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**BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL
EDUCATION, WORKFORCE AND YOUTH
COMMITTEE**

Mission Statement

The Committee on Education, Workforce and Youth (EWY) is responsible for creating opportunities for our young people, ensuring economic opportunity and prosperity for Baltimore's workforce, and supporting our most vulnerable neighbors. The committee's areas of jurisdiction include public education, labor relations, workforce development, employment, public parks, recreation, and youth affairs. Issue areas include, but are not limited to: education, including adult education, higher education, workforce development, labor, senior affairs, veterans, childcare, accessibility and disability issues, recreation and parks, and historical landmarks.

**The Honorable Robert Stokes, Sr.
Chairman**

PUBLIC HEARING

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023
10:01 AM**

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Legislative Oversight LO22-0137

Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers

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All City Council Members
Staff: Larry Greene (410-396-7215)

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BILL SYNOPSIS

Committee: Education, Workforce and Youth

Resolution: 22-0137R

Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers

Sponsor: Councilmember Ramos, et al

Introduced: September 19, 2022

Purpose:

For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Employment, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Transportation, the Department of General Services, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights and the Baltimore City Public School System to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

Effective: On the date it is enacted.

Agency Reports

Law Department	Favorable
Department of Housing & Community Development	Comments
Department of Public Works	Favorable
Department of Transportation	Favorable
Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs	Comments
Office of Equity and Civil Rights	None as of this writing
Mayor’s Office of Employment Development	Favorable
Department of Human Resources	Comments
Department of Recreation and Parks	Favorable
Department of General Services	Favorable
Baltimore City Public School System	Comments

Analysis

Current Law

Baltimore City Code – Article 1, Subtitle 1-City Council, Section 1-6

§ 1-6. Agencies to provide legislative information.

It shall be the duty of the head of every City department or bureau established by the Baltimore City Charter or by ordinance to provide all technical materials, plats, drawings, and information that are requested by any member or the President of the City Council for the purpose of introducing legislation into the Council.

(City Code, 1976/83, art. 1, §6.) (Ord. 76-080.)

Background

On Thursday, February 2, 2023, the committee held a hearing to discuss this topic with pertinent representatives.

The committee will reconvene on **October 12, 2023**

Hearing Notes Attached

Deontre Hayes

Deontre L. Hayes, Committee Staff
(410) 369-1260

Date: October 10, 2023

cc: Bill File
OCS Electronic File

¹ The Honorable Odette Ramos, Councilmember, District #14



Odette Ramos

Baltimore City Councilwoman

District 14

(410) 396 - 4814

odette.ramos@baltimorecity.gov

100 N. Holliday Street, Room 506

Baltimore MD 21202

Testimony

February 2, 2023

22-0137R – Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives - Spanish Speakers

City Council hearing to discuss hiring Spanish speaking frontline workers in City Government

Honorable Chair Stokes and Distinguished Members of the Education, Workforce, and Youth Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to hear 22-0137R – Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers. This is an important hearing to understand where the City is in ensuring that all residents are connected to our government, are able to participate in public meetings, and are able to access the services that they deserve and are paying taxes to receive.

Baltimore City has already implemented Language Line, a service used when a speaker of another language needs to communicate with one of our staff who does not know that language. They can call a number and be connected with a translator immediately. While accessing Language Line is one of the ways to ensure our community is able to access services, hiring members of our community is essential.

According to the most recent census, the Hispanic/Latino community in Baltimore City has grown almost 80% in 10 years rising from 25,960 residents to 45,927 residents, and it is widely believed this is an undercount. Our community is no longer concentrated in SE Baltimore. We are living, working, playing, and going to school across the City.

Some of our agencies have been exceptional in seeing a need in our community, and hiring accordingly. The Department of Health is one agency who hired community health workers during the pandemic and has kept them on. I have seen some improvement in additional agencies, and look forward to the testimony from those agencies, however there is still work to do, as we know from our budget hearings, that there was at that time one person in 911 dispatch that spoke Spanish.

Our community is disconnected from government for many reasons. The biggest indicator of this is that Baltimore City 311 system received 660,000 calls between January 2020 and December 2021, and only 2,000 of those calls used the Spanish language line, which is .03% of the calls. We know our community members want to connect with government and want to learn how, we have to help them feel welcome to do so.

It's not enough to say that Baltimore City is a welcoming city if the people who serve us don't look like us or can't speak our language. Our community is the fastest growing community in the city, and Spanish is the 2nd most spoken language. We want to make sure our Spanish speaking neighbors are aware of the city services they should benefit from just like any other resident of our City. We also want to be sure our

community can participate in government, just like anyone else can. It's about building trust between our city government and the community.

