

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
11/11/2024

For More Information Contact:

Erin Calloway, Director of Communications
DC Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
Office: 202-879-8807
Email: ecalloway@dcappleseed.org
www.dcappleseed.org



DC APPLESEED WELCOMES TOMMY WELLS FORMER COUNCILMEMBER AND DIRECTOR OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT JOINS TEAM

[Washington, DC]: Tommy Wells has joined the organization's staff as a senior fellow. "Tommy brings a 35-year track record of tackling the District's challenges and building coalitions among diverse interest groups," Batters-Thompson said. "We are delighted he is joining DC Appleseed's team and our efforts to increase democratic representation, advance economic mobility, and address inequities in health and the environment within the District."

As a social worker, school board member, and nonprofit director, Wells spent 15 years devising, advancing, and executing measures to improve public education and social services. Serving two terms on the DC City Council, he became a leading advocate for sustainable development, fueling unprecedented economic revitalization in Ward 6. He also stood firmly for adhering to a strict code of ethics at a time when many of the city's leaders were mired in controversy. From 2015 to 2023, Wells was the director of the Department of Energy and Environment and chair of DC Water, becoming a nationally recognized proponent of carbon emissions reduction, climate change resilience, river and stream restoration, and the activation of parks and public spaces.

"As a public servant who has long admired and worked with DC Appleseed, I am honored and excited to formally sign onto this organization's outstanding team," Wells said. "It is second to none in bringing solid research and strategic thinking to solving our city's most urgent challenges."

As director of the Consortium for Child Welfare, Wells counted among his accomplishments partnering with leaders in Congress to create the DC Superior Court's Family Court. He was instrumental in defining the function and operations of the new court, which subsequently provided the necessary judicial specialization and capacity to produce a 300% increase the number of foster children adopted into permanent homes every year.

On the City Council, Wells negotiated with stakeholders to develop and enact bills to charge a 5-cent bag fee that dramatically reduced litter in the city and provided funding for the restoration of the Anacostia River; to decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana to end the disparate and devastating impact on the District's Black residents; and to establish mayoral control of DC Public Schools to streamline management and increase accountability.

Wells also led the Department of Energy and Environment in achieving an interim record of decision with the U.S. Department of the Interior to clean up PCB-contaminated sediments in the Anacostia River. The ROD established specific numerical cleanup goals, identified 11 Early Action Area "hot spots," and defined an area of about 77 acres to be cleaned up at an estimated cost of \$35.5 million.

Wells has a law degree from the Catholic University Columbus School of Law and a master's degree in social work from the University of Minnesota. He lives on Capitol Hill with his wife, Barbara Wells.

For over 30 years, through litigation, teamwork, and advocacy, DC Appleseed has helped make the District of Columbia a better place to live and work. Throughout our history, we have taken on some of the District's toughest problems, developed proposed solutions to those problems, and then worked to get our proposed solutions adopted and implemented. All of our projects emphasize three key values: democratic participation, economic mobility, and racial equity.

We are independent, non-partisan, and objective. We do not come to any issue with an agenda or predetermined viewpoint and we take a position on an issue only after thoroughly researching it from all sides – with this approach, we meet our goal of finding the best possible solutions for all who live and work in the District.