

Testimony of Wei Guo in seeking appointment to the Howard County Commission on Aging

October 21, 2019

Good afternoon Council Chair Rigby and members of the Howard County Council,

I am Wei Guo, and I am providing this testimony in support of my appointment to the Howard County Commission on Aging. I would like to begin by thanking Howard County Executive Calvin Ball for nominating me for this Commission. The Commission does a lot of important work in providing a voice to our growing older population, and I hope to be able to make valuable contributions to its efforts as a new member.

I moved to Howard County in 1997, and over the years, I been active in the county's Chinese community. Since founding the Howard County Chinese School (HCCS) in 1998, I have been served the school as a teacher, senior member of the Executive Committee, principal, and member of Board of Directors.

I am the current chair of the HCCS Board of Directors. Since my tenure as chair began in July 2015, I have been remained committed to serving the Chinese community and the broader Asian community throughout the county, and I've worked with colleagues to expand HCCS' extraordinary Chinese language and cultural programs for students, regardless of their racial or ethnical backgrounds.

My efforts have extended beyond only teaching the Chinese language and management responsibilities at HCCS, but also included coordinating programming and services with other communities. I have diligently collaborated with the Korean community in Howard County to organize several Asian and Pacific American Heritage Month events. In addition, I strove to collaborate with the Asian American Doctors Association to serve low-income people and families in Howard County's Chinese community. I also led efforts to have HCCS representatives attend traditional holidays events with older adults at our county senior centers.

During the years that I've been involved with the school and in the community, I have observed that there has been a growing population of people age 55 years or over in Howard County. As a result, their needs for medical care, transportation, cultural programs, and social services are increasing. I am looking forward to the opportunity to help our senior community live healthier, happier lives and age gracefully as a new member of the Commission on Aging.

My past years of experience serving various communities in Howard County, along with my background and profession as an engineer, will allow me to bring a unique perspective to trying to solve the challenges facing seniors today. By serving on this Commission, I wish to bring my prior skills, knowledge, and experiences together to ensure representation for the seniors of Howard County's Asian communities, and I hope to share new ideas for programs and services to help all of our County's seniors live healthier, safer, more independent, and enjoyable lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I will be happy to answer questions.