In preparing for this hearing, we have asked for dual translation services, and discovered that dual translation services have not been provided in most public meetings. And City Council was not even ready to provide dual translation services – until this hearing. Thanks to Hosea and the Council President's office, we have translators for the hearing. One translator is translating from English to Spanish over the phones, and one will translate from Spanish to English when it's time for public testimony. This was a lesson learned for a lot of us, and in the new fiscal year, more agencies and the Council will be prepared.

This is one of the steps in the process for being ready for our growing populations, and I look forward to the hearing.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions. I can be reached on 410-396-4814 or via email at odette.ramos@baltimorecity.gov.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Odette", written in a cursive style.

Odette Ramos
Baltimore City Councilwoman, District 14



HEARING NOTES

Resolution: 22-0137R

Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speaking

Committee: Education, Workforce, and Youth

Chaired by: Robert Stokes, Jr.

Hearing Date: Thursday, February 2, 2023

Time (Beginning): 10:00 AM

Time (Ending): 12:05 PM

Location: **Council Chambers**

Total Attendance: Approximately 70 in-person
Approximately 15 virtually

Committee Members in Attendance:

Robert Stokes, Sr. James Torrence
John Bullock Sharon Green Middleton
Phylicia Porter Zeke Cohen

Bill Synopsis in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Attendance sheet in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Agency reports read?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Video or audio-digitally recorded?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Evidence of notification to property owners?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Final vote taken at this hearing?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

- Stephanie Murdock, Department of Housing and Community Development
- Quinton Herbert, Department of Human Resources
- Marcia Collins, Department of Public Works
- Liam Davis, Department of Transportation
- Dana Moore, Office of Equity and Civil Rights

- MacKenzie Garvin, Agency Representative
- Jenny Morgan, Department of Recreation and Parks
- Berke Attila, Department of General Services
- Emily Nielson, Baltimore City Public Schools
- Lisa Allen, Baltimore City Call Center
- Catalina Lima, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
- Public Speakers (Public Testimony)
 - Rocio Masset
 - Yolanda Martinez
 - Sandy Ramos
 - Macrina Galvez
 - Yessica Marroquin
 - Lucia Islas
 - Angelo Solera
 - Joy Scalabrin
 - Julia Sarmiento
 - Mark Parker, Pastor
 - Garry Aime
 - Pat Shannon Jones
 - Susan Barrios
 - Cecilia Gonzalez
 - Ricardo
 - Gina Baez

Major Issues Discussed

1. Councilmember Ramos, primary sponsor of the Resolution gave opening remarks. She stated, "The Latino/Spanish Community has grown and wants to make sure everyone has a voice."
2. The chairman went over the agency reports with the agency representatives.
3. The representative from the Office of Equity and Civil Rights informed the attendees that her Office did not submit an agency report because she wanted to hear what everyone have to say first. A report will be submitted after the hearing.
4. The committee/councilmembers asked questions, stated concerns, and asked for clarification for some issues. Some highlights from same were:
 - Comments/Remarks/Concerns
 - The Latino community has also grown in the 5th Council District
 - The Latino community is in deed growing and supports the Resolution
 - The Health Department was recognized for its hiring initiatives within the Latino community
 - A suggestion/recommendation that city employees/staff be trained to interact with Latino community and other language speakers
 - Our city have more than just with Spanish language speakers! In order for our city to grow we must be prepared to address all language speakers living here
 - Comments regarding the importance of preparing students for independent living after finishing high school

- Other Maryland counties have programs in schools for financial literacy, we should too!
- Financial literacy is a part of being expected in the community
- In the near future will ask to hold a hearing on financial literacy in school curriculum and at that time will want to know what the BCPS is doing to address same
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
 - Requested by Committee member Porter:
 - To Baltimore City Public Schools – Provide a description and transition data on the ESOL Program for students
 - Requested by Committee member Porter:
 - To the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MIMA) – Provide formal data of the programs between MIMA and the Department of Housing
- Questions
 - Do we have immigrant attorneys in the Office of Equity? Answer: No
 - Small Non-Profits as Service Providers
 - How can we use more of the smaller non-profits for needed services?
 - Integrating High Schools
 - How can we do more to integrate the schools?
 - Importance of having the right infrastructure to support students
 - Where are you (BCPS) with these efforts?
 - Requested by a committee member:
 - To Baltimore City Public Schools – Provide a breakdown of all the ESOL teachers in the city’s school systems
 - Homeland Security Funding
 - Talk more about the funding available
 - Translator/Interpreter Services
 - Comments
 - Translator services are being provided today and will be needed in the future as well
 - Comments regarding the importance of having this service available in the future for public meetings
 - Per the representative from MIMA, “translator services can be costly; is asking agencies to assess the need for these services beforehand and to pay for same out of their own budget
 - Requested by Chairman Stokes:
 - To Mayor’s Office – Provide a list for all Latino liaisons in each agency

