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**From:** Dennis Fike <dennisjbs25@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2024 9:37 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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Howard County Council,

I was at the meeting tonight listening to the testimony about the IG office.

It was mentioned or suggested that the state IG office might be the appropriate place for oversight for the school system. One citizen mentioned where the funds from the county goes to another agency should be the test if something should be reviewed (paraphrasing) but to me this seems appropriate.

It seems like from a practical matter the farther you go away from the source the less likely citizens of the county would report waste, fraud and abuse. Also, over 50% of the budget goes to the school system in the county. The school system has one auditor and they can not possibly be looking at all of the issues for a \$1B organization.

If the State IG office is so effective, why were the issues mentioned at the school board hearing on August 22 at approximately six minutes into the process never caught by the IG office? I would suspect that most of the issues will fall into waste and abuse and not fraud to make the system more cost efficient. The issues go more to policies, procedures and practices in place that makes the dollars spent not as efficient as it could be. The result of the decisions made at the operational level is where dollars are not being used effectively.

It is my hope that you will be able to somehow include the school system so that the IG office of Howard County can review the school system issues.

Best Regards,  
Dennis Fike  
410-707-5274

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**From:** LISA MARKOVITZ <lmarkovitz@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 22, 2024 9:48 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Support and thank you for CB61  
**Attachments:** cb6124.docx

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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Lisa Markovitz, MSF

Lisa Markovitz  
President, The People's Voice  
CB 61 Support

Thank you to all the Council Members who unanimously passed legislation to create Question A on the ballot, which received quite a mandate of FOR votes at almost 85%! Much congratulations there. Now onward to the implementation phase. We clearly need to run this office as independently as possible. It would be nice for the IG to have subpoena power, and access to conduct necessary investigations.

It makes sense on the side of independence to have an Advisory Board hire and oversee the IG. It is imperative to work out the details of the Advisory Board members, what powers it has versus another body such as the Executive or the Council. We must focus on the best way to provide adequate funding, procedures and independent operation while also having the immediate ability of oversight to intervene and stop anything inappropriate that could happen.

Having longer terms, to go past elected office terms makes sense, for continuity and unconstrained operation. Thank you to all for the hard work on implementing this best practice for our county governance. It is heartening and appreciated seeing the Council work together to provide best practices of this type for our local government.

THANK YOU!

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**From:** Cat Carter <carterclan2001@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 25, 2024 3:55 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** CB61-2024 CE ammendment

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Dear Howard County Council,

As a resident of Howard County, I am asking that you keep the current legislative language of allowing the County Council to pick the most qualified seven candidates and ensure this important board remains independent and free from interference.

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL CITIZEN BOARD SHALL BE COMPRISED OF SEVEN MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL BY COUNCIL RESOLUTION FROM A SELECTION OF NAMES PUT FORTH BY EACH COUNCILMEMBER AND THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

<https://apps.howardcountymd.gov/olis/api/Documents/LegislationDocument?documentId=37109>

I am asking that you REJECT the amendment proposed by the County Executive to allow a Howard County Executive to get 2 appointments to the 7 person IG Citizen Board.

Cat Carter  
Woodbine, 21797

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**From:** Bryna Dash <bgkaplan@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 26, 2024 7:53 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** IG Vote

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

As a resident of Howard County, I am asking that you keep the current legislative language of allowing the County Council to pick the most qualified seven candidates and ensure this important board remains independent and nonpartisan.

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL CITIZEN BOARD SHALL BE COMPRISED OF SEVEN MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL BY COUNCIL RESOLUTION FROM A SELECTION OF NAMES PUT FORTH BY EACH COUNCILMEMBER AND THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fapps.howardcountymd.gov%2Folis%2Fapi%2FDocuments%2FLegislationDocument%3FdocumentId%3D37109&data=05%7C02%7Cianderson%40howardcountymd.gov%7Ce28b63bc2b3649763cd608dd0e7df1f4%7C0538130803664bb7a95b95304bd11a58%7C1%7C0%7C638682656321233326%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIlwLjAuMDAwMCIslAIiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoiTWFpbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=hEdnZGc39G3xLoOthRsflxuMkrCtebf3FwQlunQAvVc%3D&reserved=0>

I am asking that you REJECT the amendment proposed by the County Executive to allow a Howard County Executive to get 2 appointments to the 7 person IG Citizen.

