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MAYOR

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February 11, 2020

**HB 312**

TO: Members of the House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Nicholas Blendy, Deputy Director of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 312 – Discrimination in Employment – Reasonable Accommodations for Applicants With Disabilities

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Davis, Vice Chair Dumais and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 312.

If enacted, this bill would ensure that, as a matter of state statute relating to prohibited forms of discrimination, a regulated employer may not refuse to make a reasonable accommodation for the known disability of an otherwise qualified applicant for a job through adjustments of the employment application process, including; (i) allowing alternatives to an online application process; (ii) accepting a video resume or other alternative form; allowing a support professional to provide assistance during an interview; or providing an accessible interview location.

While existing law under State Government Article § 20-606 dealing with unlawful employment practices generally prohibits an affected employer from failing or refusing to hire an otherwise qualified person because of that person's disability, the current provision does not specifically address ensuring that the job application process itself is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

This important piece to providing the same opportunities to all of our fellow citizens who are qualified to perform a particular job of the means to seek gainful and satisfying employment deserves a clear statement within state law. This bill, if enacted, would provide that clear statement.

For the above reason, we respectfully request a **favorable** report on HB 312.

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