5. Approximately Sixteen (16) persons gave public testimony. All written testimony received was placed in the bill file.
6. Councilmember Ramos gave closing remarks.
7. Hearing called to recess.

Further Study

Was further study requested

Yes **No**

If yes, describe. See "red and yellow highlights" in Major Discussion section above.

Marguerite M. Currin

Marguerite Murray Currin, Committee Staff

Date: February 6, 2023

**cc: Bill File
OCS Electronic File**

Spanish Language Line Metrics

	FY2021					
	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020
Total # of 311 Calls Answered	61085	63009	41564	39802	39156	38022
Total # of Spanish Calls Received & Translated via LLS	209	225	142	159	172	152
Total # of Spanish Calls Received & Translated via LLS (In Minutes)	1,447	1,475	973	990	1,047	1,012
	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021
Total # of 311 Calls Answered	42749	44221	45214	43734	42752	46278
Total # of Spanish Calls Received & Translated via LLS	173	167	198	148	180	207
Total # of Spanish Calls Received & Translated via LLS (In Minutes)	1,239	1,149	1,336	1,155	1,187	1,461

	FY2022					
	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021
Total # of 311 Calls Answered	47196	47284	45985	45902	42231	42406
Total # of Spanish Calls Received & Translated via LLS	196	203	199	206	162	126
Total # of Spanish Calls Received & Translated via LLS (In Minutes)	1,432	1,509	1,921	1,546	1,117	947
	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
Total # of 311 Calls Answered	53831	43929	45349	41311	46107	48709
Total # of Spanish Calls Received & Translated via LLS	207	187	189	124	158	189
Total # of Spanish Calls Received & Translated via LLS (In Minutes)	1,594	1,383	1,476	980	1,110	1,575



February 1, 2023

City Council Bill 22-0137R - Informational Hearing - Hiring Initiatives - Spanish Speaker

Position: Support With Amendment

Dear Baltimore City Council,

As leaders of Baltimore's Asian American community, we commend this effort to improve language access. We believe that ensuring that all city residents can access services should be a high priority.

That said, residents who do not speak English in Baltimore speak a multitude of languages, not just Spanish. Promoting the hiring of Spanish-speaking employees is helpful, but language barriers for additional groups—such as Asian Americans—must also be recognized.

The Asian American community in Baltimore is often overlooked for their language needs due to structural issues, such as their diverse linguistic backgrounds and the model minority myth. Over 3,000 Baltimoreans who speak an Asian language do not speak English, with many residing in central Baltimore and many more contributing to the city's economy through businesses and work.

We encourage the creation of equitable systems to address the needs of non-English speakers in general. Even with bilingual staff, the people we work with face difficulties accessing systems not designed for all, especially impacting Asian Americans who are impacted by hate crimes and business concerns.

Baltimore City must prioritize measures that will provide equal access to city services and resources for all residents, regardless of language background.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this issue. We look forward to working with you to overcome language barriers for all residents in Baltimore.

Joe Nam Do

Asian Real Estate Professionals

Alexandria Liu

Association of Baltimore Chinese

Young Ran Chang Smith

The League of Korean Americans / Greenmount Senior Center

Legislative Oversight: LO22-
0137R

AGENCY REPORTS

See attached

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT
Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW
JAMES L. SHEA, CITY SOLICITOR
100 N. HOLLIDAY STREET
SUITE 101, CITY HALL
BALTIMORE, MD 21202

October 5, 2022

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
Attn: Executive Secretary
Room 409, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: City Council Bill 22-0137R – Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives –
Spanish Speakers

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department has reviewed City Council Bill 22-0137R for form and legal sufficiency. The bill is for the purpose of inviting representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Department of Transportation, the Department of General Services, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, and the Baltimore City Public School System to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