Thank you.  
Bryna Dash  
Fulton, MD

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**From:** STUART KOHN <stukohn@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 29, 2024 9:31 AM  
**To:** via Howard-Citizen; CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Inspector General Bill Regarding Policy, Process and Rules to be Voted on this Monday

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

FYI,

Good Morning and Happy Day after Thanksgiving.

Today, as you know is declared “Black Friday.” This coming Monday, December 2 will hopefully be declared “Good Monday” by the County Council when they are scheduled to vote on CB61-2024 regarding the policy, process and rules of the Office of Inspector General. Hopefully the Bill will receive unanimous Approval by ALL Council Members.

Currently there are 13 Amendments which have been filed by the Council and Administration. See <https://apps.howardcountymd.gov/olis/PrintSummary?legislationId=13630&legislationNumber=CB61-2024>.

The HCCA is very pleased with the introduction of Amendment 3 which was suggested during testimony by us.

Some of the suggested Amendments introduced by the Administration triggered concerns from Council members at their recent Work Session reference - [https://howardcounty.granicus.com/player/clip/5998?view\\_id=6&redirect=true](https://howardcounty.granicus.com/player/clip/5998?view_id=6&redirect=true) and scroll down to CB61-2024 to watch.

Hopefully the end result will be an Approved Bill which will have a lasting impact for a future we can ALL be thankful. We reiterate our Appreciation to Council Members for working together to form a Bill which should undoubtedly provide a legacy.

Stu Kohn  
HCCA President

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** STUART KOHN <stukohn@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 30, 2024 11:35 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin  
**Subject:** Suggested Suggestions and Questions Regarding Amendments to CB61-2024

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members and County Executive Ball,

After reviewing the proposed Amendments for CB61-2024 the following are recommendations for consideration:

**Overall** - whenever “days” are stated in the Bill add the word “business” in front of the word “days.” For example on Page 9, lines 9 - 10.

Refer to Page 16, line 24 strike “may” to “shall”

**Amendment 1 - Page 17, after line 20** (5) “The Advisory Board shall review the Office of Inspector General policies and procedures.” Suggestion - state immediately after how often this action should be done?

**Amendment 2** - We don’t understand the rationale and justification for the Council to not be involved in the appointments and removal of Advisory Board Members. We ask because the Bill is designed so the Council, Advisory Board and the Public is involved in the selection process. We would like to know the rationale for proposing this Amendment?

**Amendment 9** - What is the rationale and justification for the County Executive to appoint 2 appointees to the Advisory Board vice the Council having selecting 1 Member? This is simply not right! We expect a fair and impartial system as we are sure the 145,061 or 86% of the voters who Approved the establishment of the Office of the Inspector General did not want any possibilities of a potential conflict of interest.

**Amendment 13** - rather than the Administration’s suggested wording for Page 17 after line 29 we propose the following:

Refer to Page 17, line 26 - after “Council,” add “and County Executive” after “Council” and “or County Executive”

Refer to Page 17, line 27 - strike “the Council with”

There was a posting on our Howard County Citizens Association Listserve referencing an Op-Ed in “Maryland Matters” which is very complimentary of Howard County’s establishment of the Office of Inspector General - <https://marylandmatters.org/2024/11/29/a-tale-of-two-counties-a-tale-of-two-cultures/>

It is very telling which ALL should be Proud. We appreciate your consideration regarding the aforementioned suggestions and concerns.

