



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

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

Date: 15 July 2024

Subject: HCCA Testimony CB47-48-2024 Establishment of the Inspector General

Good evening, Council members.

My name is Stu Kohn from beautiful Scaggsville. I am testifying for the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA as its President.

The HCCA is extremely enthusiastic and very much in Favor of both CB47 and 48 to establish an Inspector General (IG) in Howard County which has been incorporated in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Montgomery and Prince George's. We, as residents and voters, are hoping you will unanimously pass these Bills especially since the jurisdictions believe the IG is a necessary position to establish the potential for a Good Government.

It is your obligation if you truly believe in Good Government to promote transparency and oversight which consists of openness, accountability, and honesty for a government we all can be proud to serve the people and ensure that integrity is the major component of mutual respect between our elected officials and constituents. Having an IG in place would undoubtedly be an asset to hopefully obtain an independent / unbiased body.

When reviewing CB47 and 48 all members of the Council and the County Executive should adhere to page 9, of CB47, lines 22 thru 24 as the contents clearly demonstrates what good governance is all about as it reads, "The IG is to make recommendations to the County Executive and Council to promote efficiency, accountability, and integrity in County Government." It is your duty to show your constituents you firmly believe in the role of the IG by showing you are willing to promote a better means of Government in the immediate future. The benefits of establishing an Inspector General will far exceed the cost. It would simply be too costly not to have such a position in our County. If you were to vote "no" it would clearly demonstrate your indifference for transparency, accountability and oversight for the establishment of an independent office.

The following are some questions and suggested Amendments for consideration:

Refer to CB47

- Refer to page 6, line 21 - Question - what happens if the IG fails to obtain certification within 7 months? What is the consequence?
- Refer to page 6, line 24 - Why is it a term of 6 years?

- Refer to page 7, line 6 and 7 - Question - Why 6 months if the IG remains vacant? Why not a shorter amount of time?
- Refer to page 8, line 29 change the word “may” to “shall.”
- Refer to page 11, line 9 add - “A Public Hearing shall commence within 30 calendar days to discuss the findings.”
- Refer to page 12, lines 1 thru 3 - on line 1 add after the word “Any” the word “increase” slash (/). In line 3 after the word “the” add the word “increase slash (/). We don’t understand why there shouldn’t be a written justification whenever asking for an increase.
- Refer to page 16, line 1 - Question - What is the definition of the number of “majority”?
- Refer to page 16, line 10 - after the word Section add the wording “within 3 months of their appointment.”
- Refer to page 16, line 17 - Question - Why 6 months? Why is it not less time?
- Refer to page 16, line 30 after the word “council” add the wording “and immediately be available to the public on the County website.”

Refer to CB48

- Refer to page 3, lines 3 to 27 and page 4, lines 1 thru 6 - Question - What happens to the Auditors role? Will anything change?
- Refer to page 4, line 13 - change 22.1200 to 22.1300 - refer to CB47 on page 12, line 17. HCCA previously pointed out the error and anticipates the Amendment will be added for correction.
- Refer to page 5, line 7 - Question - What is the rationale of eliminating that majority votes will now be 4 vice 3?

Your unanimous positive votes would undoubtedly show your constituents that you care about ensuring transparency, oversight and accountability because you believe in obtaining Good Government for the people and by the people. We hope we can count on you to do what is right!

Thank you.

Stu Kohn
HCCA President