The City Council has an inherent power to investigate “in furtherance of its legislative function.” 4 McQuillin Mun. Corp. § 13:7. A resolution is an appropriate way for the City Council of Baltimore to conduct an informational hearing. *See, e.g., Inlet Assocs. v. Assateague House Condominium*, 313 Md. 413, 428 (1988). Therefore, the Law Department approves this resolution for form and legal sufficiency.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Hochstetler
Chief Solicitor

cc: James L. Shea, City Solicitor
Nina Themelis, Mayor’s Office of Government Relations
Elena DiPietro, Chief Solicitor, General Counsel Division
Hilary Ruley, Chief Solicitor
Ashlea Brown, Chief Solicitor
D’Ereka Bolden, Assistant Solicitor
Michelle Toth, Special Solicitor



MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Alice Kennedy, Housing Commissioner



Date: December 15, 2022

Re: City Council Resolution 22-0137R Informational Hearing - Hiring Initiatives - Spanish Speakers

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Resolution 22-0137R for the purpose of inviting representatives from the Mayor's Office of Employment Development, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Department of Transportation, the Department of General Services, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, and the Baltimore City Public School System to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

DHCD is pleased to participate in an informational hearing to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government. While we do not directly require new hires to be proficient in Spanish for all positions, we recognize the value of a workforce that is reflective of the population we seek to serve, including its Hispanic and Latino residents in order to promote municipal services that are open and accessible to all.

DHCD has assessed all internal and external forms, website content, handbooks, policies, and other content accessible to employees, recruits, constituents, visitors, and others to ensure ADA compliance and to identify those forms/information most important to individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

We also utilize the *Neighborly* platform, an online application portal, to promote several important programs in multiple languages including; Community Catalyst Grants, Homeownership Incentives, Housing Preservation Programs, Housing Upgrades to Benefit Seniors (HUBS), Tax Sale Exemption Program, Emergency Mortgage & Housing Assistance Program and AHTF – New Construction/Preservation of Existing Rental Housing.

As part of a cohort of City agencies identified to create a Language Access Guidance document pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights act of 1964, we have been working with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MIMA) on the translation of identified vital documents. DHCD has also recently hired a permanent Equity Coordinator to continue to advance this work.

Conclusion

DHCD supports increasing the number of Spanish speaking employees in public-facing roles, including an examination of relevant City hiring processes aimed at recruiting and retaining Spanish speaking employees. DHCD is supportive of finding ways to recruit Hispanic and Latino peoples into the workplace, break down language barriers and build trust in this ever-growing community.

DHCD defers to the Department of Human Resources in providing further details on best practices to attract and retain quality candidates for employment within the City of Baltimore.

The Department of Housing and Community Development respectfully **defers to DHR** on City Council Resolution 22-0137R.

AK/sm

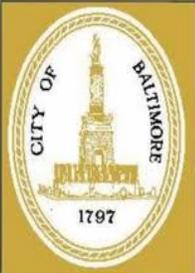
cc: Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office of Government Relations

Ms. Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary of the City Council

Brandon M. Scott, Mayor • **Alice Kennedy**, Housing Commissioner

417 East Fayette Street • Baltimore, MD 21202 • 443-984-5757 • dhcd.baltimorecity.gov



FROM	NAME & TITLE	Dr. Jason W. Mitchell, Director	CITY of BALTIMORE <i>MEMO</i>	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building		
	SUBJECT	City Council Resolution 22-0137R		

December 13, 2022

TO:

Education, Workforce and Youth Committee

I am herein reporting on City Council Resolution 22-0137R introduced by Councilwoman Ramos.

The purpose of the Resolution is to request representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Department of Transportation, the Department of General Services, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, and the Baltimore City Public School System to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

According to the 2020 Census data, there was a 77% increase recorded in Baltimore’s Hispanic/Latino population since the gathering and analyses of the 2010 Census data. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origins now comprise 7.8% of the City’s population, growing and expanding in neighborhoods in the southeast, south, and northwest portions of Baltimore City.

The Department of Public Works is proud of its diverse workforce. The Department’s Office of Equity and Environmental Justice has enabled “intentional” initiatives to address inequities across all barriers (race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.). In addition to actively recruiting the population comprising the Baltimore community, among the initiatives advancing these efforts is the “Diversity Lens” training that provides detailed and specific guidance regarding the benefits and advantages of a diverse workforce that first acknowledges, and celebrates, values and respects all employees at every level in DPW. City Council Resolution 22-0137R is an expression of this inclusive intentionality.