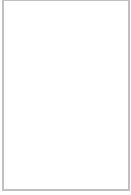
Thank You,

Stu Kohn  
HCCA President

Sent from my iPhone

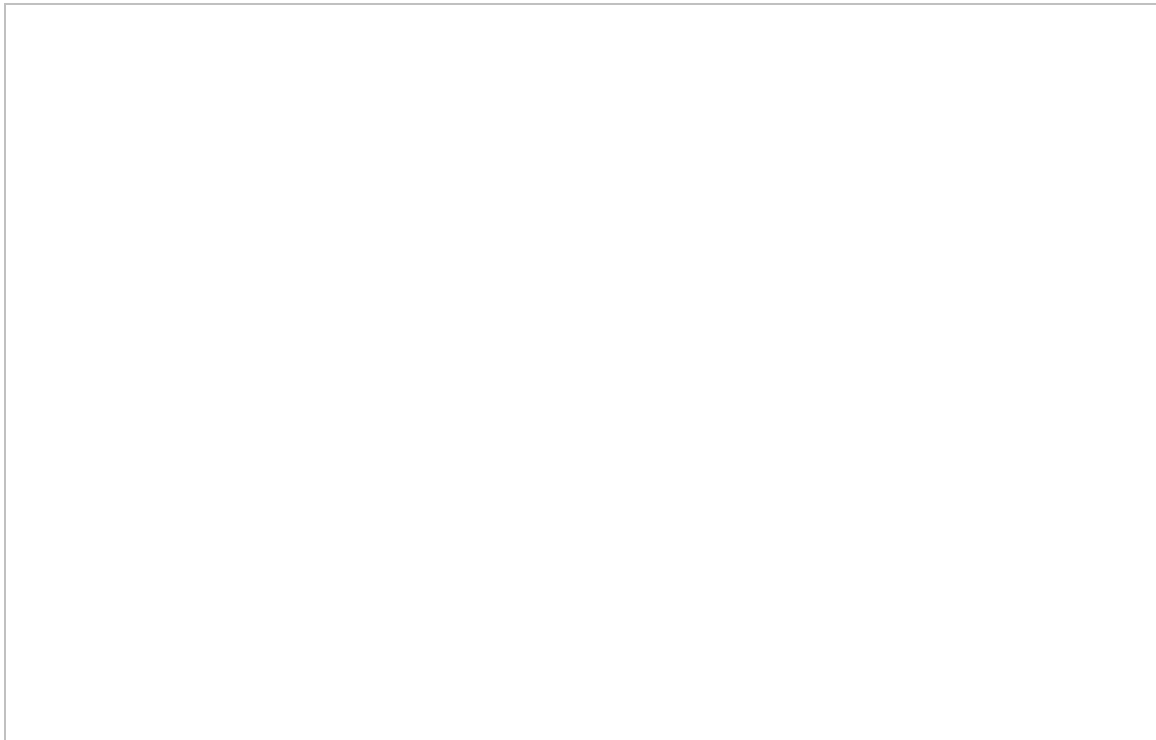


# A tale of two counties, a tale of two cultures



[David Plymyer](#)

November 29, 2024 6:30 am



The George Howard Building, headquarters of Howard County government, in Ellicott City. Howard County government photo.

Role models and good examples can be hard to find in state and local government. That is why it is worthwhile to highlight the constructive manner in which elected officials in Howard County worked with county residents to craft a charter amendment establishing a new, independent Office of Inspector General (OIG). Howard County voters [overwhelmingly approved the amendment](#) on Nov. 5.

On the same day, Baltimore County voters approved a charter amendment ensuring the independence and efficacy of the existing Baltimore County OIG. The histories of the charter amendments, however, couldn't be more dissimilar and provide an opportunity for a comparison of how the political cultures in the two neighboring counties affect governance.

That comparison shows why what happened in Howard County is an example for Baltimore County to emulate. It's a lesson on how progress is made toward good government when elected officials are not consumed by self-interest and are willing to focus on the best interests of their constituents – a lesson that elected officials and residents in Baltimore County should take to heart.

The momentum toward an independent OIG in Howard County began with a bill proposed by Councilwoman Liz Walsh in July. The public and other members of the County Council quickly became engaged in discussions about the proposal, and all five members of the Council embraced the idea of establishing the OIG by [charter amendment rather than by ordinance](#) to guarantee its independence from both branches of county government.

County Executive Calvin Ball commended council members for “[reaching bipartisan consensus](#)” on the proposal. Now that the amendment has been approved, legislation already drafted can be introduced to flesh out the details of what in my opinion is a model governing structure for an OIG.



The Baltimore County Council chambers. Baltimore County [Flickr](#) photo.

