County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2026 Legislative Session Legislative day # 11

RESOLUTION NO. 131 - 2026

Introduced by: Chairperson at the request of the County Executive

Short Title: Appointment – Mary O. Barton– Interfaith Advisory Commission

Title: A RESOLUTION confirming the appointment of Mary O. Barton to the Interfaith Advisory Commission.

Introduced and read first time on Sept 8, 2026.

By order Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

Read for a second time and a public hearing held on Sept 22, 2026. and Oct 19, 2026

By order Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted ✓, Adopted with amendments___, Failed___, Withdrawn ___ by the County Council on Oct 30, 2026.

Certified by Michelle Harrod
Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing language; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing language. ~~Strike-out~~ indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

9/22/2026 Did not appear 10/5/2026 Tabled MRH

WHEREAS, Section 404 of the Howard County Charter and Section 6.300 of the Howard County Code provide for the County Executive to appoint and for the County Council to confirm nominees to Howard County Boards and Commissions created by law; and

WHEREAS, Sections 6.352 and 12.222 of the Howard County Code provide for an Interfaith Advisory Commission in Howard County; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive has proposed the appointment of Mary O. Barton as a member of the Interfaith Advisory Commission; and

WHEREAS, the County Council ratifies the County Executive's special trust and confidence in the abilities of the nominee.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland this 30 day of October, 2026 that the following person is appointed as a member of the Interfaith Advisory Commission to serve from the passage of this Resolution to October 5, 2029 or until a successor is appointed and confirmed:

Mary O. Barton
Columbia, Maryland

Mary O. Barton

Summary of Qualifications

- Community engagement and adult education leader with nearly 20 years of experience supporting immigrant and multilingual communities through education, workforce transition, and community-based services.
- Experienced in program design, transition advising, and systems coordination for adult learners across literacy, GED, college, and career pathways.
- Strong record of building partnerships across educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, workforce agencies, and community groups, including partnerships with faith-based and community organizations.
- Experience identifying and reducing barriers to access for immigrant, multilingual, and underserved residents navigating education, workforce, and community support systems.
- Committed to inclusive community-building, intercultural understanding, and strengthening pathways to opportunity and belonging across diverse communities.

Professional Experience

Howard Community College – English Language Center, Columbia, MD

ELC Student Success Manager (2017– July 2026)
ELC Intake, Assessment Specialist & Transitions Counselor (2007–2017)

- Led intake, assessment, and placement systems and supervised registration team ensuring consistent advising and placement practices for adult immigrant learners.
- Proposed and developed a Skilled Immigrant Program supporting internationally trained professionals seeking career re-entry in the United States, in collaboration with college and community partners.
- Designed and facilitated transition workshops and provided individualized advising to support adult English learners across literacy, GED, college, and workforce/career pathways.
- Built partnerships with public schools, community organizations, workforce agencies, and nonprofit partners to support immigrant and multilingual learners.
- Developed a Language Access Plan (LAP) to improve equity and access for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students.
- Supported students in navigating community resources and services to address barriers to persistence and success.

Luminus (formerly FIRN), Columbia, MD

Volunteer Coordinator & Literacy Program Manager (2006–2007)

- Provided leadership for volunteer coordination and adult ESL literacy programming serving immigrant and refugee communities in Howard County.

- Recruited, onboarded, and trained volunteers and coordinated assignments across office support roles, ESL tutoring, and ESL program support, with ESL tutoring delivered in partnership with Grace Community Church.
- Assessed adult ESL learners and matched them with volunteer tutors based on language needs and learning goals.
- Supported outreach, volunteer engagement, and community representation efforts across programs and organizational initiatives.

Observ, Inc., St. Louis, MO

Staff Coordinator (2001–2005)

- Managed recruitment, training, and scheduling of event staff for a large-scale public venue operation.
- Strengthened onboarding and retention processes and supported day-to-day operational coordination in a high-volume environment.
- Resolved staffing and service issues in a fast-paced customer-facing setting.

Young Life, Newark, DE & New Providence, NJ

Area Director (1988–1997)

- Provided leadership for faith-based youth ministry programs and volunteer teams serving middle and high school students across multiple school communities.
- Recruited, trained, and mentored staff and volunteers to support relational outreach, small group programming, and weekly youth activities.
- Built partnerships with schools, churches, parents, and community leaders to support youth engagement, mentoring, and holistic personal development grounded in faith-based values.

Education

- Master of Divinity, Fuller Theological Seminary
- Spiritual Director Training, Vincentian Formation Program
- B.S. Business Administration, Towson University

Community Engagement

- Skilled Immigrant Task Force, Maryland Department of Labor (Member)
- Board Member, Association of Community Services (Chair, Education Committee), 2015–2018
- Board Member, Luminus (formerly FIRN), 2011–2015
- Howard County Ethnic Minority Roundtable (Member/Chair roles)
- Community engagement and informal advocacy supporting immigrant and underserved families in navigating education, social services, and community resources in Howard County.