The Human Resources Division of Public Works collaborates with the Department of Human Resources (“DHR”) in its hiring efforts. The Department appreciates DHR’s work to expand its outreach to Hispanic/Latino communities, as well as ensuring that resources are available for Spanish speakers at our career fairs to eliminate barriers that may occur during the recruiting process. The next Joint Hiring Event with DHR will be on Saturday, January 28, 2023 from

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council

December 13, 2022

Page 2

10am – 2pm at the Abel Wolman Building. In addition, Public Works is in the process of hiring a Spanish speaking community liaison, and the Department’s newest workforce program, B’More WISE¹, provides English as a Second Language (ESL) support for enrollees who struggle with language barriers.

The Department of Public Works supports City Council Resolution 22-0137R.


Dr. Jason W. Mitchell
Director

JWM/MMC

¹ B’More WISE is a new DPW program that provides training to individuals interested in a career in the water and wastewater industry, including young adults, recent high school graduates, under-employed individuals, individuals returning to the workforce after incarceration, and those who have lost their jobs due to COVID-1 or whose job prospects are significantly diminished due to socio-economic issues.

F R O M	NAME & TITLE	Corren Johnson, Interim Director	CITY of BALTIMORE	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Transportation (BCDOT) 417 E Fayette Street, Room 527		
	SUBJECT	City Council Resolution 22-0137R	M E M O	

TO: Mayor Brandon M. Scott
TO: Education Workforce and Youth Committee
FROM: Department of Transportation
POSITION: **Support**
RE: Council Resolution – 22-0137R

DATE: 12/14/22

INTRODUCTION – Informational Hearing - Hiring Initiatives - Spanish Speakers

PURPOSE/PLANS – For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Department of Transportation, the Department of General Services, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, and the Baltimore City Public School System to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

COMMENTS – Council Bill 22-0137R calls on Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT) to join numerous municipal agencies, including the Department of Human Resources, for the purpose of discussing Baltimore City Government’s efforts to hire Spanish speaking employees. Baltimore City’s Latino population continues to grow, jumping from over 25,000 residents in 2010 to over 45,000 residents in 2020, per the United States Census. BCDOT acknowledges the importance of hiring employees who speak Spanish, given the 76% growth in the City’s Latino population over the past decade. BCDOT has made measurable progress in this area in recent years, hiring Spanish speaking employees to fill critical roles within the Director’s Office, specifically the agency’s Communications Office and Government Affairs & Policy Office.

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT POSITION – Baltimore City Department of Transportation looks forward to participating in this important conversation and fully **supports** Council Resolution 22-0137R.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Liam Davis at Liam.Davis@baltimorecity.gov or at 410-545-3207.

Sincerely,

Corren Johnson
Interim Director



January 24, 2023

To the Honorable City Council President, Nick Mosby and
Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 409, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: City Council Bill 22-0137R – Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers

The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MIMA) is herein reporting on City Council Bill 22-0137R regarding the Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers.

Since its establishment in 2014, MIMA has prioritized the hiring of staff that reflects the city's cultural and linguistic landscape. Currently, 100% of MIMA staff are bilingual and 50% can read, write, and speak Spanish. In addition, MIMA's two outreach staff are fluent in Spanish and conduct ongoing activities to support Baltimore's Spanish speaking constituencies.

As a technical assistance provider, MIMA has worked with city agencies to assist with recruitment of bilingual staff to meet the linguistic needs of their programs or services. For example, MIMA has referred city agencies with outside organizations, such as academic institutions and workforce development organizations working with immigrants to identify bilingual candidates. Furthermore, a section of MIMA's monthly newsletter is dedicated to sharing bilingual employment opportunities, many of which seek candidates fluent in English and Spanish. Finally, our biweekly community stakeholder calls and WhatsApp group are used to share employment opportunities with service providers working with immigrant communities.

While the need for hiring more Spanish speakers remains relevant, MIMA's goal is to ensure that all Limited English Proficient (LEP) residents in Baltimore City are served equitably. To this effect, MIMA has developed resources for city agencies to overcome language barriers - beyond Spanish - in their day to day operations. Some of these resources include but are not limited to:

- Telephonic interpretation services made available – at no cost – to city agencies. In 2022, MIMA recorded a total of 17,000 minutes in Spanish telephonic interpretation.
- Training to ensure that frontline employees can assist LEP constituents. MIMA has provided training to over 2,500 employees in the past 3 years.
- Translation of documents into Spanish and other core languages. MIMA translated a total of 126 documents to Spanish in 2022. Additional translations include documents in the city's top languages spoken by LEP residents (Spanish, French, Mandarin Chinese, Korean and Arabic). Other languages by LEP Baltimore City Public School families include Swahili, Amharic, Tigrinya and Nepalese.

