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Contact: Diane.Shinn@dc.gov, 202-727-8991

Audit Finds Events DC Owes District \$45 Million
Convention Center authority proposes legislation to effectively limit repayment

October 19, 2026—The Washington Convention and Sports Authority, known as Events DC, again owes the District general fund a substantial amount in excess cash based on errors and differences of opinion with the Office of the D.C. Auditor on what the quasi-public authority is required to repay for Fiscal Year 2025.

D.C. Code requires Events DC to transfer excess cash to the District at the end of each fiscal year. In FY 2026 Events DC calculated the required transfer for FY 2025 to be \$5.1 million. ODCA contends Events DC misinterprets statutory requirements – provisions that Events DC is now seeking to change with legislative action by the D.C. Council – and should pay an additional \$45 million.

The excess cash transfer calculation is defined by D.C. Official Code §§ 10-1202.13(a) and (b). The amount due to the District is the sum of cash and investment balances held in the Convention Center Fund, minus the sum of the Fund’s current liabilities, debt service reserves, operating reserves, capital replacement reserves, and any amounts expected to be used to purchase or redeem debt in the next fiscal year. A year ago ODCA found that Events DC owed an additional \$68.7 million beyond what they initially paid but the D.C. Council took no action to recover the funds. Because the difference of opinion relates to interpreting D.C. Code provisions, Events DC has proposed legislation that was introduced by Councilmember Anita Bonds. The change would essentially codify the methodology Events DC has used in prior years with the practical effect of reducing to zero what is owed today.

“The issue of the calculation is a policy matter to be decided by elected officials,” D.C. Auditor Kathy Patterson said. “If legislators believe what their counterparts believed in 1984, they will retain the excess cash repayment requirement. If, as appears to be the case, they prefer Events DC to have and to spend that additional cash, they could simply remove the requirement from the Code. Changing one complicated calculation for another complicated calculation as the Events DC proposes does not seem prudent to me.” A Council hearing on the proposed legislation is scheduled October 28, 2026.

The excess cash amount that has been determined by Events DC was incorrect because the excess cash calculation rested on a series of errors, including using operating budget instead of operating expenditures to calculate the operating reserve. Events DC interpreted expenditures to *mean budget* by referencing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Events DC which incorrectly stated “budget” instead of “expenditures.” Events DC’s interpretation was contrary to the plain language of the statute.

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