

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2020 Legislative Session

Legislative day # 12

RESOLUTION NO. 142- 2020

Introduced by: Opel Jones and Christiana Rigby

A **RESOLUTION** creating a Racial Equity Task Force to study racial inequities and disparities in Howard County and recommend legislative actions to close racial disparities in our community.

Introduced and read first time on September 8, 2020.

By order: Diane Schwartz Jones
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

Read for a second time and a public hearing held on September 21, 2020.

By order: Diane Schwartz Jones
Diane Schwartz Jones, 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This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted , Adopted with amendments , Failed , Withdrawn by the County Council on October 5, 2020.

Certified by Diane Schwartz Jones
Diane Schwartz Jones, 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.

1 **WHEREAS**, systemic injustices have contributed to the tragic and avoidable deaths of
2 Americans, specifically unarmed Americans, sparking nationwide protest and civil unrest,
3 forcing a conscious conversation throughout our community about racial equity and unconscious
4 bias; and

5

6 **WHEREAS**, our beloved nation has struggled with our history of enslaving human
7 beings, to legalized “Jim Crow” laws, and the present day judicial, legal and social inequalities
8 which prevent people of color from truly achieving “equal protection under the law”; and

9

10 **WHEREAS**, with the assistance of James Rouse in the 1960s, the planned community of
11 Columbia sought to balance economic, racial, and environmental interests in Howard County;
12 and

13

14 **WHEREAS**, even though Howard County is often viewed as a community that has
15 become a beacon of diversity, acceptance, and inclusion, systemic inequities still exist that lead
16 to disparate outcomes for residents; and

17

18 **WHEREAS**, Howard County is a diverse and multicultural society, and the County
19 should seek to acknowledge, analyze, and provide solutions to address and eliminate disparate
20 outcomes experienced by county residents; and

21

22 **WHEREAS**, the Howard County Council seeks to engage the community in an open
23 dialogue to improve racial and cultural understanding and relations, acknowledge unconscious
24 biases, and enhance the quality of life for every person in our community; and

25

26 **WHEREAS**, Section 902 of the Howard County Charter authorizes the creation of
27 temporary advisory boards of citizens to study policies and issues and to make
28 recommendations; and

1 **WHEREAS**, the County Council seeks to establish a Racial Equity Task Force to
2 develop community-led recommendations that seek to enhance Howard County as a community
3 that respects racial equity, and justice for all citizens, including people historically marginalized
4 and disenfranchised.

5
6 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the County Council of Howard County,
7 Maryland, this 5th day of October 2020 that there is a Racial Equity Task Force
8 (“Task Force”);

9
10 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Task Force shall recommend legislative
11 actions to the Howard County Council to remedy racial disparities and inequities in our
12 community by:

- 13 1. reviewing indicators of disparate outcomes, findings of applicable studies, best practices,
14 and local data to ascertain pertinent information on issues related to racial equity and
15 identifying metrics for measuring progress in improving racial equity;
- 16 2. identifying new County policies and changes to County ordinances and policies that
17 could improve racial equity;
- 18 3. recommending legislation to the County Council that can be passed that will improve
19 racial equity; and
- 20 4. recommending actions that other Howard County entities, that receive County funds, can
21 take that will improve racial equity outcomes.

22
23 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Task Force consists of the members
24 listed below and shall be organized into the subgroups listed below, which shall meet at least
25 monthly to accomplish its respective tasks. Upon majority approval of a subgroup’s
26 membership, the membership of any subgroup may be expanded to accomplish its tasks.

27 **Personal and Public Safety Subgroup Membership:**

- 28 1. Allison Sayers, Chairperson
- 29 2. Zainab Chaudry
- 30 3. Zikora Akanegbu

- 1 4. Maya Carey
- 2 5. Augustin Bibum
- 3 6. Eduardo R. Ribeiro
- 4 7. Jonathan Branch
- 5 8. Jumel Howard
- 6 9. Rahel Petros
- 7 10. Office of Sheriff (ex-officio)
- 8 11. Office of States Attorney (ex-officio)
- 9

