



Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961... The Voice of the People of Howard County

Date: 18 February 2020

Subject: **HCCA is in Favor of CB8-2020**

Good Evening. My name is Stu Kohn representing the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA as President. We are in Favor of CB8 but only if our questions are answered and our suggested amendments are adopted. We want to congratulate Councilman Jones for introducing this Bill and thank both Council members Rigby and Yungmann for their co-sponsorship. We believe that whenever one can obtain any quantitative analysis which can be relied on and completely verified it would undoubtedly be beneficial for all concerned parties. We do have some important questions regarding this Bill and suggestions for improvements for your consideration for proposed amendments. They are as follows:

1. Who will perform the Fiscal Analysis?
2. Will a Fiscal Impact be conducted on any applicable Resolution?
3. Refer to page 1 – Lines 27 and 28 – it states, “A Fiscal Analysis must be submitted to the County Council not later than 2 business days before the public hearing for legislation.” Why only 2 days? This is in no way sufficient time for the public to analyze the data. The time period should be when the Bill is introduced and included as an attachment to the Technical Staff Report when applicable giving the public a two week period to review and have ample time to testify on the findings.
4. Refer to Page 2 – Line 8 – which states, “At least 1 business day before the public hearing for the legislation, the County Council shall make each fiscal analysis freely available to the public.” This is in no way ample time and needs to be available at the same time the Bill is introduced to the public.
5. Refer to Page 2 – Lines 13 and 14 – It states, “Council action on legislation that is otherwise valid is not invalid because of any failure to follow the requirements of this section.” We would like for you to please explain the meaning of this wording.

Can someone please tell us why we are seeing under “Related Documents” regarding CB7, 8 and 9 “Fiscal Impact” statements and CB1 we see “Fiscal Impact Study Frequently Asked Questions?” Why on CB2 was the Fiscal Analysis performed by the County Administrator? Why at this time is the Fiscal Impact being documented when CB8 has not been passed? Please refer to the “Fiscal Impact” regarding CB8 under Background where it states, “Prior to 2013, the Office of the County Auditor did not provide the Council with fiscal analysis of legislation. The current County Auditor initiated the practice of creating a detailed fiscal impact analysis for all bills and resolutions excluding resolutions for appointments.” Where was the public able to see the results? Now refer to the section “Comparison with Surrounding Counties” and go to the fifth row stating. “Is the Fiscal Note made public?” The result is that Montgomery, Anne Arundel and Baltimore states “Yes” but “Howard County says, “No.” So

based on this chart is the Background statement really correct? Was the public ever privy to the Fiscal Impact information? When referring to the Fiscal Impact Study FAQ under CB1 it defines the difference between a Fiscal impact Study and an Economic Impact study. We suggest an Economic Study also be included in a Bill or Resolution whenever applicable.

In closing this proposal is a major step in the right direction. If done right we should all have a better understanding of the Fiscal Impact and hopefully the Economic Impact resulting in determining the good and bad of any such applicable proposed Bill or Resolution.

Thank you,

Stu Kohn
HCCA President