In addition to the above, MIMA works with city agencies to tailor language access services based on both need and available resources. For example, MIMA may recommend a combination of approaches to overcome language barriers, such as the hiring of bilingual staff and/or subcontracting with community-based organizations when providing critical services.

MIMA is committed to ensuring that all LEP residents have access to services and resources. As such, our office will continue to assist city agencies with language and hiring needs to ensure services are available regardless of language proficiency.

For additional questions or concerns, contact:

Catalina Rodriguez Lima
Director

Catalina.rodriguez-lima@baltimorecity.gov
410-818-6193

Masuma Islam Lonczak
Deputy Director

masuma.lonczak@baltimorecity.gov
410-382-7362

CITY OF BALTIMORE

Brandon M. Scott, Mayor



Mayor's Office of Employment Development

Jason Perkins-Cohen
Director
417 E. Fayette Street, Suite 468
Baltimore, MD 21202

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
Room 409, City Hall
100 N. Holiday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: City Council Bill, 22-0137R

Dear President and City Council Members,

The Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) is herein reporting on City Council bill- 22-0137R-Informational Hearing - Hiring Initiatives - Spanish Speakers

For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Mayor's Office of Employment Development, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Department of Transportation, the Department of General Services, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, and the Baltimore City Public School System to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

The Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) coordinates and directs workforce development initiatives responsive to the needs of Baltimore City employers and job seekers in order to enhance and promote the local economy. Our vision is for all city residents to maximize their career potential, and all employers to have the human resources to grow and prosper.

MOED understands the importance of employing Spanish speaking public facing staff. MOED has been intentional in its efforts to increase Spanish speaking staff and currently employs three fluent Spanish-speaking staff members. These staff members help connect customers (job seekers and businesses) with job related services and employment opportunities. Having Spanish speaking staff members at Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) helps to ensure that all members of the local community have equal access to the services and resources offered by the MOED. This is important because it allows MOED to reach and assist a larger number of people, and to better serve the needs of the community as a whole. Additionally, having a diverse staff that is representative of the local community, helps to foster a sense of inclusiveness and accessibility at MOED. Which is beneficial for both the staff and for the people who use the MOED's services.

MOED supports hiring initiatives that will increase the number of Spanish Speaker employees that work for Baltimore City Government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jason Perkins-Cohen".

Jason Perkins-Cohen
Director



October 24, 2022

To the Honorable City Council President, Nick Mosby
and Members of the Baltimore City Council
City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street, Room 409
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: CC Bill 22-0137R – Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers

The Department of Human Resources (“DHR”) has reviewed City Council Bill 22-0137R Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers. For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Department of Transportation, the Department of General Services, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, and the Baltimore City Public School System to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

DHR has reviewed the above-referenced bill and acknowledges that while we are making strides in our attempts to reach Spanish speakers, there are opportunities for further outreach to this population. While the Spanish-speaking population within the City of Baltimore continues to grow, this is in line with that of the United States as a whole, where it is estimated that 13% of Americans are Spanish speakers, second only to Mexico. It is anticipated that by 2050, the United States is expected to exceed Mexico in the percentage of Spanish-speaking citizens.¹ Therefore, it is paramount to find ways to recruit this population into the workplace.

Currently, DHR’s Office of Recruitment/Shared Services adds information to postings to indicate that a Spanish speaker is required if the position is geared towards Spanish speakers. Also, when they go to hiring events, they specifically seek Spanish speakers as well. Recently, the Department of Recreation and Parks had an event that was geared toward recruiting Spanish-speaking candidates. DHR’s Office of Recruitment/Shared Services currently has a bilingual Spanish-speaking member on the recruitment team. Additionally, when the recruitment team conducts hiring events, there are video demonstrations in Spanish on how to apply for the positions.

¹ Lugo, S. (2022, May 27). *How to recruit Hispanic employees - tips to find Spanish speaking job applicants*. CareerPlug. Retrieved October 19, 2022, from <https://www.careerplug.com/blog/recruiting-spanish-speaking-job-applicants/>

Diverse and non-traditional recruitment methods must be employed in order to recruit Spanish speakers. According to the Society for Human Resource Management (“SHRM”), traditional recruitment strategies do not effectively reach Hispanic candidates, because they often don’t believe that such traditional methods will help them get a job.² Instead of traditional recruitment methods, Hispanic candidates often find jobs through networks of friends and family. Therefore, organize to leverage existing employee networks because applicants sourced through a referral are more likely to be hired than an applicant from a job board. With that in mind, it may be helpful to offer an incentive for employee referrals for Spanish-speaking candidates.

