

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BERNARD C. "JACK" YOUNG,
Mayor



**DEPARTMENT OF
RECREATION AND PARKS**

REGINALD MOORE, *Executive Director*
Dr. Ralph W. E. Jones, Jr. Building
3001 East Drive - Druid Hill Park
Baltimore, Maryland 21217
410-396-7900

DATE: November 16, 2020

TO: Honorable President and Members of the City Council

FROM: Baltimore City Recreation & Parks

POSITION: Support

Re: CITY COUNCIL BILL 20-0218R: City Council recognizing systemic racism as a public health crisis.

Dear President and City Council Members,

Systemic racism has been an aspect of American life since the founding of this country. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) declared that health is determined in part by access to social and economic opportunities, and that the conditions in which we live are related to the reasoning that the health outcomes of some Americans are better than those of others. In recent decades, scientific research has shown that racism is a fundamental cause of poor health outcomes for minorities.

Systemic racism and discrimination is an overwhelming public health crisis that deprives people of color and other minorities equal access to health, housing, basic public safety, food access, education, public transportation and employment. There are countless roadblocks that negatively affect the lifespan and quality of life of citizens of these communities.

The mission of Baltimore City Department of Recreation & Parks (BCRP) is to improve parks and natural resources, and to promote fun, active lifestyles for all ages. To that end, the vision of BCRP is to build a stronger Baltimore one community at a time. BCRP possesses a critical responsibility of preserving natural resources that have real economic, physical, and emotional benefits for communities. We are the leaders and often the only voice in communities, for protecting open space, connecting children to nature, and providing education and programming that helps communities engage in conservation practices. BCRP leads the City of Baltimore in improving the overall health and wellness of communities. We serve as essential partners in combating some of the most complicated and expensive challenges that our city faces to include but are not limited to poor nutrition, hunger, obesity, and physical inactivity.

To that end we stand by our daily commitment to ensure social equity. Universal access to public parks and recreation are is not merely a privilege; it is a right. Each day we work hard to ensure that all members of the community have access to the resources and programming. BCRP is committed to promote equity, fairness, access, and an inclusive environment of mutual respect for all citizens in the City of Baltimore. The agency is committed to the citizens of Baltimore; we strive to eliminate any practice within our communities that stem from implicit bias, systemic racism and/or are contrary to our mission and vision.

Therefore, Baltimore City Recreation & Parks recommends the approval of City Council Bill 20-0218R. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jenny Morgan, *Legislative Liaison* at jmorgan@baltimorecity.gov or at 410-396-7900.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Reginald Moore".

Reginald Moore
Executive Director

City of Baltimore, Department of Recreation & Parks