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**From:** Brian Scott Bailey <baileybrianscott@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 16, 2024 4:38 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Cc:** LGBTQIA  
**Subject:** Submission of Testimony for CB52-2024  
**Attachments:** Written Testimony CB52-2024.pdf

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September 16, 2024

Dear Chairperson Jung, Vice Chairperson Walsh, and Members of the Howard County Council,

I am submitting my written testimony in support of CB52-2024, which proposes amendments to the membership of the Howard County LGBTQIA+ Commission.

As the Chair of the Commission, I believe these changes will significantly enhance the diversity and inclusivity of our group, allowing us to better serve the LGBTQIA+ community in Howard County.

Please find my testimony attached to this email for your review and consideration. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important matter. I am available to discuss my testimony further if needed.

Additionally, the chairperson of the Commission's Ad Hoc Public Policy Committee, Chris Hefty (they/them), will be testifying in person tonight on this same bill on behalf of the Commission.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Brian S. Bailey (he/him/his)  
Chair, Howard County LGBTQIA+ Commission  
c/o Office of Human Rights & Equity  
9820 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 237  
Columbia, MD 21046-3396  
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# LGBTQIA+ COMMISSION

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Howard County Government, Calvin Ball County Executive  
Brandee Ganz, Chief Administrative Officer  
Yolanda F. Sonnier, Office of Human Rights & Equity Administrator

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LGBTQIA@howardcountymd.gov

September 4, 2024

Howard County Council  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Chairperson Jung, Vice Chairperson Walsh, and Members of the Howard County Council:

I am writing in my role as Chair of the Howard County LGBTQIA+ Commission to express my strong support, and that of the Commission, for CB52-2024, which proposes amendments to the membership of the LGBTQIA+ Commission. As a group of individuals deeply invested in the well-being and representation of our LGBTQIA+ community, we believe these changes are both necessary and beneficial.

The county code, as set by CB48-2022, restricts the Commission's membership to Howard County residents only. It also mandates the inclusion of "at least one student who resides in Howard County and attends a college or university," serving a term from July 1 through June 30. While this structure has served its purpose, the proposed code modification to allow up to two seats for individuals who work or study in Howard County but do not reside here will significantly enhance the diversity of perspectives represented on the Commission.

Many students pursuing higher education do not reside in the same county as their institution, and numerous civically engaged individuals work in Howard County and have a vested interest here without residing here. These individuals often possess specialized interests, knowledge, lived experiences, or professional and academic backgrounds aligned with the LGBTQIA+ community. Allowing them to serve on the Commission will ensure a broader range of voices and experiences are heard, enriching the Commission's work and the support it provides to our community.

This adjustment aligns with the goal of making the Commission more inclusive and representative of the diverse community it serves. By expanding the eligibility criteria, we can bring in fresh perspectives that will help address the unique challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ individuals in our county and beyond.

The Commission extends its sincere gratitude to County Executive Ball for introducing this legislation in response to our suggestion. On behalf of my colleagues, I strongly urge you to support CB52-2024. By doing so, you will affirm Howard County's commitment to inclusivity, representation, and the ongoing enhancement of services and support for all members of our LGBTQIA+ community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brian S. Bailey, Chairperson  
Howard County LGBTQIA+ Commission