Additionally, electronic methods are extremely effective as a recruitment tool for Spanish speakers, as 72% of the Spanish speakers in the United States own at least one smart device, with 64% of Hispanics aged 35-49 using tablet devices daily.³ Therefore, it would be easier for them to apply for jobs via online job boards, participate in virtual forums, and access social media sites on which jobs requiring Spanish speakers would be available.

Another tool that could be effective in the outreach to Spanish-speaking candidates would be to explore how the City of Baltimore can better utilize organizations that serve the Spanish-speaking population, such as:

- Accesolatino.org – an online site with information, guidance, and tools for Latin immigrants, whatever their immigrant status, inside the United States and Mexican territory.
- iHispano.com – a site owned by the Professional Diversity Network that connects diverse talent with great opportunities.
- LatPro.com – a job board that serves as a conduit between the career-focused professional and potential employers. The site is dedicated to bringing diversity to the American workforce.
- AllBilingualJobs.com – the very first job board connecting Hispanic bilingual job seekers with recruiters searching for multilingual and multicultural professionals.
- BilingualCrossing.com – another website that services bilingual candidates that locates and classifies jobs on every source it can find and provides its highly specialized research to job seekers, recruiters, and other job sites throughout North America.
- Getbilingualjobs.net – a one-stop resource for finding and filling Bilingual positions for the growing community of Bilingual job seekers and employers.

² Rodriguez, R. (2018, April 11). *Tapping the Hispanic labor pool*. SHRM. Retrieved October 19, 2022, from <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/pages/0404rodriguez.aspx>

³ Minton-Eversole, T. (2018, April 11). *Hiring Hispanics requires awareness of differences*. SHRM. Retrieved October 19, 2022, from <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/hiring-hispanics-requires-awareness-of-differences.aspx>

- Hispanic-jobs.com – a career site founded in 2004 for employers who want to reach bilingual/Spanish-speaking professionals nationwide.
- Saludos.com – another site that specializes in joining the Hispanic bilingual professional with companies looking for diversity in the workplace.

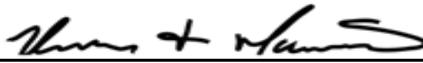
Establishing relationships with these and similar organizations can only extend our reach into the Spanish-speaking community and increase our ability to find qualified Spanish speakers to fill City positions.

The Department of Human Resources supports best practices which attract and retain quality candidates for employment within the City of Baltimore. To that end, implementing an employee referral bonus program, leveraging and expanding professional connections with the Spanish-speaking community, and continuing to build up the technological recruitment efforts geared toward Spanish speakers, may be helpful toward building a better pipeline of candidates.

For additional questions or concerns, contact me at Quinton.Herbert@baltimorecity.gov or by phone at (410) 396-1563.

Sincerely,

Quinton Herbert, JD

F R O M	Name & Title	Reginald Moore Executive Director 	CITY OF BALTIMORE	
	Agency Name & Address	Baltimore City Department of Recreation & Parks 3001 East Drive, Baltimore, Maryland (MD) 21217	MEMO	
	Subject:	City Council Bill # 22-0137R- Informational Hearing - Hiring Initiatives - Spanish Speakers		

DATE: November 16, 2022

TO: The Honorable City Council President Nick Mosby
Members of the City Council
City Hall
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Baltimore City Recreation & Parks (BCRP) has been asked to participate in an investigative hearing with other City representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Department of Transportation, the Department of General Services, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, and the Baltimore City Public School System to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

This legislation aligns well with BCRP’s own internal focus as it pertains to the agency’s objectives and goals as outlined through our Hispanic engagement initiative. It reflects our pursuit of ensuring a more diverse and reflective staff representation for the communities we serve across Baltimore.

Moreover, it allows for us to be more equipped, able and capable to serve our ever-growing Hispanic constituency in a more equitable and holistic way. However, despite the growth of Latinx/Hispanic Community in Baltimore the department’s demographic of has remained at 1%.

Baltimore City Recreation and Parks supports City Council Bill #22-0137R and looks forward to participating in the upcoming discussion.