10 **Land-Use and Housing Policy Subgroup Membership:**

- 11 1. Jessica Coates, Chairperson
- 12 2. Isabella Battish
- 13 3. Taneeka Richardson
- 14 4. Vonda Orders
- 15 5. Ian Kennedy
- 16 6. Suzanne Haley
- 17 7. Herbert James Smith, Jr.
- 18 8. Peter Engel, Ex-Officio
- 19 9. Jonathan Edelson
- 20 ~~10. Council Appointee~~ 10. Phil Engelke

21 **Economic and Workforce Development Subgroup Membership:**

- 22 1. Candace Dodson-Reed, Chairperson
- 23 2. Jonathan Studdard
- 24 3. Pamela Pina
- 25 4. Ayesha Holmes
- 26 ~~5. Hector Garcia~~
- 27 ~~6. 5. Leonardo McClarty~~
- 28 ~~7. 6. Darin Atwater~~
- 29 ~~8. 7. Aaron Johnson~~

- 1 ~~9.~~ 8. Young Ran Smith
- 2 ~~10.~~ 9. Roger Barnes
- 3 ~~11.~~ 10. Minah Woo
- 4 ~~12.~~ 11. Nathaniel Alston

5

6 **Public Health and Environmental Policy Subgroup Membership:**

- 7 ~~1.~~ Chiara D'Amore, Chairperson ~~1.~~ Yvonne Commodore-Mensah, Chairperson
- 8 2. Myiesha Padder
- 9 3. Nia Leak
- 10 4. Paula Goodwin
- 11 5. Jean Silver-Isenstadt
- 12 6. Yvette Oquendo
- 13 ~~7.~~ Tiquoria Jackson ~~7.~~ TiQuoria Jackson
- 14 ~~8.~~ Yvonne Commodore-Mensah ~~8.~~ Chiara D'Amore
- 15 9. Delora Sanchez Ifekauche
- 16 10. Michael Allen
- 17 ~~11.~~ Council Appointee ~~11.~~ Buffy Illum

18

19 **Education Subgroup Membership:**

- 20 1. Karen Randall, Chairperson
- 21 2. Grace Ko
- 22 3. Mavis Ellis
- 23 4. Sabina Taj
- 24 5. Patricia Silva
- 25 6. Natalie Pretzello
- 26 7. Bitu Dayhoff
- 27 ~~8.~~ Jackie McCoy ~~8.~~ Jacquelin McCoy
- 28 9. Meina Liu
- 29 10. Erika Strauss Chavarria
- 30 ~~11.~~ Council Appointee ~~11.~~ Ying Matties

1 **Legislative Process Subgroup Membership:**

- 2 1. Rashida George, Chairperson
- 3 2. Kathryn Valentine
- 4 3. David Koralov
- 5 4. Lucas de Melo
- 6 5. Bruce Nelson
- 7 6. Allyson Owens
- 8 7. Dana Davenport
- 9 8. Beth Hufnagel
- 10 9. Laura Mettle

11
12 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Task Force shall hold such meetings and
13 hearings as necessary, as long it holds at least two public hearings, virtually as necessary.

14
15 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that there shall be a final report presented to the
16 County Council. The final report will be a compilation of subject matter reports prepared and
17 approved only by each respective subgroup. Each individual subgroup portion shall be approved
18 by the membership of the subgroup only. The subgroup recommendations shall be prioritized by
19 the subgroup by effectiveness in improving racial equity and the extent of improvement in racial
20 equity and organized by short-term (0 to 2 years) and long-term (2 or more years) solutions.

21
22 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Task Force shall meet the following
23 completion milestones:

- 24 1. An interim status update shall be delivered to the County Council at its March 2021
25 Monthly meeting;
- 26 2. Preliminary findings and recommendations shall be presented to the County Auditor on
27 or before July 1, 2021; and
- 28 3. Final recommendations shall be presented to the County Council on or before August 2,
29 2021.

1 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Solicitor, the Council Administrator,
2 and County Auditor shall assist the Task Force or subgroups, thereof.

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4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that County Departments, other public entities, and
5 recipients of County funding are requested to cooperate fully with the Task Force or subgroups,
6 thereof.

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8 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Council shall work with the Horizon
9 Foundation to jointly fund a facilitator to support the work of the Task Force or subgroups,
10 thereof. The Council's share of the joint funding for facilitator services shall not exceed
11 \$25,000.

12
13 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Task Force shall terminate on October 31,
14 2021.