



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

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

Date: 20 January 2026

Subject: HCCA Testimony for CB8-2026

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

We believe Council-members yearly salary should be fair and equitable. The only way to execute this is to have your positions classified as a full-time as stated for the County Executive in the County Charter. We suggest you consider introducing a Resolution to place a referendum to revise the Charter. This has been long overdue for years. Let your constituents decide.

There is no doubt that some of our Council-members spend an exorbitant amount of time working on various legislation and constituents concerns. Quite frankly you are seriously underpaid. The Compensation Review Committee basically agreed but the only way to implement this recommendation is as they stated is to have the Charter revised.

On November 19, the HCCA testified to the Compensation Review Commission and emphasized the Council is underpaid and should be declared a full-time position. The Commission agreed in their report by stating, "In reviewing the hours dedicated and the commitments undertaken, the Commission agreed that the position of County-members has evolved beyond part-time responsibility and has become a full-time office. While specific code changes on this question will not be included in legislation that adopts the Commission's recommended salaries, the Commission concluded that the County Council, County Executive, and future Charter Review Commissions should consider necessary changes to the County Charter and County Code to reflect the full-time responsibilities of a Member of the County Council."

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

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 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! Council-members deserve to be paid more than their staff.

Being four of you are not running for a Council seat you have an opportunity to make a wrong a right. Our future Council-members should get an annual salary equivalent to their fair share of work. Hopefully you will let your constituents make this decision by providing an opportunity via referendum.

Let's make sure that in the future fair and equitable salaries become reality. County Councilmembers deserve an increase regarding their yearly salary.

Thank you,

Stu Kohn

HCCA President