



Angela D. Alsobrooks
County Executive

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

September 20, 2021

The Honorable Calvin S. Hawkins, II
Chairman
Prince George's County Council
County Administration Building
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

Dear Chairman Hawkins:

Enclosed for the County Council's consideration is a proposed legislation Bill to amend Division 12—Office of Human Rights ("OHR") of the Prince George's County Code. The goal of this amendment is to ensure substantial equivalency with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's ("HUD") Fair Housing Act ("FHA"). By having substantially equivalent language, Prince George's County's Office of Human Rights will be able to apply for certification as a HUD Fair Housing Assistance Program ("FHAP"), which gives the authority to receive and investigate federal housing discrimination complaints at the local agency level.

The first proposed amendment is to revise definitions to ensure similar language with the Fair Housing Act. This provides additional clarifications to terms used throughout various sections of Division 12 involving housing and residential real estate-related transactions. The next proposed amendment is to clarify investigative procedures. One of the qualifications for substantial equivalency under the FHAP is that the Agency must be very specific about the procedure to receive and process housing complaints, delegate certain authority to the Agency, and clarify the process for final administrative dispositions of housing cases. The final amendment is to add a section to Division 12 that identifies a clear process for administrative and judicial protection and enforcement for housing cases. This ensures language and procedural equivalency with the federal Fair Housing Act.

The Council's favorable consideration of this legislation is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact my office or Renée Battle-Brooks, Executive Director, Office of Human Rights (OHR), at (301) 780-8241.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Angela D. Alsobrooks".

Angela D. Alsobrooks
County Executive

Enclosures

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