

# State of Maryland

## Commission on Civil Rights

*“Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination.”*



### *Officers*

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January 27, 2021

### **House Bill 15 – Governor's Office of Immigrant Affairs POSITION: Support**

Dear Chairperson McIntosh, Vice Chairperson Chang, and Members of the House Appropriations Committee:

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (“MCCR”; “The Commission”) is the State agency responsible for the enforcement of laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and state contracts based upon race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, physical and mental disability, and source of income.

House Bill 15 establishes the Governor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs and its structure. The Office is mandated to connect immigrants with community resources and support services; support initiatives to increase equity and opportunity with immigrants; reduce barriers to accessibility for immigrants due to language barriers; advise the Governor concerning matters affecting immigrants; coordinate with other state agencies to ensure resource delivery that serves the need of immigrants, and provide support to local governments to support immigrants and their communities. The Office will also be required to submit an Annual Report with specific information on June 15, beginning in 2022.

Unlawful discrimination based on race and national origin continue to be chronic issues facing Marylanders, especially within immigrant communities. Providing access to resources and support services to those who are marginalized and disenfranchised is an effective way to eradicate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality. Leveraging the resources and knowledge of the state government and its partners builds more secure, vibrant, and cohesive communities for everyone’s benefit.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges a favorable vote on HB15. Thank you for your time and consideration of the information contained in this letter. The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights looks forward to the continued opportunity to work with you to improve and promote civil rights in Maryland.