

For Immediate Release

Friday, March 6, 2026

Statement from Lori Furstenberg, Chair, DC Chapter of The Conservative Caucus

The DC Chapter of The Conservative Caucus commends U.S. Attorney Jeanine Ferris Pirro and the team at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, along with investigators from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, for securing convictions in the \$4 million Medicaid fraud scheme involving Washington Smile Center in Northwest DC.

This prosecution demonstrates the importance of strong federal enforcement to protect programs intended to serve vulnerable residents.

However, the lengthy duration and scale of this fraud raises serious concerns about oversight within the District's Medicaid system, administered by Wayne Turnage, the Deputy Mayor for the District of Columbia Health and Human Services, and Director, District of Columbia Department of Health Care Finance. Repeated claims involving over 50 surgical procedures and devices for individual patients, should have triggered internal safeguards long before federal investigators stepped in.

Mayor Bowser, the DC Council, and Wayne Turnage must explain how millions of taxpayer dollars were lost under their management.

Congress should now consider stronger federal oversight mechanisms for District programs funded with federal dollars, including mandatory program audits and reviews, and the establishment of a federal commission to ensure accountability and transparency in the management of these programs.

Washington, DC is unique among American cities: Congress retains constitutional authority over the nation's capital. When oversight failures occur within federally supported programs, it is appropriate and necessary for Congress to exercise that responsibility.

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