August 4, 2017

The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman of the City Council for the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

The Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1B, at the request of the residents of the alley bounded by 4, 5, and T Streets NW in LeDroit Park, voted 8,0,0 at its regular monthly meeting on August 3, 2017, to ask that the council officially recognize this alley and support naming it Ernest Everett Just Court.

The designation is important because it will allow residents living in the alley to have an address, enable them to receive mail, improve the speed with which they can request emergency services and file police reports, increase opportunities for housing development, and make it easier for GPS-dependent services such as Uber to locate the alley.

Mr. Ernest Everett Just was a pioneering African-American professor and science writer who lived at 412 T Street and likely walked through the alley that was in the rear of the property. He was published widely on cytology (the study of cell structure), fertilization and early embryonic development. Today, he is acknowledged as one of the first ecological developmental biologists, which involves the study of biology in its natural environmental context as opposed to the laboratory setting. While a professor at Howard University, he helped established Omega Psi Phi, the first black fraternity at a historically black college in the country.

The initiative for official recognition has followed the requirements outlined in D.C. ACT 21-489, "Public Space Naming Amendment Act of 2016". More than the 50% of residents required have signed the petition and the most relevant government bodies including DDOT, the Office of the Surveyor, and Councilmember Nadeau’s office.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION.

Regards,

Mr. James A. Turner
Chairman, ANC 1B, Commissioner 1B09

Mr. Jon Squicciarini
Secretary ANC 1B, Commissioner 1B04

c: The Honorable Brianne Nadeau, Councilmember Ward One
The Honorable Mary Cheh, Councilmember Ward Three
Ms. Melinda Bolling, Director, Office of the Surveyor, DCRA
Mr. Leif Dormsjo, Director, District Department of Transportation (DDOT)