



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3700
County Council

POSITION STATEMENT

House Bill 460
Delegate Taylor, et al.

Department of Housing and Community Development –
Racial Equity Impact Assessment

POSITION:

SUPPORT

HB 460 – Department of Housing and Community Development – Racial Equity Impact Assessment – For the purpose of requiring the Department of Housing and Community Development to annually complete a racial equity impact assessment; requiring the Department to work with independent experts to complete the assessment and make the assessment available to the public; and generally relating to racial equity impact assessments. This bill takes effect October 1, 2023.

Even in as progressive a state as Maryland, we cannot deny a history of racial inequity across a broad swath of our society, including in the area of housing. Analysis of historical trends in the State has shown a long pattern of red-lining and other discriminatory housing practices that have served to limit the options available to individuals from communities of color to access financing, government assistance, and support services to the same extent as people from more traditionally white regions of the State.

HB 460 would require the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to develop a rubric with the help of independent experts in the field of racial equity to be used in conducting an annual assessment, beginning in December 2024, of the impact of the agency's financial assistance programs on racial minorities and whether those programs are equitably invested in the communities with the largest need and the largest population of economically marginalized people. These reports would then be made available to the public on demand.

The Prince George's County Council supports all efforts to uncover racial inequity in government programs and to implement whatever steps are necessary to stamp it out. As part of our efforts to address systemic problems like this throughout government, it seems reasonable to ask the agencies that administer programs where racial inequity has been an issue to conduct periodic evaluations of their operations to ensure that they are no longer perpetuating the very practices that were responsible for holding so many of our citizens back from full participation in society. HB 460 will do just that in the area of housing by requiring an annual assessment of the impact of DHCD's work on racial minorities and minority communities.

For the foregoing reasons, the Prince George's County Council **SUPPORTS HB 1077** and respectfully requests your favorable consideration of its position.

Prepared by: Evans & Associates
On behalf of Prince George's County Council

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