

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
2022 Legislative Session

Resolution No. CR-068-2022
Proposed by Council Member Taveras
Introduced by Council Members Taveras, Glaros, Ivey, Franklin, and Medlock
Co-Sponsors _____
Date of Introduction May 31, 2022

RESOLUTION

1 A RESOLUTION concerning

2 Equity Policy Framework within County Government

3 For the purpose of declaring the intent of Prince George's County to develop an equity policy
4 framework to promote racial equity and social justice throughout County Government.

5 WHEREAS, Prince George's County supports its community with public services that
6 embrace its residents and the future. Our strong public services include award-winning public
7 schools, community college, and park systems, vibrant performing and fine arts, and essential
8 safety net programs in housing, public health, and other social services; and

9 WHEREAS, Prince George's County is a diverse and welcoming community. The 2020
10 data census showed that Maryland had the largest diversity index gain among the entire United
11 States. Our diversity is our strength and is key to our continued success as a community; and

12 WHEREAS, while we embrace our diversity, disparities exist among ethnicity, income,
13 disability, gender, sexual identity, and other factors that impede our future prosperity. These
14 same disparities are imposed in education, employment, health, and housing as a result of
15 institutional and individual biases that undermine opportunities for vital members of our
16 community; and

17 WHEREAS, COVID-19 exacerbated the disparities that existed by racial and linguistic
18 diversity in that those were over represented by population as contracting COVID-19 virus and
19 were amongst the last to be vaccinated in significant numbers such as Mary's Center who
20 received federal vaccines for Maryland in early March, 2021 and vaccines from Washington DC
21 in late December, 2020 and;

22 WHEREAS, CASA de Maryland (CASA) saw a need and began to advocate to local and

1 state health authorities to host vaccine clinics before vaccine clinics were even created knowing
2 the grave challenges our community had already faced in the earlier phases of the pandemic; and

3 WHEREAS, many COVID-19 responses were not established utilizing an equity lens to
4 ensure equal access for all. CASA was able to host vaccine clinics starting at the end of
5 February 2021 by pooling multiple resources, including Prince George's Health Department and
6 Adventist Hospital; and

7 WHEREAS, the availability of vaccines were sporadic at the beginning until CASA was
8 able to connect to the Maryland Vaccine Equity Task Force and set up regular allotments of
9 vaccines. The CASA vaccine clinic initiative was an unfunded initiative for several months
10 knowing the importance of bringing vaccine clinics directly to the community; and

11 WHEREAS, in May, CASA entered into an MOU with the Maryland Department of Health
12 to fund this program to increase vaccine equity and address the high levels of COVID-19
13 infections in the 20783 zip code, the highest in the state at the time; and

14 WHEREAS, eliminating disparities by promoting equity, the fair treatment of individuals
15 and diverse groups, is an economic imperative. For just one example, the Urban Institute's Racial
16 Inequities in Prince George's County, 2011-15, report shows that in an equitable Prince George's
17 County, 38,100 more Hispanic adults and 20,200 more black adults would have some
18 postsecondary education; and

19 WHEREAS, the Prince George's County Government is responsible for all its residents and
20 can address both unconscious and overt bias, to advance equity, and to address disparities based
21 on race, ethnicity, national origin, English language proficiency, gender, gender identity, sexual
22 orientation, religion, age, differing abilities, and income; and

23 WHEREAS, part of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a growing
24 number of jurisdictions are undertaking the work needed to operationalize equity and integrate it
25 into the decision-making process. These include the use of an "equity lens" to determine who
26 benefits from public policies, regulations and practices and the development of equity tools and
27 plans to inform local decision-making; and

28 WHEREAS, it is time for Prince George's County to move beyond disjointed efforts to
29 reduce disparities and commit to advancing the actions necessary to intentionally develop strong
30 equity policies and create a strategic plan.

31 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of Prince George's

1 County, Maryland, that the County Council for Prince George’s County, Maryland, is committed
2 to examining the data needed to develop an equity policy framework that would require the
3 County to question how budget and policy decisions impact equity.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a successful effort must be a partnership among the
5 County Executive, County Council, County Government, county agencies, institutions, and our
6 community. The County Government must challenge itself to bring new and different partners to
7 the table. Partnering with other jurisdictions as members of the Government Alliance on Race
8 and Equity (GARE) will also enhance the County's effort and commitment to fostering equity.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that equity analyses should be part of legislative branch
10 review of capital and operating budget, appropriation requests, and legislation. Program and
11 process oversight should be undertaken viewing programs and processes through an equity lens.
12 Equity targets and measures of progress must be put in place.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Budget and Policy Division of the Office of Audits
14 and Investigations shall develop a baseline report by December 23, 2023 that describes current
15 disparities in education, employment, housing, health, general employment, land use, business
16 owners and other measures of opportunity. Following the completion of the baseline report, the
17 County Executive working with the County Council should consider next steps for the County to
18 develop an equity policy framework to inform the delivery of all County services.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be expeditiously sent to
20 Senator Joanne C. Benson, Chair, Prince George’s County Senate Delegation, Delegate Nick
21 Charles, Chair, Prince George’s County House Delegation, Senator Clarence K. Lam, M.D.,
22 Chair, Maryland Legislative Asian-American and Pacific Islander Caucus, Delegate Darryl
23 Barnes, Chair, Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland, Inc., and Delegate David V. Fraser-
24 Hidalgo, Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus.

Adopted this 4th day of October, 2022.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE
GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY: _____
Calvin S. Hawkins, II
Chair

ATTEST:

Donna J. Brown
Clerk of the Council