing because of the noise. This not only creates lost revenue but also costs associated with the loss of their in-progress meal preparation. Furthermore, it causes negative experiences for guests and staff alike that are impacted by the noise. Our servers make less in tips when guests are dissatisfied. Less guests willing to tolerate the noise means servers have fewer tables which equates to lower income as their wages are tip-based.”

**-Erik, Restaurant Manager**

“Each and every time we have performers outside using amplification or drumming, our windows shake and those guests seated near the windows overlooking the entrance on both the ground and second floor complain and often demand to be moved. While this is

beyond our control, it is quite common to have guests hold us responsible and we have had many say they will not return until we do something about it. Their frustrations are understandable as it is very uncomfortable and distracting to have two separate music sources battling it out when one is dining near a window (windows which are closed).” - **John, Restaurant Manager**

“We really have buskers that play with no restrictions or regard to any decibel level. I’m all about everybody’s rights to express themselves, but it has been having a negative effect on my guests, my workers and my business. We typically have at least one band, which directly affects our patio, which we pay a licensing fee to DC. Some days the music is playing and guests asked to be seated inside because it’s too loud or people don’t like the music being played. On a bigger night, multiple bands will show up, and then it becomes a contest between multiple performers for who is louder.

So it becomes increasingly detrimental because they all raise their decibel level substantially. Full bands with percussion, horn section and amplified keyboard and guitar all playing simultaneously. It becomes really harmful to our business, because guests don’t want to have to compete to be heard from across the table. Prime seats along the window are usually premium, but the glass vibrates and can create an unpleasant experience. More rare that the bands are not amplified. Not only do they play, but they play all the way through the evening, sometimes even well past midnight.”  
-**Lerone, Restaurant Manager**

## **Landlords/Neighborhood Associations**

“The volume seems to be getting worse and I’m very concerned about property values. I’m a real estate broker and other places in the DMV have appreciated largely in the last few years, while we have not, in fact values have gone down. I think the noise level is certainly a contributing factor. I believe the unit will be very difficult to sell or rent in the future because the noise is such an issue.”  
-**Sujata**

“On almost a daily basis, our office and retail building tenants complain to Lincoln Property Company, as the building property manager, and when they do, their expectations are that we will do something to resolve the problem. Tenants in office buildings as high as the 12th floor have complained that meetings and conference calls are hindered because the noise is so loud from the street level that they are unable to proceed. These tenants want us to stop the noise immediately so that they can continue their conference call, draft a letter, or meet undisturbed with clients.”  
-**Jerry, Lincoln Property Company**

“When I moved to Philadelphia for work I had a rental tenant. This gentleman is a special agent for the FBI and chose my apartment due to its convenient proximity to FBI headquarters. Four months into his lease, he notified me that he was breaking his lease specifically because of the noise. He reported multiple logged dates and times of amplified street performances interfering with his work, his family and his relaxation. He cannot decompress after work due to these loud noises. Furthermore, they kept him up late, often well past 10:00pm. He had to be up at 5:00am for work and therefore needed to be able to sleep early. He reported that even turning the TV to nearly full volume would still not overpower the outside noise and only contributed to a less comfortable

environment. His 3-year-old son was unable to take naps or get on a regular sleep cycle due to the extremely loud noise from amplified street performances that were a constant bombardment into his home. He noted that the volume of amps and frequency of performances both increased to the point where he could not longer tolerate living there. This was not only due to negative quality of life but also impacting his work with the FBI. He was unable to conduct sensitive and important business calls due to the level of noise during the day and unable to live comfortably at night. He was very clear that the only reason he felt “forced” to move was the noise. Both he and I are accustomed to “normal” city noise. However the volume from these performances far exceeds reasonable expectations.”

**-Erik, Restaurant Manager**

“My name is Jo-Ann, I am the Executive Director of the Penn Quarter Neighborhood Association and am testifying on the Association’s behalf. The Association membership is diverse; it includes 10 residential condominium associations and several apartment buildings, museums and art galleries, theaters and other performing venues, places of worship, property owners, hotels, office tenants, a great variety of non-profit organizations other than those previously mentioned, and restaurants and retail establishments. Often there are differences of opinion as you might suspect between tenants and property owners, and residents and businesses, but this is one issue where everyone appears to be united. Buskers should play but they need to respect those living and working where they play and allow the residents and businesses to not hear them inside their homes and offices. Further, there have been significant increases in entertainers using amplification that is so loud one can’t hear a companion speaking while walking along, and some of us find that the music is so loud we have to hold our ears to avoid the pain as we walk by.”

**-Jo-Ann, Penn Quarter Neighborhood Association**

## **Safety**

“Nowadays, some of the buskers have begun to use cones to block off the sidewalk. Often they illegally park or double-park. When I park just to run some groceries in or something, the police come to me immediately and ask me to move. I actually called Child protective services a few months ago, because a busker had a four year old kid singing in front of a loudspeaker. That can damage someone’s ear, especially a child’s. I’m a physician, I have to say something if I see something, and if you put a child in front of speakers like that, you’re doing damage.”

**-Dr. John**

“The sidewalk is also not an acceptable place for a band to set up. It obstructs pedestrians who routinely spill out onto the road to walk around the band. The 7th/H St Intersection is one of the busiest in DC and it’s only a matter of time before folks are injured by spilling out onto the road. We now have teenagers dancing to amplified drums and throwing flags in the air. I have personally seen 2 pedestrians get hit in the face with the flying flags. Word is quickly spreading that downtown DC is unlivable.”

**-PK**

“The incredibly loud volume outside is most definitely creating a public safety hazard. When a performer is blaring, foot traffic tends to move around a wide circumference of them, often having people step into the street. I have personally witnessed a confused

pedestrian step into the line of traffic and not hear the horn of a taxi. It also makes the visually-impaired assistance at traffic lights unusable.”

**-John, Clyde's Restaurants**