



**HCCA**

**Howard County Citizens Association**

*Since 1961...*

*The Voice Of The People of Howard County*

Date: 17 June 2019

Subject: HCCA Testimony CR100-2019

My name is Stu Kohn and I am the President of the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA.

HCCA is against this proposal. We understand the intent of the Resolution is to perhaps attempt to streamline the testimony process, but unfortunately it is counter intuitive. When referring to lines 20 to 24 on page 2 any interested party is penalized because they did not sign-up in advance. The Council Chair for quite some time has had the courtesy to ask the audience is there anyone else who would like to testify. This tells the audience that Council Members are willing to hear further testimony and seem to want to obtain as much information as possible. Yes – you could ask for those not signing up in advance of the 30-minute deadline to please send written testimony. However suppose you as Council Members have a question to the person who wishes to provide perhaps compelling testimony which the public should have the opportunity to hear your question(s) to them and their response. You should want to hear all information provided by your constituents to assist in making your decision. There is also a situation whereby someone who previously did not sign-up in advance might want to counter what he or she heard during testimony of a given Bill or Resolution.

In conclusion we should not shutoff the valve because we want to save time by penalizing someone who did not previously register. This would be a negative for open government. In this case change is not good.

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stu Kohn', written in a cursive style.

Stu Kohn  
HCCA President



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL  
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION  
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION

I, Stu Kohn, have been duly authorized by  
(name of individual)

Howard County Citizens Association to deliver testimony to the  
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding CR100-2019 to express the organization's  
(bill or resolution number)

support for opposition to / request to amend this legislation.  
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Stu Kohn

Signature: Stu Kohn

Date: 17 Jan 19

Organization: Heck

Organization Address: ELLICOTT CITY MD

Number of Members: 500

Name of Chair/President: Stu Kohn

*This form can be submitted electronically via email to [councilmail@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councilmail@howardcountymd.gov) no later than 5pm the day of the Public Hearing or delivered in person the night of the Public Hearing before testifying.*

## Council Resolution 100-2019

Lisa Markovitz – The People’s Voice Ellicott City

The practice, over many years, of the Chairperson asking if there is anyone else who wishes to speak, after signed in testimony, has been a courtesy and not a requirement. This can be seen upon reading the existing code language. I believe that occurred in large part, due to the fact that although sign-in was to continue until the hearing ended, it actually stopped at, or shortly after, the beginning.

The only change to the required process in this Resolution is to have sign-up discontinue at the start of the hearing, versus the end; however, there are pros and cons to this change.

The benefit is that it will streamline the process of testimony, reducing the time it takes to hold hearings, by having only those signed up testify.

The downsides include having the public feel stifled not being able to testify when they hear something they didn’t realize was an issue while attending a hearing, or maybe had a problem signing up. If there are technical issues, like someone did sign up, but wasn’t called for some reason, or there are site issues not allowing testimony sign up right up until the start of the hearing, then that needs to be addressed.

I suggest the following compromises. First, please amend the resolution to require that at the end of signed up testimony, it is asked if anyone signed up who wasn’t called, and if someone claims such, then testimony is allowed. Second, please continue to allow testimony without being signed up, when the legislation is the type that has untimed presentations before testimony. When there is a petitioner, attorney or other group representative, or even DPZ, presenting an untimed case in support of the legislation, then the public is hearing new information at the hearing, and it will feel far more unbalanced if so much untimed consideration is allowed in support, but the community, in support or opposed, are so limited. Thus, if there is a technical staff report, then the change should not apply.

We know, we know, that the Council reads all the testimony it receives, but sometimes testimony should be heard publicly.

Thank you for considering these details.



**HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL  
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION  
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION**

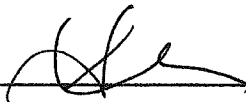
I, Lisa Markovitz, have been duly authorized by  
*(name of individual)*

the People's Voice to deliver testimony to the  
*(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)*

County Council regarding ~~CR100~~ CR100 to express the organization's  
*(bill or resolution number)*

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.  
*(Please circle one.)*

Printed Name: Lisa M Markovitz

Signature: 

Date: 6/17/19

Organization: the People's Voice

Organization Address: 3205 Corporate Ct 21042

Number of Members: 2844

Name of Chair/President: Lisa Markovitz

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