



# HCCA

**Howard County Citizens Association**

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

Date: 19 November 2025

Subject: Let's Pay Our Council Members What They Deserve

Dear Compensation Review Commission Members,

I am Stu Kohn from Scaggsville representing the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA as its President.

Based on your recommendation regarding the County Council salary we are probably wasting our time because unfortunately my experience in the past when I testified as an individual before being President of HCCA to the Compensation Commission was very discouraging. It looks like all continues to be status quo as the Council Members salary is still treated as a Part-Time position. I previously asked that County Council Members should receive their fair share of pay, especially considering comparison of their salaries in other counties and comparing overall salaries of various Howard County positions. Our County Council Members are woefully underpaid and should be classified as Full-Time not Part-Time. Some Members of the Council partake much greater than on a Part-Time basis. I'm sure when interviewing them you heard the same. Why are they paid less than their Chief of Staffs? This is drastically wrong with the pay system. Unfortunately, the past two times testifying before this Commission was ignored because the Commission refuses to classify the Council as Full-Time. The rationale is we would get less qualified candidates applying for the position. Why not advertise as a Full-Time position, pay Council Members commensurate with other Counties especially when Howard County is the richest County per capita in Maryland? If classifying as Full-Time and a Council Member wishes to have an alternate job, then permit this to happen.

What we are about to state has nothing to do with personalities. We are simply comparing overall yearly salaries with other positions. For example, our Council Members in 2024 were on average making \$81,000 per year. Yet the salary of their Chief of Staffs is an average of \$118,000. The County Council Administrator's salary is \$203,000. The salaries of the County Executive, members on his staff, and various department directors and deputies' salaries are anywhere from two to two-in-a-half times that of the Council. This is simply not right especially considering the responsibilities of Council Members. If you are not willing to increase Council Members' salaries, then perhaps reduce the salaries of Department and Deputy Heads to save taxpayer dollars.

When you compare the salaries of County Council Members in Prince George's they are making \$138,000 in 2023 and in Montgomery they were \$167,000 in 2024. We should accordingly pay our hard-working Council Members' salaries commensurate with other Counties. There is no excuse!

In conclusion, County Council Members deserve a break today and this Commission should make sure it becomes reality. Our recommendation is Council Members' salaries should be no less than \$130,000 per year. Thus, an increase of approximately \$50,000 or an overall increase totaling approximately \$250,000 with all five members per year or over 10 years costing \$2.5 million, which

is not a large increase in the budget. We certainly can afford it when we are willing to allocate tremendous sums of money to various projects such as the Library and Gateway. Yes - It's time to pay our Council Members a reasonable salary!

Thank You for listening and perhaps you will consider taking the necessary action to correct a long overdue injustice. Please pay our Council Members what they deserve.

Stu Kohn  
HCCA President