

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORT
2026 Legislative Session

Reference No.: CR-024-2026

Draft No.: 2

Committee: PSHHS

Date: May 14, 2026

Action: FAV (A)

REPORT: Committee Vote: Favorable, 4-0 (Council Members Fisher, Blegay, Oriadha, and Hunter)

The Public Safety, Health, and Human Services Committee convened on May 14, 2026, to consider CR-024-2026 a resolution concerning the Accessibility Taskforce for the Blind and Deaf for the purpose of identifying accessibility barriers and developing recommendations to improve access for blind, low-vision, deaf, and hard-of-hearing residents in Prince George's County; consideration of related accessibility issues affecting other residents with disabilities; the membership of the accessibility task force; and generally relating to improving accessibility for residents who are deaf or blind.

The taskforce will be comprised of 13 members, beginning within 90 days of this resolution's adoption and will present preliminary findings and recommendations to the County Council no later than October 6, 2026, with the Taskforce's final recommendations due by December 8, 2026.

The task will have the following members:

- (a) One representative from the Department of Family Services;
- (b) One representative from the Office of Information Technology;
- (c) One representative from the Department of Social Services;

- (d) One representative from the Department of Public Works and Transportation;
- (e) One representative from Prince George's County Public Schools;
- (f) One representative from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority;
- (g) One representative from Gallaudet University;
- (h) One representative from Connections Beyond Sight;
- (i) One representative from Maryland/DC Hands & Voices;
- (j) One representative from the Prince George's County Memorial Library System;
- (k) The County Council Chair shall appoint six (6) members which shall include:
 - (1) One resident of Prince George's County who is blind;
 - (2) One resident of Prince George's County who is low-vision;
 - (3) One resident of Prince George's County who is deaf;
 - (4) One resident of Prince George's County who is hard-of-hearing;
 - (5) One resident of Prince George's County who is deaf blind; and
 - (6) One member of the County Council.
- (l) The Chair of the Prince George's County Commission for Individuals with Disability Chair, or their designee;
- (m) One representative of the Coalition of Blind Residents for Accessibility, Inc
- (n) The membership should be composed of fifty percent (50%) with individuals with disabilities.

Mr. David Noto provided statistical information that described the scope of the challenge in Prince George's County. According to Prince George's County Healthzone, approximately 1.9% of the County's population has a vision difficulty, which is on par with the state, and lower than the national average, while the County's population with hearing difficulty is lower than both the state and national average. Additionally, approximately 1.9% of the County's population has hearing difficulties, which is lower than both the state and national average. A new facility has opened in Largo that will serve both the blind and deaf.

CR-024-2026 is not likely to have any direct fiscal impact beyond the entitled reimbursements of expenses for workgroup members under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided by the County Budget.

The Office of Law, represented by Ms. Dinora Hernandez, stated that CR-24-2026 was in proper legislative form with no legal impediments to its enactment.

The Office of the County Executive, represented by Ms. Angela Angel, stated that the Administration is in support of the legislation.

Council Member Blegay thanked Ms. Janice Samuels, who highlighted some of the challenges facing this community, and explained a comprehensive approach is necessary to understand the full scope of the needs. The goal is to provide a system that accommodates everyone. She also expressed that, as written, the resolution only lists one resident who is blind or has low vision and requested that the committee increase this number. The spectrum of vision loss is wide. One individual cannot adequately do this work, and each type of disability should be represented.

Speakers who addressed the committee include Ms. Carolyn Scales, who inquired about the adequacy of accessible county services and requested that the county ensure access to websites and improve in-person assistance with trained staff who know how to assist individuals with disabilities.

Ms. Lakeisha Butler requested that the number of individuals be increased to more adequate representation on the task force.

Mr. Ramon Gonzalez reviewed the amendments that include a change to the title of the legislation and others throughout the resolution that make the membership more inclusive and representative of all disabilities.

After further discussion, a motion was made by Committee Vice-Chair Blegay, and seconded by Council Chair Oriadha, and the Public Safety, Health, and Human Services Committee voted favorably, 4-0 draft 2 as amended.