



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

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

Date: 18 November 2024

Subject: **CB61-2024 HCCA Testimony**

Good evening. I am Stu Kohn from Scaggsville testifying on behalf of the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA on CB61-2024 which we unequivocally APPROVE and say THANK YOU.

Without the establishment of the Office of Inspector General it would be too costly not to have such a position for your constituents. Your attention to detail should be highly commended.

We continue to be extremely enthusiastic and appreciative as stated when we testified in July especially since 85 percent of voters showed their full support. We stated that all Councilmembers should have an obligation to believe in Good Governance in an attempt to promote transparency and oversight consisting of openness, accountability, and integrity for a government we all can hopefully be proud of. We commended all the Council members when we testified when fully endorsing the establishment of the IG office. Now we unfortunately see that Council-member Dr. Jones name does not appear as a sponsor of this most compelling Bill. Is this an oversight? We simply ask why when stated in the Press Release on 26 July, he stated, "The Office of Inspector General will ensure that Howard County Government operations maintain the highest level of integrity?" Dr. Jones, you should be commended for this statement. So, did something change?

Please refer to the Bill for some suggested amendments and questions.

- ❖ Refer to Page 7, Line 19 - add after "County Council" - "the Office of Law." The IG office needs to be completely independent of the Office of Law unless the IG asks for assistance.
- ❖ Refer to Page 8, Line 1 - it states, "The Inspector General is appointed by Council Resolution..." Question - Will there be a Public Hearing?
- ❖ Refer to Page 11, line 18 - change "may" to "shall"
- ❖ Refer to Page 14, line 13 - add after "General" "only whenever requested."
- ❖ Refer to Page 14, line 19 - Question - Why "three to five years"? We think it should be specific to read "every two years."
- ❖ Refer to Page 15, line 20 - Question - it states, "Council Resolution" Will there be a Public Hearing?
- ❖ Refer to Page 18, line 4 - Question - Why are agendas made available only 3 days prior to the meeting in electronic medium to the Public? It should be no less than 7 days.

- ❖ Refer to Page 18, line 6 - change the word “practicable” to a given time period. We recommend deleting the words “as soon as practicable” to “within two weeks”
- ❖ Refer to Page 18, line 28 - after the word “shall” add “immediately compose and”
- ❖ Refer to Page 18, line 30 - add after the word “responsibilities” “prior to any rulings.”

Question – will the IG be involved in any school concerns?

Again, we want to reiterate our appreciation for Council members working together in pursuing the establishment of the Office of Inspector General. Your exceptional work should be highly complimented by all.

Thank you,

Stu Kohn
HCCA President