In contrast, the Baltimore County OIG was conceived in partisan politics and almost died in infancy because it threatened the status quo in the county. [Al Redmer announced](#) early in his campaign for the Republican nomination for county executive in 2018 that he would establish an OIG to end the “culture of corruption and cronyism” in county government. On the Democratic side, Johnny Olszewski was running against Jim Brochin, who made ending the “[pay to play system](#)” with builders and developers his primary theme.

Not to be outdone, Olszewski promised that he also would establish an OIG. He followed through on that promise when elected. The first time an investigation by the OIG hit too close to home, however, the [office came under fire](#) from Council members. Then Olszewski tried to strip it of its independence and powers.

After an unsuccessful attempt by his chief of staff [to bully IG Kelly Madigan](#) into allowing him to control the OIG's access to records, Olszewski had a bill drafted that would have eviscerated the OIG. Madigan told the media she [was not consulted about the bill](#) and opposed it. Olszewski was unprepared for the intensity of the public backlash against his proposal that followed.

Chastened, he didn't introduce the bill and instead [formed a commission](#) to make recommendations on the structure of the OIG. The charter amendment passed earlier this month was the eventual result.

Why the differences in the courses of events in the neighboring counties, and what is the takeaway for the residents of Baltimore County? In my opinion, the differences lie in what I'll refer to as the Index of Soft Corruption. The more soft corruption there is, the higher the index and the greater the resistance by elected officials to good government measures.

The term “[soft corruption](#)” refers to actions that, while not illegal, are intended to gain political power or personal benefit rather than to advance the public interest. It is influence-peddling every bit as harmful as the cash-in-white-envelopes criminal corruption for which [Baltimore County once was known](#).

For the Baltimore County Council, soft corruption is inherent in the unusual amount of power individual council members wield over land use decisions within their own districts through the much-maligned practice of “[councilmanic courtesy](#)” and in deals brokered with landowners that critics decry as legislative “[spot zonings](#).” For Olszewski, who will move on to Congress in January, it manifested itself in a series of “[special arrangements](#)” with cronies and political allies.

The Index of Soft Corruption in Baltimore County is exceptionally high. There’s no easy fix, but things will change only when voters keep in mind that the character of elected officials counts and insist that candidates for county executive and county council commit themselves to genuine reform.

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**From:** Tammy Maben <mabentammy@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 2, 2024 4:19 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Attorney General

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good Afternoon,

I'm writing to request that no amendments be added to the bipartisan Inspector General legislative language the council created to ensure an independent Inspector General. Please vote no on the amendments from County Executive Calvin Ball. I am a strong supporter of Dr. Ball and I'm very surprised he is doing this. County government should have nothing to hide. Thank you in advance.

Tammy Maben

Matt Maben

Nicole Ely

Victoria Ely

5914 Hunt Club Road

Elkridge 21075

443-834-0373

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**From:** STUART KOHN <stukohn@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 3, 2024 11:35 AM  
**To:** via Howard-Citizen; CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Inspector General (IG) Bill Unanimously Passes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

FYI,

The IG Bill, CB61-2024 was unanimously passed last evening by the County Council. The Bill was to establish the Office of the Inspector General; specifying the selection, term, qualifications, and responsibilities of the Inspector General; providing for the referral of certain matters; specifying the funding and powers of the Office of the Inspector General; requiring certain reports; establishing the Inspector General

Citizen Board; specifying the composition, term, and responsibilities of the Inspector General Citizen Board; amending the whistleblower protection statute; and generally relating to the Office of the Inspector General. To view go to

[https://howardcounty.granicus.com/player/clip/6006?view\\_id=6&redirect=true](https://howardcounty.granicus.com/player/clip/6006?view_id=6&redirect=true) and scroll down to CB61-2024.

There were a number of Amendments and Amendments to Amendments which was introduced see <https://apps.howardcountymd.gov/olis/PrintSummary?legislationId=13630&legislationNumber=CB61-2024> and the voting result. Amendment 3 was initiated because of HCCA's testimony which was very much appreciated.

This piece of legislation will be long lasting and the County Council deserves a lot of credit for working together to construct the Office of Inspector General. The 145,061 Howard County residents voting in Favor should be grateful for the effort of their representatives.

Thank You Council Members.

Stu Kohn  
HCCA President

Sent from my iPhone