FROM

NAME & TITLE	Berke Attila, Director
AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of General Services 200 N. Holliday Street, Rm 800
SUBJECT	City Council Bill 22-0137R

CITY OF
BALTIMORE
MEMO



DATE:
December 9, 2022

TO The Honorable President and Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400, 100 North Holliday Street

Position: Favorable

The Department of General Services (DGS) is in receipt of and reporting herein on City Council Bill 22-0137R: Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers. We request a favorable report on this bill.

Legislation Background

The purpose of this resolution is to bring together key City agencies to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment within Baltimore City government.

Comments

DGS is an internal-facing City agency that provides the support upon which all other City agencies can build their operations. As such, our operations do not have a direct impact on the residents and businesses of the City, but our role ensures that the operations of agencies that do have direct impact are able to be performed. Our agency is comprised of roughly 316 employees across five (5) divisions: Fleet Management, Facilities Maintenance, Capital Projects, Energy, and Administration (which includes the Director’s Office, HR, Fiscal, and the Office of Performance Management).

DGS recognizes the importance and benefits of hiring and retaining a diverse workforce, both within the agency and across City government. While the City collects certain demographic data of employees such as race/ethnicity, gender, and age, current application and interview processes within DGS do not explicitly track the bilingual or multilingual abilities of prospective candidates. Due to the nature of DGS’ scope, bilingual skills are generally not considered to be essential for our positions. However, there are several opportunities ahead for us to assess and expand upon some of our current hiring practices to diversify our talent pipelines. For example, one recruitment initiative that we are currently undertaking includes reaching out to community partners that focus within the City’s Hispanic/Latino population so that we may broaden our outreach.

We remain committed to working with the Department of Human Resources and other key stakeholders to surface and implement promising recruitment efforts to attract and hire diverse candidates into the future.

Conclusion

The Department of General Services requests a favorable report on City Council Bill 22-0137R and looks forward to discussing further with the Education, Workforce, and Youth Committee.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact DGS’ Legislative Liaison Annie Fullas at annie.fullas@baltimorecity.gov or at 667-208-0380.

Sincerely,

Berke Attila
Director, DGS

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Jhnette Richardson
Chair, Baltimore City Board
of School Commissioners

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer

City Council Bill 22-0137R **Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers**

February 2, 2023

Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) has reviewed City Council Resolution 22-0137R, which invites agency representatives, including the Baltimore City Public School System, to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

As the Resolution highlights, the 2020 Census noted a 76% increase in the Hispanic and Latino population of Baltimore City, rising from 25,960 residents in 2010 to 45,927 residents at the time of the survey. This dramatic increase in Hispanic and Latino residents is indicative of a population that is no longer limited to Broadway, Eastern Avenue, and Highlandtown, but rather integrated and integral throughout the many neighborhoods and communities of Baltimore City. City Schools appreciates the significance of these figures and would note that in examining our own data, from school year 2016-17 to school year 2021-22, City Schools' enrollment of English Learners whose primary home language is Spanish more than doubled (from 3,418 to 7,677).

City Schools recognizes the importance of recruiting Spanish speakers for employment throughout the system. At present, the district pursues the following bilingual staff recruitment efforts:

- City Schools has a [Multilingual Learner and Community Strategic Plan](#); bilingual staff recruitment is a specific goal in this plan.
- Recruitment efforts in Puerto Rico (including newspaper advertisements) and at Hispanic-serving institutions to target Spanish-speaking teachers and staff for district office positions.
- Leveraging (social media and) recruitment platforms, such as LinkedIn and Handshake, to target Spanish-speaking candidates for teacher and other district office positions.
- Surveyed existing City Schools' staff to gather data about language-speaking abilities to better ascertain the distribution of bilingual employees, and as a way to recruit employees to schools with significant multilingual enrollment or into ESOL positions.

In addition, the district's emerging bilingual staff recruitment efforts are as follows:

- Expand the number of bilingual job applications that we post, to include key positions such as Secretary, Social Worker and Guidance Counselor, for schools with significant multilingual enrollment.
- In collaboration with the ESOL Department, additional recruitment efforts/partnerships with local colleges and universities for bilingual candidates.
- Connect with the local community/hold events in the community to foster engagement with City Schools and provide opportunity to learn about employment opportunities.
- Promote bilingual staff opportunities to parents and community members with the fastest growing Hispanic student populations.
- Collect staffing referrals from newly-hired bilingual staff members.

City Schools stands ready to work with Baltimore City government in seeking to increase the number of Spanish speaking employees in public-facing roles, including an examination of relevant hiring processes aimed at recruiting and retaining Spanish speaking employees. We look forward to participating in further discussions.